

VACCINE-PREVENTABLE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES PROCEDURE



Human Resources and Compliance

Version 2.0

Last Reviewed: 22 May 2020

1 Statement

The College is committed to preventing the spread of vaccine-preventable and infectious diseases. Of paramount concern is the health and wellbeing of students, families, staff, volunteers and other members of the College community.

2 Purpose

St John's Anglican College is bound by the *Public Health Act 2005* (the Act) and the *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) Act 2011*. This procedure outlines the vaccination policy of the College and describes the practices undertaken to manage the prevention of spreading infectious diseases throughout the College community.

3 Scope

This procedure applies to board and council members, employees, parents/guardians and students.

4 Principles

St John's Anglican College is committed to preventing the spread of vaccine-preventable and infectious diseases by implementing practices such as:

- monitoring immunisation records;
- refusing the enrolment or attendance of children at our Early Childhood Education and Care Centre (ECEC) or Early Years program who are not up-to-date with their scheduled vaccinations;
- handwashing;
- effective cleaning procedures; and
- complying with legislation and recommended exclusion guidelines and timeframes.

St John's Anglican College supports the Queensland Public Health Act and are committed to the health and wellbeing of our staff, students and families. We encourage everyone to make sure their vaccinations are up to date as we see this as a simple and effective way of protecting our community.



Vaccination is also important for adults to boost immunity, protect those around them, catch up on missed childhood doses, and to protect against diseases when travelling or for specific work activities. Our staff have the opportunity to participate in the College's staff immunisation program on an annual basis.

Our College community is encouraged to seek medical advice in relation to their specific individual vaccination needs.

5 Student Protection

St John's Anglican College supports the rights of children and young people and is committed to ensure the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students. The College is therefore committed to responding to allegations of student harm resulting from the conduct or actions of any person including that of employees. This commitment includes the provision of a safe and supportive living and learning environment for all students and requires all employees, volunteers and visitors to model and encourage behaviour that upholds the dignity and protection of students from harm.

6 Vaccination in Early Years

Legislation aims to protect children and adults who work in early childhood settings from vaccine-preventable diseases. Refusing to allow a child to enrol or attend a service based on their immunisation status is not unlawful discrimination under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*. Under Queensland's Public Health Act, approved early childhood education and care services may refuse enrolment or attendance of children who are not up-to-date with their 'scheduled vaccinations'. Further information regarding this schedule is available on the Queensland Health website www.health.qld.gov.au

6.1 New enrolments

During the enrolment process the College asks parents to provide an immunisation history statement that demonstrates their child's immunisation status is up-to-date. If their child's immunisation status is not up-to-date the college may choose to:

- refuse enrolment of the child;
- accept enrolment but refuse attendance of the child until proof of an up-to-date immunisation status is provided; or
- conditionally accept enrolment or attendance until proof of up-to-date immunisation status is provided.

Parents will have two weeks to provide the immunisation history statement. Failure to provide the statement will lead to refusal of enrolment.

6.2 Existing enrolments

The College will ask parents for an updated immunisation history statement after the child passes the vaccination milestones under the National Immunisation Program Schedule Queensland. Parents will be given 4 weeks to provide a current immunisation history statement. If a current immunisation history statement is not provided within the requested timeframe the College may choose to:

- cancel the enrolment of children whose immunisation status is not up-to-date;
- refuse attendance of children until proof of up-to-date immunisation status is provided; or



- impose another condition on the child's enrolment or attendance until proof of up-to-date immunisation status is provided.

Enrolled children whose immunisation status is unknown will be considered as not vaccinated.

6.3 Vulnerable children

The Queensland Government recognises the importance of immunisation and high-quality education and care for all children. The Act is not intended to disadvantage vulnerable children and maintains flexibility in this area.

6.4 Medical contraindication and catch-up schedules

While technically not fully vaccinated, children who:

- have a medical contraindication to some or all scheduled vaccines, and/or
- are on a recognised vaccination catch-up schedule

will not be refused enrolment or attendance as they are still classified as having an up-to-date immunisation status which should be indicated on their immunisation history statement.

6.5 Homeopathic treatments

Children who have only had homeopathic treatments will be shown as not up-to-date on their immunisation history statements. Enrolment and attendance of these children will be treated the same as those who do not have an up-to-date immunisation history statement.

6.6 Conscientious objection

Some parents may not want to have their child vaccinated. If parents have recorded a conscientious objection to vaccination through the Australian Immunisation Register, their child's immunisation status will show as not up-to date. Enrolment and attendance of these children will be treated the same as those who do not have an up-to-date immunisation history statement.

6.7 Immunisation history statements

An immunisation history statement must be used as proof that a child's immunisation status is up-to-date or not up-to-date. This statement can be:

- an official record issued by the Australian Immunisation Register
- a letter from a recognised immunisation provider (e.g. a GP or immunisation nurse).

The Personal Health Record (the 'red book') from Queensland Health is not acceptable proof of immunisation because it only contains handwritten updates.

7 School Immunisation Program

The Queensland School Immunisation Program allows Year 7 and 10 students to be vaccinated through the College for free. Year 7 students are offered vaccinations against:

- Human papillomavirus (HPV);



- Diphtheria; and
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

This age group requires these vaccinations because:

- they need a booster dose for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- some immunisations need to be given in early adolescence (HPV) because the immune response is better at this age for this vaccine.

Year 10 students are offered vaccination against Meningococcal ACWY strains. In Queensland during 2016, there was a rise in the numbers of meningococcal cases. Some of the highest rates of meningococcal carriage occur among 15 to 19 year olds. By decreasing the proportion of people carrying the bacteria in their nose and throat, the program protects young people immediately and the wider community over time.

If you do not want your child to be vaccinated through the school program:

- complete and sign the 'No to Vaccination' section of the consent card;
- indicate why your child is not receiving vaccinations through the school program; and
- return the consent card to the College.

7.1 Disclosure of student and parent information

The Act requires that our Principal provides student and parent information to approved school immunisation providers for the purposes of following up with parents of students who have not returned a consent card. This is to ensure that parents are given every opportunity for their child to participate in the School Immunisation Program and be protected against vaccine-preventable diseases. The provider can only request the following information under the Act:

- the name and date of birth of a student;
- the name, telephone number, email address and postal address of a parent or guardian of a student;
- any other information prescribed by the *Public Health Regulation 2005* (Part 2D) about a student:
 - the sex of the student;
 - the school's class or group to which the student belongs;
 - the language spoken at home by the student;
 - whether the student identifies as being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

All student and parent information provided is protected under the Queensland *Information Privacy Act 2009*. The information will only be retained by the provider for the school year that the child is eligible for vaccination.

8 Overseas travel

Whether you are travelling overseas from Australia or returning from another country, immunisation plays an important role in protecting you against serious diseases that are common in some countries. Recommended vaccines may include:

- Measles
- Polio
- Pneumococcal disease
- Hepatitis A and B
- Cholera
- Rabies
- Typhoid fever
- Tetanus
- Influenza
- Meningococcal disease
- Yellow fever
- Japanese encephalitis
- Tuberculosis

The College requires all students that attend our International College to provide medical information including a record of their immunisations.

9 Outbreak Management Plan

In the event of an outbreak of a contagious condition the College will respond in accordance with the *Public Health Regulations 2005* (Qld) and take into consideration its Duty of Care obligations. Some medical conditions require exclusion from school to prevent the spread of infectious diseases among employees and students.

The *Public Health Regulations 2005* (Qld) lists the following conditions as prescribed contagious conditions:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Chickenpox (varicella) | * Influenza |
| • Diphtheria | * Measles |
| • Enterovirus 71 | * Meningococcal Disease |
| • Gastroenteritis | * Poliomyelitis |
| • German Measles (Rubella) | * Typhoid and Paratyphoid |
| • Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib) | * Tuberculosis |
| • Hepatitis A | * Whooping Cough (Pertussis) |

Upon becoming aware that there is a case of a contagious condition, the College will:

- contact the local Public Health Unit – West Moreton (Ipswich) (07) 3818 4700
- advise parents of the incidence at the College – draft letter templates available from ISQ
- provide parents with a copy of a fact sheet about the condition, as provided by the Public Health Unit
- keep the infected child or children out of the school.

The Public Health Unit will work in coordination with the College during this time. All students with confirmed cases of the condition must keep away from the College until the prescribed period has ended,

as set under the Regulations. Students with suspected cases of the condition must not attend school until they are medically cleared.

If a student with a confirmed or suspected case continues to attend the College, under specific rules of the Act, the College may direct the student to be removed from the College for the prescribed period.

If a vaccine is available for a prescribed contagious condition, the College will seek advice as to whether the vaccine is an adequate defence against the condition. If so, under the College's duty of care obligation, the College will allow vaccinated students to remain at the College, and require the unvaccinated students to stay away for the prescribed period. This is particularly relevant in the case of measles.

Under the Public Health Act 2005, all staff are required to advise the Principal if they know or suspect that a student has a contagious condition.

9.1 Checklist

Below is a non-exhaustive checklist of items that may be included in the Outbreak Management Plan. Please note that in some cases the Public Health Unit may contact the College to inform of a confirmed case of a contagious condition.

The Public Health Unit may request information including contact information of staff, students and parents. All requests should be complied with and any correspondence retained for record keeping purposes.

Following are some examples of questions that may be posed to the Public Health Unit in the event of a school closure.

- Are you exercising powers under the Public Health Act?
- Can we please have a copy of this directive in writing?
- For how long?
- Does this direction apply to students only?
- Are we able to continue with a skeleton staff onsite?
- If so, is there a limit on the number of staff?
- Can a skeleton staff return sooner than the students?
- Can the students of essential workers and vulnerable students still attend?
- What if a student turns up onsite during the closure period?
- What communication would you like us to/can we send to the school community?

Action	Responsible Person	Date/Time	Evidence
Call the local Public Health Unit:	Principal or Delegate		
*Update with Actions required by the Public Health Unit			
Inform the College Council	Principal		
Inform Staff	Principal or Delegate		

Inform School Community	Principal		
Arrange deep clean of contaminated environment	Business Manager or Delegate		
Update risk management plans	Deputy Principals/Manager Human Resources and Compliance		
Establish a return to school plan	Principal and Delegates		
Create an incident report for records	Deputy Principals/Manager Human Resources and Compliance		
Prepare lists of close contacts	Deputy Principals and Delegates		

9.2 Contact Tracing – Covid-19

In the event of a confirmed case of Covid-19, Queensland Health will need to conduct contact tracing and will advise members of the College community if they are considered a close contact and are required to self-quarantine for 14 days. Further information can be sourced from Queensland Health's website.

The Act includes information sharing and disclosure provisions that require schools to comply with any request for information, including personal information, from Queensland Health. Disclosures of this nature are required by law and therefore permissible under Australian Privacy Principal 6.2 (b).

10 Accountabilities and Responsibilities

The table below outlines the accountabilities and responsibilities for managing employees.	
College Council:	Is responsible for ensuring the proper and effective management and operation of the College. This includes defining and monitoring the strategic direction, developing and monitoring policies, monitoring the effectiveness of the College Council and College, and establishing control and accountability systems.
Principal:	Is responsible for the administration and implementation of the College's strategic direction, policies and procedures and control and accountability systems developed by the College Council. The Principal works closely with and is accountable to the College Council for leading the College to deliver high quality curriculum and educational outcomes, excellence in teaching and learning, a strong College community and driving market growth.
Manager Human Resources and Compliance:	Is responsible for ensuring the achievement of College strategic objectives through the development and application of best practice Human Resource Management principles and practices that comply with legislative requirements. The Manager Human Resources and Compliance works closely with and is accountable to the



	Principal for developing, implementing and evaluating an appropriate policy framework compliant with all statutory requirements.
Employees:	Are expected to abide by all College policies and procedures.

11 Related policies, procedures and other documents

11.1 Policies

Student Protection in Anglican Schools Policy

11.2 Procedures

Privacy Procedure

Student Protection in Anglican School Procedures

11.3 Other Documents

FSAC Ltd Enterprise Agreement

11.4 Legislation

Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Queensland)

Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) Act 2011

Public Health Act 2005 (Queensland)

Public Health Regulations 2005 (Queensland)

Information Privacy Act 2009 (Queensland)

12 Approval

This procedure was issued on 10 July 2020 under the authority of the Principal. This document represents the current policy of St John's Anglican College until it is revised or rescinded.

13 Managing this procedure

13.1 Review

This procedure is to be reviewed every two years or earlier if necessary. The Manager Human Resources and Compliance is responsible for reviewing or making approved modifications to the procedure and distributing. Any previous versions of this procedure will become superseded.

13.2 Breach of Procedure

Failure to appropriately manage the prevention of spreading vaccine-preventable and infectious diseases as far as reasonably practicable is considered a breach of this procedure. All employees are expected to abide by College policies and procedures, failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action ranging from counselling to dismissal.



14 Document information

Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	23 February, 2018	Initial Draft	Manager HR and Compliance
1.1	16 March, 2018	Incorporating feedback	Manager HR and Compliance
1.1	11 September, 2018	Final Draft	Manager HR and Compliance
2.0	22 May, 2020	Review in accordance with guidelines regarding COVID-19	Manager HR and Compliance

15 Authorisation

Maria McIvor
Principal
Date: 10 July 2020