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| Secondary School Immunisation Program |
| A guide for schools |
| **OFFICIAL** |



This guide supports schools to deliver a safe and successful secondary school immunisation program to eligible students.

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# **1. Protecting students against vaccine-preventable diseases**

In Victoria, local council immunisation providers with the support of secondary schools administer the majority of vaccinations due in adolescence through their provision of the Secondary School Immunisation Program (SSIP).

The SSIP offers free vaccines provided by the National Immunisation Program each year to Year 7 and Year 10 students.

Students who miss vaccination due to absence on the day of the school immunisation clinic may be offered catch-up vaccination at subsequent school clinics or with another immunisation provider. Consent provided by parents or guardians the year before remains valid the following year.

Students can also receive [catch-up vaccines](https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/immunisation-information-for-health-professionals/catch-up-immunisations) <https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/immunisation-information-for-health-professionals/catch-up-immunisations> with their GP or a participating community pharmacy. Many community pharmacies offer National Immunisation Program adolescent vaccines with no out of pocket cost to individuals.

The current adolescent vaccination program schedule for Victorian schools is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Victoria’s secondary school immunisation program schedule

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Vaccine | Eligibility in the school-based program | Eligibility in community setting |
| HPV (human papillomavirus) – single injection for most adolescents. Three doses may be required for immunocompromised adolescents. | Year 7 | 12 – 25 years of age |
| Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough) - single injection | Year 7 | 12 – 19 years of age |
| Meningococcal ACWY -single injection | Year 10 | 15 – 19 years of age  |

Source: [National Immunisation Program](https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/national-immunisation-program) <https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/national-immunisation-program>.

# **2. Roles and responsibilities**

**Councils**

Councils are mandated under the [Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008](http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/num_act/phawa200846o2008268/s24.html) <http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/num\_act/phawa200846o2008268/s24.html> to provide immunisation services to children living or being educated within their municipal district. Councils coordinate and deliver vaccine programs to secondary schools.

#### Catch-up for students who missed vaccination at school

Your local council immunisation service will advise parents/guardians and work with your school to deliver any catch-up vaccines due to students. Consent provided by parents/guardians the year before remains valid the following year. Students who are unable to receive missed vaccinations at school, may also access immunisations with their GP, Pharmacist Immuniser or attend their local council immunisation service.

It’s important that parents/guardians as well as students communicate to the school and immunisation provider about any catch-up vaccines the student has received prior to the school-based vaccination visit.

# **Immunisation service**

In this guide the council or its contracted service provider is referred to as the immunisation service. The role of the immunisation service is to:

* oversee the delivery of the SSIP
* undertake administrative tasks associated with the program
* administer vaccinations to eligible students by [Authorised Nurse Immunisers](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/immunisers-in-victoria/nurse-immunisers) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/nurse-immunisers> on immunisation day

Table 2: Immunisation provider roles and responsibilities

| **Coordinate** | **Consent** | **Service delivery** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * initiate and maintain contact with schools
* provide schools with council’s email and contact details
* plan school vaccination dates
* provide [secondary school immunisation program agreement](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) <https:www.health.gov.au/
* immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> to schools
* distribute consent forms (online or hardcopy where appropriate) and resources for schools to distribute
* collect returned and collated consent forms
 | * review consent forms for completeness and eligibility
* follow up non-returned, incomplete, or incorrectly completed consent forms
* obtain telephone consent from parent or guardians where appropriate (Authorised Nurse Immunisers only)
 | * ensure vaccines are stored, transported and monitored in accordance with the [National Vaccine Storage guidelines – strive for five](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/national-vaccine-storage-guidelines-resource-collection) <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/national-vaccine-storage-guidelines-resource-collection>
* ensure students are eligible to receive vaccines on the day
* monitor students for a minimum 15 minutes after vaccination
* respond to and manage adverse reactions following immunisation
* report adverse reactions following immunisation to vaccine(s) to [SAEFVIC](https://www.safevac.org.au/Home/Info/VIC) <https://www.safevac.org.au/Home/Info/VIC>
* inform the school immunisation coordinator and parents/guardians of any incidents occurring during immunisation day
* follow up students who have missed vaccine(s)
* record and report immunisation encounters to the [Australian Immunisation Register](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register/what-immunisation-history-statement) <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/what-immunisation-history-statement?context=22436>
 |

# **Schools**

The role of the school is to:

* Appoint a school immunisation coordinator to liaise with the immunisation provider and ensure that the [responsibilities of the school](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/immunisation/policy) <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/immunisation/policy> are carried out
* Send a [collection statement](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program to parents/guardians that informs them that their contact details will be transferred to local council unless they request otherwise.
* Send student and parent/guardian contact details by email to your council immunisation provider as permitted by the [Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019](http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_reg/phawr2019331/s112.html) <<http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_reg/phawr2019331/s112.html>>.
	+ Resources including a data extraction tool to make the transfer of data simple, quick and secure, are available at <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program>.
* Utilise vaccine resources provided by the immunisation provider or on the [Department’s website](Department%E2%80%99s%20website) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> to communicate with students, parents/guardians, teachers, and the wider school community about adolescent immunisation.
* Support the distribution and collection of all immunisation consent forms, either hard copy or links to online portals
* Ensure appropriate resources and environments are available for the program to run safely and effectively on vaccination day.

Table 3: Role of the school/school immunisation coordinator

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Coordinate** | **Consent** | **Communicate** |
| * sign secondary school immunisation program agreement with local council immunisation provider
* plan and facilitate vaccination days
* send a [collection statement](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) <https:www.health.gov.au/

immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> to parents/guardians* transfer student and parent/guardian contact details to immunisation provider
* ensure adequate school staff available to supervise students on vaccination day
 | * distribute consent forms (online or hard copy)
* collect and collate into class groups returned consent forms for the immunisation provider
* ensure that the consent form the student presents on the day of vaccination to the immunisation provider is their own
 | * liaise with immunisation provider
* communicate with parents/guardians
* promote immunisation day to students and staff
* use health promotion resources provided by immunisation provider and the Victorian Department of Health
* communicate to the immunisation provider any questions or concerns raised by parents/guardians, students, or staff
 |

# **3. Data transfer from school to immunisation provider**

Schools are authorised under the [Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019](http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_reg/phawr2019331/s112.html) <http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol\_reg/phawr2019331/s112.html> to provide student and parent/guardian contact details (for students eligible for school-based vaccines) to the council immunisation provider. This information assists councils to follow up any non-returned consent forms with parents/guardians directly. Updates and changes to contact details should be communicated to council throughout the year.

A local council may request the secondary school to disclose the following information about a student enrolled at the school:

* student name
* date of birth
* gender
* year level and class group
* parent/guardian contact details
* language(s) spoken at home.

#### Why do schools provide this information?

* To improve communication with parents/guardians regarding their child’s vaccination needs.
* To ensure all eligible students are offered the opportunity to access free vaccinations at school.
* To reduce the administrative burden on school staff to follow-up consent forms.
* To eliminate manual data entry processes.

#### What do schools need to do?

There are two key steps for schools to action at the commencement of the school year:

1. Send [collection statements](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> to parents/guardians of students in Year 7 and Year 10 that informs them that their contact details will be transferred to the local council immunisation service unless they request otherwise.
2. Transfer parent/guardian/student contact details to the local council immunisation service. To make the data extraction transfer simple, quick, and secure, use the data extraction instruction guide relevant to your school in the downloads section located at [Secondary school immunisation program - Resources for secondary schools and councils](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program>.

#### Key dates for schools

* **Week of 29 January** – distribute a [Collection Statement](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> to parents/guardians of all students in Years 7 and Year 10.
* **February** – record any objections from parents/guardians who do not wish for their contact details to be provided to local council.
* **28 February** – transfer contact details to local council as soon as possible after census date, edited as per parent/guardian requests. If student data is confirmed prior to 28 February it may be sent earlier to assist local councils to prepare for the SSIP.

For further information for parents/guardians please refer to the [Secondary School Immunisation](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) webpage <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program>.

Further information regarding the extraction of student and parent/guardian contact details is available from:

* [Secondary School Immunisation](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) – Resources for secondary schools and councils <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program>
* Department of Education and Training [School Policy – Immunisation](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/immunisation/policy) <<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/immunisation/policy>>.

#### Privacy obligations

In managing the collection and transfer of student and parent/guardian contact details, consent form distribution and collection process, schools are required to comply with the [Information Privacy Act 2000](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/information-privacy-act-2000) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/information-privacy-act-2000> and the [Health Records Act 2001](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/health-records-act-2001/046) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/health-records-act-2001/046>. This legislation prescribes the standards for the collection, handling, and disposal of personal and health information.

Schools must ensure confidentiality by:

* ensuring records are secure, for example, by storing them in a locked filing cabinet
* preserving confidentiality when handling written or oral information
* conducting personal interviews in a private environment
* training staff in information-handling procedures
* monitoring access to databases and systems that contain personal and health information
* periodically reviewing appropriate access levels to databases and systems and data security arrangements.

Further information about [maintaining privacy of records](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/privacy-information-sharing/policy) <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/privacy-information-sharing/policy> is available from the Department of Education and Training School policy and advisory library.

# **4. Steps for a successful immunisation program**

Refer to [Appendix A](#_Appendix_A:_Eight): Eight tips for a successful school vaccine program

#### Step 1: Liaise with the immunisation provider

Immunisation providers usually commence their school vaccine program planning cycle prior to the commencement of the school year. Your local council will be in touch with your school between September and December; however, schools are encouraged to contact the immunisation provider at any time during the year.

#### Step 2: Confirm dates for school immunisation

There will be a minimum of one immunisation visit scheduled each year, but immunisation providers are encouraged to provide two visits each year to capture students missed during the first visit. Under some circumstances your immunisation provider may negotiate attending additional days. It is important that your school adheres to the dates you’ve committed to in your agreement.

#### Step 3: Enter immunisation dates into the school calendar

Marking dates in the school calendar ensures that all staff are aware of upcoming commitments. It is also important to book appropriate rooms and equipment for the days of vaccination. A checklist is provided in [Appendix B](#_Appendix_B:) that steps through all the requirements for setting up a suitable vaccination area.

#### Step 4: Complete and sign agreement

A [signed annual agreement](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> formalises the arrangements agreed to between schools and immunisation services to deliver the secondary school immunisation program. Please ensure each section of the agreement is complete and accurate. The agreement can be found in the [Resources section of the SSIP website](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> page.

#### Step 5: Provide school and student information

In week 1 of the school year, schools are required to distribute the [Collection Statement](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> to all students in year 7 and year 10.

Record any objections from parents/guardians. Electronically transfer contact details for those students and parents/guardians who **have not** opted out to your council as soon as possible after the school census date - 28 February annually.

Instructions about how to [extract the relevant information from your school system](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) is in [Secondary school immunisation program - Resources for secondary schools and councils](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program>.

#### Step 6: Receive consent forms and vaccine information

Your immunisation service will provide printed immunisation resources and/or links to online digital resources. Depending on the specific circumstances for each school, consent forms will be distributed either online through platforms such as the Central Immunisations Records Victoria (CIRV) portal or by hard copy.

For online consent forms, your local council will provide your school with details on accessing relevant online portals. If your local council is obtaining consent through the CIRV portal, your council will provide your school with a link specific for your school and relevant year level. Schools will disseminate this link to all eligible students through your preferred mode of communication. Parents or guardians can then provide their consent through the CIRV portal. A link to the Better Health Channel [Secondary School Immunisation Program](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/immunisation-in-secondary-schools) <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/immunisation-in-secondary-schools> page is provided through the CIRV portal and parents/guardians are encouraged to read this information prior to providing their consent.

Hard copies of the information and consent form will still be available for immunisation providers.

Additional immunisation resources and information may be accessed on [Secondary School immunsation program](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program) website <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program>.

#### Step 7: Distribute vaccine information and obtain consent

It is recommended that a coordinated approach is taken to distribute online or hard copy consent and vaccine information (for example, through homeroom classes). Schools will decide on the preferred mode of distribution. Students should be advised when completed consent forms need to be returned following distribution.

Should you require translated resources, they are available on the Health Translations page.

* For translated resources for parents/guardians of year 10 students, resources are available on the [health translations](https://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/resources/adolescent-meningococcal-acwy-vaccine) webpage <https://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/resources/adolescent-meningococcal-acwy-vaccine>.

Your local council may also provide additional resources. Alternatively, the national Translating and Interpreting Service can also be contacted at 131 450.

#### Step 8: Promote immunisation

It is important to communicate vaccination dates and times with parents and guardians, students, and school staff.

Providing positive messages and appropriate health information to students and parents /guardians (especially in their own language) will help them to understand the importance of immunisation and encourage students to be vaccinated.

A range of [educational resources](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> designed to raise awareness about immunisation for teachers, students and parents/guardians in [Appendix D](#_Appendix_D:_Resources).

#### Step 9: Collate consent forms into class groups

All consent forms (hard copy or online) must be returned or responded to, signed by their parent/guardian. Both ‘YES’ and ‘NO’ forms or responses must be collected. It is the school’s goal to ensure that 100 per cent of the consent forms are responded to or collected. For councils using online consent, schools can send reminders to students for their parents/guardians to respond. It is not the responsibility of the school to review or ensure consent forms are appropriately completed. Schools need to collate consent forms into year groups with student class lists to assist the immunisation provider to facilitate a smooth operation on vaccine administration day.

It is important to note that completed consent forms constitute a health record and schools must abide by legislative privacy requirements in relation to how this information is collected, used, disclosed, and stored. See the previous section: [Roles and responsibilities – School](#_2._Roles_and).

The immunisation provider will collate the completed consent forms. They will follow up consent forms (including those students who have not returned a form or responded online) directly with parents/guardians using the contact details your school provided at the beginning of the year.

#### Step 10: Pre-plan vaccination days

Ensure facilities and resources for the day are booked and organised (see [Appendix B](#_Appendix_B:_Vaccination)). This includes room bookings, staffing, and the vaccination day timetable, which determines the order in which the students proceed to be vaccinated.

The vaccination day timetable is usually organised by class. This is best done with the participation of year-level coordinators and homeroom teachers, as they are aware of class sizes, timetables, and class commitments. The school is responsible for providing staff to supervise students pre and post vaccination. [Appendix C](#_Appendix_C:_Messages) provides tips on communicating with students and parents/guardians about immunisation.

#### Step 11: Facilitate vaccination days

The school has a responsibility to facilitate vaccination days and ensure students are always supervised. It is the key responsibility of the council immunisation provider to ensure medical eligibility, administration of vaccines and appropriate care post vaccination. For more detail, please see the section entitled [What to do on immunisation day](#_What_to_do).

#### Step 12: Communicate with your immunisation provider

It is important to notify your immunisation provider with any questions or concerns raised by parents/guardians, students, or staff; for example, concerns about vaccine side effects.

Common side effects following the administration of vaccines are usually mild and temporary (generally occurring in the first few days after vaccination). Any event felt to be adverse or significant following immunisation, regardless of whether you think the symptoms were related to the vaccine or not should be reported to the Victorian vaccine safety surveillance service -[SAEFVIC](https://www.safevac.org.au/Home/Info/VIC) <https://www.safevac.org.au/Home/Info/VIC>.

If there have been any significant issues or incidents identified on the vaccination day or following the administration of the vaccine, these will need to be reported as required by the Department of Education and Training policy to the Incident Support and Operations Centre on 1800 126 126. For further information regarding [reporting and managing incidents](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/reporting-and-managing-school-incidents-including-emergencies/policy) <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/reporting-and-managing-school-incidents-including-emergencies/policy> see the Department of Education and Training policy and advisory library.

#### Step 13: Continue to collect consent forms and update enrolment numbers

It is important schools forward any consent forms that are returned to school throughout the year to council and communicate to councils any fluctuations in student enrolment numbers. This ensures that each eligible student has the opportunity to receive free vaccination to protect against vaccine preventable diseases.

#### Step 14: End-of-cycle review and planning for next year

The school immunisation coordinator should take the opportunity at the end of the year to consider what went well, and what could be improved for the following year. The council will provide you with feedback about your consent form return rate and the percentage of students vaccinated.

#### Further information for schools

The Department of Health immunisation website provides a range of [Secondary school immunisation program - Resources for secondary schools and councils](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-adolescents/secondary-school) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program> to assist with delivery of the secondary school immunisation program:

* Secondary School Immunisation Program – A guide for schools.
* Secondary School Immunisation Program – School-based Immunisation checklist for Secondary School
* Sample of collection statement
* Secondary School Immunisation Program – Annual agreement between the local council immunisation provider and the secondary school.
* Secondary School Immunisation Program – Social Media pack 2024.
* School data extraction instructions for sharing information with councils.
* Order free [printed resources](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/immunisation-resources-order-form) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/immunisation-resources-order-form> to support the SSIP.

# **5. What to do on vaccination day**

# **Preparation for vaccination day**

#### Equipment availability

Ensure tables, chairs and privacy screens are available in the allocated room for immunisation providers to set up as necessary. Please refer to the vaccination area checklist in [Appendix B](#_Appendix_B:_Vaccination) to ensure you have all the equipment needed for set-up on vaccination day.

Meet and greet your immunisation provider
The immunisation provider team will arrive at the school at the agreed time and report to the front office or reception area. The immunisation provider will ensure that consent forms have been correctly completed and that the required number of vaccines are available.

The immunisation provider team will set up and prepare all the equipment before they start immunising.

# **Vaccination day process**

Designated school staff will escort eligible students to the vaccination waiting area according to the vaccination day timetable.

#### Student check-in

The students who have consent granted for vaccination will proceed to the vaccination area, where the Authorised Nurse Immuniser will complete a pre-vaccine checklist and ensure the student is eligible to receive the vaccine(s). If eligible, students will be administered the vaccine(s).

Students who have consent declined must not attend vaccine area.

#### Vaccination record

The immunisation provider will ensure that each student receives a written record of the vaccines they received to take home. The immunisation provider is also responsible for reporting all immunisation encounters to the [Australian Immunisation Register](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/what-immunisation-history-statement?context=22436).

Parents/guardians can check their child’s immunisation history statement on the Australian Immunisation Register using their MyGov account. If the student is over 14 years old, they can access their immunisation history statement using their own MyGov account or the Medicare mobile app.

#### Monitoring students after vaccination

After receiving a vaccine(s), students **must** be seated for a **minimum of 15 minutes** in an adjacent area, within proximity to the immunisation provider team. Students must be supervised in this area by a First Aid trained school staff member. It is important that any student who appears pale, unwell, or distressed is immediately reported to the immunisation provider team for closer monitoring. Parents/guardians must be notified if there are any incidents or adverse reactions following immunisation. All adverse reactions following immunisation should be reported to the Victorian vaccine safety surveillance service - [SAEFVIC](https://www.safevac.org.au/Home/Info/VIC) <https://www.safevac.org.au/Home/Info/VIC>.

If there have been any significant issues such as adverse reactions or other critical incidents, these will need to be reported as required by the Department of Education and Training policy on [reporting school incidents](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/reporting-and-managing-school-incidents-including-emergencies/policy). <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/reporting-and-managing-school-incidents-including-emergencies/policy>

#### Departure of the immunisation provider team

It is the responsibility of the immunisation provider to remain at the school until all students have completed the minimum 15-minute waiting period and arrangements have been made for any student who is unwell following vaccination.

# **Some common issues**

#### Students who feel anxious or unwell

Anxious students should be encouraged to present first for vaccination to avoid waiting. Alert your immunisation provider of any student who is looking or reporting feeling anxious or unwell. If a student is unwell, it is the responsibility of the immunisation provider to assess the student’s condition and determine their eligibility for vaccines.

#### If a student presents without consent

If a student presents for vaccination and wishes to receive vaccination, but has not previously returned a consent form, the immunisation provider may obtain verbal consent from the student’s parent or guardian via telephone. Immunisation providers implement different policies in relation to following up with students who have not returned a consent form prior to the day of vaccination. In some circumstances councils may accept mature minor consent on the day of vaccination. In the school setting this decision should be made in consultation with the school’s principal. For further information please see Department of Education and Training policy on [mature minor decision making](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/mature-minors-and-decision-making/policy). <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/mature-minors-and-decision-making/policy>

#### If a student attends but refuses to be vaccinated

The immunisation provider will make every effort to encourage eligible students without being forceful. If the student continues to refuse, a member of the immunisation provider team will contact the parent/guardian in one the following ways to discuss alternative options for vaccination:

* by phone with the student present
* following-up by phone, letter, or email to organise a catch-up vaccine appointment

#### Student absences

If a student is absent on the vaccination day, the school coordinator must return their completed consent form to the immunisation provider. It is the responsibility of the immunisation provider to follow up with the parent/guardian of students who are absent. The immunisation provider will contact the parent/guardian either by phone, letter, or email to offer a catch-up vaccination appointment.

#### End-of-cycle mop-up

To achieve maximum immunisation coverage, immunisation providers may offer ‘mop-up’ session for those students who have not completed their recommended immunisation schedule. This may include the scheduling of an additional vaccination day, the option for some students to receive catch-up vaccine with their peers in other classes, accessing a community immunisation session or other immunisation provider.

# **Appendix:**

### Appendix A: Eight tips for a successful school vaccine program

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ✔ | 1. Planning
 | Start planning at the beginning of the annual vaccine program planning cycle. Mark planned vaccination dates in the school calendar. |
| ✔ | 1. Preparation
 | Schedule your vaccination days and organise the vaccination area before the vaccination day. |
| ✔ | 1. Communication
 | Give the students and parent/guardian as much information as you can – this will inform them of the importance of immunisation. |
| ✔ | 1. Cooperation
 | Establish a good working relationship with the immunisation provider team and share information with them early in the year. |
| ✔ | 1. Teamwork
 | School vaccination works best when the school immunisation coordinator is supported by other staff members including the principal, teachers, and other school staff. Each of these staff members has an important role to play. |
| ✔ | 1. Follow up
 | The school should aim for a **100 per cent consent form response** and should put processes in place to achieve this.  |
| ✔ | 1. Promotion
 | Promote immunisation and encourage students and parents/guardians to return consent forms – this will result in higher vaccination coverage rates and improved health outcomes for young people. |
| ✔ | 1. Review
 | Evaluate the school-based program each year to improve for the following year. |

### Appendix B: Immunisation coordinator checklist

**Term 1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Has the following been completed?** | **Complete (yes/no/NA)** |
| **Review** [A guide for schools](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/resources-for-secondary-schools-ssip). These guidelines support your school to deliver a safe and successful SSIP  |  |
| **Liaise** at the commencement of term 1 with your local council immunisation provider to reconfirm immunisation dates for Year 7 and Year 10 students |  |
| **Sign**  [Annual agreement](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/resources-for-secondary-schools-ssip) between your secondary school with your immunisation provider at the commencement of term 1 each year |  |
| **Distribute** a [Collection Statement](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/resources-for-secondary-schools-ssip) to parents/guardians of all students in Year 7 and Year 10 in first week of term 1. |  |
| **Record** any objections from parents/guardians in response to the Collection Statement **by the 28 February each year** |  |
| **Transfer** contact details to your local council immunisation provider as soon as possible after census date, **28 February each year** |  |
| **Distribute hard copy or online (eg. through the CIRV portal) consent forms provided by your local council immunisation provider to all Year 7 and Year 10 students advising students/parents/guardians the date when completed consent cards must be returned or responded (if online)** |  |

**Term 1 or later**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Has the following been completed?** | **Complete (yes/no/NA)** |
| **Collate** all returned consent forms into class groups for your local council immunisation provider to collect and review prior to vaccination day |  |
| **Promote** the SSIP and the importance of adolescent vaccination to students and parents/guardians via school communication channels each term |  |

### Vaccination day checklist

**Physical Environment**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Does / will the immunisation area have:** | **Complete (yes/no)** |
| A quiet place for students to wait on the ground floor (away from stairs), suitable for all weather conditions, and where they can’t see the vaccinations being delivered? |  |
| Mobile phone reception or within easy reach of a landline phone? |  |
| Separate entry to and exit from the vaccination area? |  |
| A ‘checkpoint’ table where the immunisation provider can record student’s attendance and check their consent card is valid?  |  |
| Mobile screens for students’ privacy? |  |
| Availability of a separate space for the vaccination procedure that affords extra privacy to individual students being vaccinated if needed? |  |
| A separate space for students to sit and be observed for a minimum 15 minutes post vaccination that is not immediately visible to the vaccination area? |  |
| Is there adequate lighting, heating/cooling; power points available? |  |
| Handwashing/sanitising facilities within easy reach? |  |

**Logistics**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Does / will the immunisation area have:** | **Complete (yes/no)** |
| Gym mats for students to lie down on if they feel faint during or following vaccination? |  |
| Provision of water/cups for students if they feel faint during or following vaccination? |  |
| Enough tables and chairs (for administration, the nurse immunisers and the students being vaccinated)? |  |

**Staffing Requirements**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Does / will the immunisation area have:** | **Complete (yes/no)** |
| School staff to ensure students present to vaccination area in a timely manner  |  |
| Adequate school staff to supervise the students before vaccination and for a minimum of 15 minutes immediately following vaccination? |  |
| Integration aides accompanying students with special needs? |  |

### Appendix C: Messages for communicating with parents or guardians and students

#### Messages for communicating with parents or guardians

Immunisation is one of the most significant public health interventions in our community. To ensure your child receives the best protection from vaccine preventable diseases make sure your child is up to date with their vaccines provided by the [National Immunisation Program](https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation-throughout-life/national-immunisation-program-schedule) <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation-throughout-life/national-immunisation-program-schedule>.

* Promotional efforts can be strengthened through the provision of resources listed on [Secondary school immunisation program - Resources for secondary schools and councils](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program) webpage <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program>. The website contains resources targeted towards specific groups of students, such as students with disability, students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background and a social media pack.
* All consent forms must be returned or responded to. You need to either consent to your child receiving the vaccination by marking ‘YES’ on the consent form or refuse by marking ‘NO’ on the consent form.
* The consent form must be returned by [provide a specific date].
* On vaccination day your child should wear loose and comfortable clothing, for example, their sports uniform (if this appropriate and permitted by your school).
* Let the school know as soon as possible if your child is going to be absent on vaccination day.
* Parents/guardians are not required to attend with their children on vaccination day.
* If your child misses a vaccination day for any reason, please contact the immunisation provider to organise a catch-up vaccination [provide a telephone number].
* If you have any questions or concerns you should contact your school’s nominated immunisation coordinator [provide telephone number] or the local council’s immunisation provider [provide telephone number].

#### Messages for communicating with students

* Yes, needles hurt – but only for a second! The benefits far outweigh a little discomfort.
* Make sure you eat breakfast on vaccination day morning.
* Bring an extra snack and drink with you on vaccination day to avoid feeling faint or dehydrated.
* Wear loose and comfortable clothing on vaccination day, for example, your sports uniform (if this appropriate and permitted by your school).
* Leave books and bags in the classroom.
* Bring a buddy if you need support.
* If you are feeling anxious, let us know – you can go in first and get it over and done with.

### Appendix D: Resources

#### Where to find out more about the secondary school immunisation program

**Secondary School Immunisation program**

Information including resources is available on the [Secondary school immunisation program](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program)  page <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/secondary-school-immunisation-program>.

**Translated Resources**

Translated immunisation resources are available at the referenced Health Translations website below.

* For translated resources for parents/guardians of year 10 students, resources are available on the [Health Translations webpage](https://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/resources/adolescent-meningococcal-acwy-vaccine) <https://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/resources/adolescent-meningococcal-acwy-vaccine>.

Alternatively, please contact your local council for any additional resources. Additional support may be provided by contacting the national Translating and Interpreting Service at 131 450.

**Australian Immunisation Register**

Information on how to obtain an Immunisation History Statement can be accessed on the [Services Australia](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register/what-immunisation-history-statement) website <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register>

**Department of Education**

Victoria’s Department of Education policy in relation to school-age children and immunisation is available on their [website](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/immunisation/policy) <<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/immunisation/policy>>.

### Acknowledgements

The *Secondary school immunisation program: a guide for schools* was originally developed by a regional working group, consisting of Barwon South West and Grampians, as part of the Victorian Department of Health Regional Immunisation Initiatives.

The Department of Health Immunisation Unit has since revised and updated the *Secondary school immunisation: a guide for schools* in January 2024.

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