CatholicCare
DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY

Children's Services

Policy Development and Review

Policy & Procedures

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What do we believe?

At CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay, we are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and hold this at the centre of our decision making and practice. We believe in the principle of paramountcy of the safety of children. This means that the safety, wellbeing, and the best interests of the child are the primary consideration in all decisions, actions, and practices. Where there is a conflict between the interests of a child and those of adults or the organisation, the child's safety and wellbeing will always come first.

We believe that effective policies and procedures are developed through collaboration, consultation and a commitment to continuous improvement. We value the knowledge, experiences and perspectives of our educators, children, families, schools and community and recognise that their feedback helps ensure our policies reflect the needs of our services and the children and families we support. We believe everyone should have a meaningful opportunity to contribute, ask questions and provide feedback, and that children's voices should be heard when changes directly affect their experiences. We believe that open communication, shared leadership and reflective practice strengthen our approach to quality and compliance.

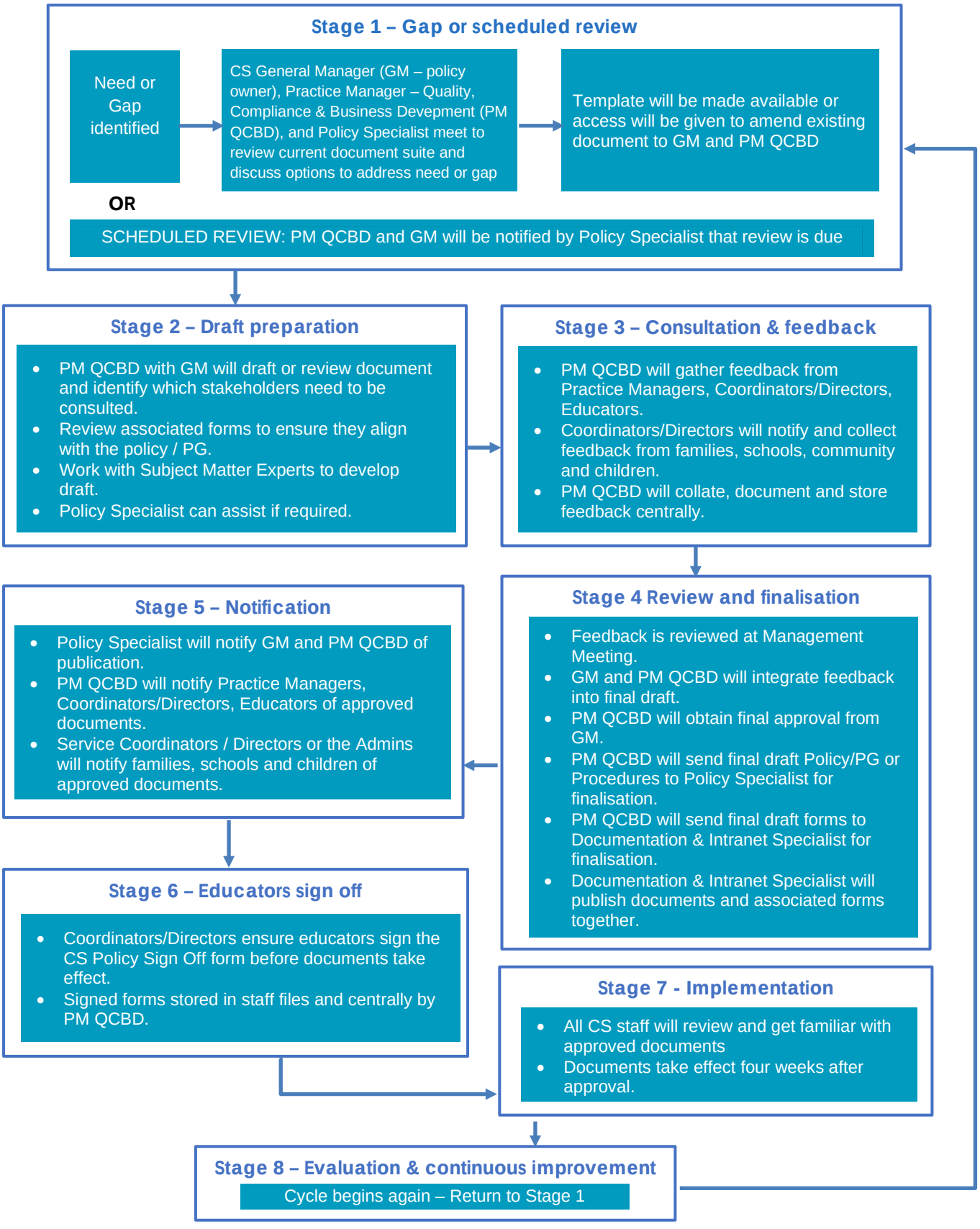
What are we going to do?

We commit to ensuring our policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated when changes, gaps or new requirements are identified. We will provide meaningful opportunities for educators, children, families, schools and community stakeholders to review relevant documents and share their feedback through appropriate consultation methods.

Feedback will be carefully considered, documented and used to inform changes before policies are finalised and implemented. We will clearly communicate changes, provide educators with opportunities to ask questions and seek clarification, and support everyone to understand what the changes mean for their practice and daily experiences. We will continue to evaluate our approach and use feedback and reflection to support ongoing improvement across Children's Services.

How will it be done?

Policy development and review cycle overview



1. Gap or scheduled review

Children's Services documents (whether a policy, practice guideline, procedure, or form) are reviewed on a scheduled cycle of either one year or two years. The Policy Specialist will ensure the Children's Services General Manager (GM – policy owner) and Practice Manager–Quality, Compliance & Business Development (PM QCBD) are informed of current policies and procedures due for review via monthly policy reminders. Associated forms are reviewed at the same time as the policy, practice guideline or procedure.

Children's Services documents are also reviewed where a gap or need is identified, or in response to legislative changes or sector requirements. The GM and PM QCBD are responsible for monitoring these updates. Where a need or gap is identified, The GM and PM QCBD will meet with the Policy Specialist to review the current document suite to and discussing options to address it.

2. Draft preparation

The GM and the PM QCBD are responsible for ensuring that the new content aligns with the overall policy framework and avoids duplication or contradiction with existing documents. It is always recommended to incorporate any new content into an existing document. When this is not possible the GM and PM QCBD will be responsible for drafting a new document using the approved templates on IsidoreNet (CS Policy Template, Practice Guideline Template or Policy and Procedure Template, with the word 'DRAFT' as a watermark.

When making changes to existing Children's Services documents, the 'track changes' functionality must be enabled to easily identify what has been updated.

The GM and the PM QCBD are responsible for drafting new Children's Services documents. New documents should be prepared on approved templates from IsidoreNet and include the word 'DRAFT' as a watermark. Please refer to the Policy Template, Practice Guidelines Template and Policy and Procedure Template. The Policy Specialist can provide guidance in scoping the initial draft if assistance is required.

The GM and the PM QCBD are also responsible for drafting new forms. New forms should be drafted using Forms Template available on IsidoreNet which contains the approved styling. For advice or assistance with CatholicCare styling or formatting staff can contact the Documentation & Intranet Specialist or Policy Specialist.

Associated forms review

When a policy, practice guideline or procedure is reviewed, the PM QCBD and PMs must also review its associated forms to make sure they still align. This includes:

- Checking forms listed under Related documents – Forms and any other forms that refer to the document.
- Updating terminology, process steps and links with tracked changes enabled, or confirming that no changes are required.
- Submitting updated forms with the policy, practice guideline or procedure so they are approved together.

The PM QCBD will confirm associated forms have been reviewed when providing the final draft. The Documentation & Intranet Specialist will publish updated forms at the same time as the related document.

3. Consultation and feedback

Primary consultation occurs with staff who implement policies and procedures as part of their daily practice. Service Coordinators/Directors, delegated person, are responsible for consulting and collecting feedback from families, schools, children and community. This helps stakeholders understand why documents are being reviewed and how their feedback is reflected.

Consultation with internal and external stakeholders occurs as follows:

Stakeholder	Consultation pathway	Consultation tools	Feedback mechanisms	Recording and storage of feedback
Practice Managers, Coordinators/Directors and Educators	• The PM QCBD will ensure Practice Managers have access to relevant documents and appropriate resources to support document review. • Practice Managers will review the documents and distribute them to all Service Coordinators and Directors. • Service Coordinators/Directors will review and distribute the documents to all educators. • Educators will review the documents in relation to practice application and compliance.	• Email	• Email correspondence • Cluster or leadership meetings • Scenario-based discussions using real OSHC and ELC contexts • Anonymous feedback via online survey forms	• The PM QCBD is responsible for collating all consultation feedback in a centralised folder on IsidoreShare and maintaining a consultation register in spreadsheet format that records: o The consultation period o The policy or procedure name o The consulted group(s)
Families	• Families are provided with a minimum two-week consultation period. • Service Coordinators/Directors will ensure families have access to relevant documents and appropriate resources to support meaningful consultation.	• Monthly newsletters • Service communication platforms • Emails	• Email correspondence • Anonymous feedback via online survey forms	
Schools (if applicable)	• Service Coordinators/Directors will ensure schools have access to relevant documents and appropriate resources to support meaningful consultation.	• Email	• Email • Anonymous feedback via online survey forms	
Children	• Service Coordinators/Directors or their delegates will ensure children are consulted on Children's Services document changes that affect them.	• Group time • Conversations • Programming	• Service Coordinators/Directors report feedback through anonymous online survey forms	

4. Review and finalisation

The PM QCBD is responsible for sharing consultation feedback with the management team and facilitating discussion of key findings at Management Meetings.

The PM QCBD is responsible for incorporating consultation feedback into the document(s), making any required amendments, and obtaining final approval from the GM.

The PM QCBD will send final draft to the Policy Specialist and associated forms to Documentation & Intranet Specialist.

The Policy Specialist will review the format and style of the document(s), accept all the changes, and update document IDs and review dates.

The Documentation & Intranet Specialist will publish the document(s) and associated forms on the intranet (IsidoreNet) at the same time.

5. Notification

Once published, the finalised document(s) are communicated to relevant parties.

Notification pathway

- Policy Specialist will notify the GM and PM QCBD of publication.
- PM QCBD will notify Practice Managers, Coordinators/Directors, and Educators of published documents.
- Service Coordinators/Directors or the Admins will notify families, schools and children of published documents.

Notification Tools

- Email or internal communication platforms
- Staff meetings or team briefings
- Induction and refresher training where required
- Group time and conversations.

Communication includes:

- Policy/procedure name
- Summary of changes or key expectations (including any updated forms)
- Implementation date
- Where the policy/procedure can be accessed
- Ensuring children are informed about policy changes and how these affect their daily experiences.

6. Educator acknowledgement and sign off

Service Coordinators/Directors are responsible for ensuring Educators have understood, and signed the Children's Services Sign Off form, available at the service, prior to the document(s) coming into effect.

To ensure the document(s) are understood and followed in practice, educators are allowed time to ask questions, and to seek clarification and support prior to implementation (under Regulation 170 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations). This can be done through:

- Conversations with Service Coordinators.
- Meetings.
- Emailing Practice Manager.

The Children's Services Policy Sign Off form is:

- Collected by Service Coordinators/Directors and stored in the staff files of each educator.
- Stored in a digital from centrally by PM QCBD.

7. Implementation

All new and revised document and new documents take effect four weeks after approval date to allow staff and external stakeholders time to make any necessary changes.

All staff and external stakeholders are responsible for correctly implementing new policies, practice guidelines, procedures, and forms.

8. Evaluation and continuous improvement

This Children Services policy development and review procedure is aligned with the *Continuous Improvement Practice Guideline* and *Continuous Improvement Policy*, and supports reflective practice shared leadership, accordance with the *National Quality Framework*.

Who is responsible?

Roles	Responsibilities
Approved Provider	• Provide overall oversight of the policy development and review process. • Ensure policies and procedures align with the organisation's policy framework and legislative and sector requirements. • Review and approve new and revised policies and procedures. • Consider feedback and recommendations provided through the consultation process. • Support a culture of shared leadership, consultation and continuous improvement.
Practice Manager	• Monitor legislation, regulatory requirements, sector changes and identified gaps that may require a policy review. • Coordinate the policy development and review process. • Ensure associated forms are reviewed and updated at the same time as the related policy, practice guideline or procedure. • Support Practice Managers and services to access relevant documents and resources.

Roles	Responsibilities
	• Coordinate consultation with relevant stakeholders and ensure feedback is collected. • Collate and maintain consultation feedback and the consultation register. • Incorporate relevant feedback into policy documents. • Facilitate discussion of key consultation findings with the management team. • Obtain final approval from the Approved Provider. • Communicate approved policy changes to relevant Practice Managers, Coordinators, Directors and educators.
Nominated Supervisor	• Review policies and procedures and consider how they apply to service practice. • Share documents with educators and facilitate meaningful consultation. • Consult with children, families, schools and community where changes affect them. • Encourage educators and stakeholders to provide feedback and ask questions. • Communicate approved policy changes to relevant stakeholders. • Ensure educators understand and acknowledge relevant policies before implementation. • Provide opportunities for educators to seek clarification and support. • Ensure policies and procedures are implemented consistently within the service.
Educators	• Review policies and procedures relevant to their role and practice. • Consider how policy requirements apply to their daily practice. • Participate in consultation and provide constructive feedback. • Ask questions and seek clarification where they do not understand a requirement. • Complete required acknowledgement and sign off processes. • Implement policies and procedures consistently in their practice. • Contribute to ongoing reflection and continuous improvement.
Parents / Guardians	• Participate in consultation when policies and procedures are under review. • Review relevant information provided by the service and provide feedback within the consultation period. • Share their perspectives, experiences and suggestions about how policies may affect children and families. • Ask questions or seek clarification about proposed changes. • Work collaboratively with the service to support the effective implementation of policies and procedures.

National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service that is child safe.

Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations	
168	Services must have policies and procedures covering prescribed matters, including governance and management.
170	Policies and procedures must be followed.
172	Parents must be notified at least 14 days before certain policy changes that may significantly affect education and care or their ability to use the service

Related documents

CatholicCare policy

- *Policy Development and Review Policy*

Forms and templates

- *Children's Services Policy Sign Off Form*
- *Forms Template*
- *Policy Template*
- *Policy and Procedure Template*
- *Practice Guidelines Template*

Resources

Internal

- *CatholicCare Style Guidelines*

External

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *National Quality Framework*
- *National Quality Standard (NQS)*

Glossary

ACECQA – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.

Child Paramountcy

Child paramountcy refers to the obligation to ensure that the best interests, safety, and wellbeing of children are paramount above all other considerations. All decisions, practices, and actions must prioritise the protection and wellbeing of children, particularly where competing interests exist.

ELC

All centre-based services for children aged 0-5 years including Long Day Care and Preschool services.

OSHC

Out of School Hours Care

Practice Manager

A practice manager oversees and supports a cluster of services within a local area. They work with the Nominated supervisor to ensure services operate safely, meet legal and quality requirements, and follow organisational policies. They do not work directly with children day to day.

Risk Assessment

A systematic process of evaluating the potential likelihood and consequences of risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.

Sign off and review

This document remains valid until it is either superseded by a new version or officially revoked.

CatholicCare values your input and welcomes feedback on this document. Your suggestions help us improve and better support your work. Please send any feedback to policy.updates@catholiccaredbb.org.au.

Version	Authorised by	Approved date	Review cycle	Review due
1.0	General Manager Children's Services	11 February 2026	1 year	January 2028

Revision history

Version	Description	Author	Amendment date
1.0	Policy and Procedure	Practice Manager – Quality, Compliance & Business Development	11 February 2026
1.1	Added reference to the Children's Services Policy Sign Off form	Practice Manager – Quality, Compliance & Business Development	4 August 2026
1.2	Added procedures on Associated forms review and reflected in the review cycle	Practice Manager – Quality, Compliance & Business Development / Projects and Policy Officer	21 September 2026