



Queensland Catholic Education Commission

Level 1, 143 Edward Street, Brisbane Qld 4000
GPO Box 2441, Brisbane Qld 4001
Ph +61 7 3336 9306 Fax +61 7 3229 0907
email: director@qcec.catholic.edu.au

www.qcec.catholic.edu.au

ABN: 57 525 935 419

Public Health (Exclusion of Unvaccinated Children from Child Care) Amendment Bill 2013

QCEC Submission, July 2013

Introduction

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) makes the following submission on the Public Health (Exclusion of Unvaccinated Children from Child Care) Amendment Bill 2013 to the Health and Community Services Committee to enable it to examine and to report to the Legislative Assembly by 27 September 2013.

QCEC as an approved Central Governing Body in Queensland, distributes Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme (QKFS) funding to four delegated Catholic agencies for the provision of kindergarten services. It is on behalf of the four delegated agencies this submission is made – Cairns Early Learning and Care (Cairns diocese), St Mary MacKillop Kindergartens (Townsville diocese), Early Learning and Care (Rockhampton diocese) and Centacare Child Care Services (Archdiocese of Brisbane) and the twenty kindergarten services that are managed under the auspices of the above agencies.

Comments on the Bill

QCEC supports the proposed amendment to the Public Health Act 2005 to refuse an enrolment or exclude a child from a particular activity if a child is not fully immunised. The rationale for supporting the amendment is made in the interest of the health of all children enrolled in the service and for the common good of all. Child care providers are obligated to implement policies, practices and procedures that promote the health and wellbeing of all children which means no child attending the service is at unnecessary risk.

Clause 5

Section 160A Exclusion actions: QCEC supports that a person in charge of an education and care service (kindergartens) may take exclusion action.

Section 160B Notice of proposed exclusion action: QCEC supports that written notice must be given to parents before any proposed action can be taken.

Section 160C Exclusion action to be taken: QCEC supports the circumstances under which an exclusion may be taken.

Recommendations

- Within the Amendment Bill itself explicitly define an 'education and care service' and specify the settings to which the Bill would refer, e.g. Family Day Care because unless the types of services are directly and explicitly specified in legislation it can be open to misinterpretation over time.
- Exclusion from the Bill should also include School Age Services if the changes do not apply to primary and secondary schools.
- Add the word 'caregiver' to the role of parent wherever it is noted in the Bill, i.e. parent/caregiver.