**Children’s participation and decision-making policy**

**Rationale**

Toowoomba Catholic Kindergarten and Care services (TCKC) are committed to ensuring that children develop a sense of agency through making and influencing decisions that may affect their world. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is reflected in this commitment as TCKC encourages children, staff and families to be collaborators and shared decision makers in the programs offered at our services.

**Legislative references**

Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010 (Qld)

Education and Care Service National Regulation 2011

**Policy statement**

TCKC staff will engage children, appropriate to their age and stage, in decision making related to their participation in and the development of the service’s program.

**Consequences**

1. TCKC staff will
   1. consult with children about the environment and program in which they participate
   2. use different communication strategies to support child-initiated activities and programs
   3. engage children in decision making processes, including shared decision making
   4. actively seek and discuss children’s views
   5. empower children to access and learn from their own life experiences as well as those of their peers and adults around them
   6. be active listeners, observers, scribes and sounding boards for children
   7. respect the age and stage of the children during decision making.
2. Educators will use different strategies to encourage participation and decision making including
   1. child initiated, shared decision making with adults
   2. child initiated and directed decision making with adults providing a supportive role
   3. adult initiated shared decision making with children
   4. consulting children about how their input will be used and advising them of the outcomes of the decisions made
   5. children having a voice in their level of participation including
      1. areas of interest they would like to explore
      2. where and how they would like to play, with others, or alone
      3. what they would like to use when they play
      4. the adults with whom they feel comfortable and secure
      5. how they prefer to sleep or rest.

**Effective date**

1/01/2020

**Review date**

1/01/2023