

POLICY:10.1 Governance and Management

Procedure: 10.2 Quality Improvement

The National Quality Framework has established a national approach to quality improvement in early childhood and school-age education and care services.

The National Quality Standard sets a national benchmark for the quality of education and care services. The Service commits to working towards meeting and exceeding the standard.

The Service promotes quality improvement through:

- continuous self-assessment against the National Quality Standard and the relevant requirements of the National Law and Regulations
- development and implementation of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

10.2.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the Service's **10.1 Governance and Management** and will assist the Approved Provider, management, staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators and administrative staff members,) Educators, Educator Assistants and parents to implement the policy. The procedure covers:

[10.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[10.2.3 Developing and Implementing QIP](#)

[10.2.4 Undertake Continuous Self Assessment](#)

[10.2.5 Continuous Improvement](#)

10.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The Approved Provider will ensure:

- the Service has a rigorous self-assessment and quality improvement planning process in place that informs continuous improvement and includes all stakeholder's perspectives
- the Service has a documented Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) in place that identifies the strengths and areas of development
- the Service uses resources and expertise to enable quality improvement

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure the Service's QIP is relevant and promotes improvement
- have collaborative processes in place that involve, wherever possible, children, families, Educators, all staff members, management and other interested parties.

- support staff, Educators, families and children's involvement in examining current programs and practices across the Service against the National Quality Standard and National Regulations
- work with others to define strengths - what is being done well?
- identify areas of development - what areas might need to be improved?
- set goals that will enhance the quality of staff, children's and families' experience within the Service
- incorporate outcomes in the Service's Quality QIP - see below Developing and Implementing the QIP
- ensure the QIP is:
 - o reviewed regularly
 - o updated at least once a year
 - o available on request by the Regulatory Authority or parents of a child enrolled or looking to enrol at the Service
 - o available at the Office
 - o accessible to each Educator and that they continue to undertake their continuous improvement process.

Staff and Educators will:

- actively undertake and participate in self-assessment to evaluate current practice against the requirements of the National Law and the National Regulations, as well as against the guidance provided in the National Quality Standard and the approved learning framework
- commit to an ongoing process of continuous improvement and planning to strengthen Service provision and aspire to quality outcomes for children
- participate in identifying areas of development as well as their strengths
- facilitate opportunities and encourage both families and children to determine how the Service and their Educators' practice meets their needs
- encourages families to provide feedback on areas needing improvement.

Families will:

- take an active role in providing feedback on their experience of the current practices across the Service
- openly communicate with their Educator regarding any areas of development they have identified as well as strengths they have noticed about the Educator's program and practice.

10.2.3 Developing and Implementing a QIP

The following process is used by the Service to develop and implement a Quality Improvement Plan:

- self-assessment: identifying strengths and improvements needed
- planning improvements and including them in the QIP
- implementing improvements
- reviewing progress

Identify the strengths and improvements needed

During the self-assessment process, the Service will note aspects that are being managed very well (strengths) and identify areas where improvements could be made.

Strengths

In the QIP, record the strengths that the Service identified during self-assessment. The strengths highlight what is agreed upon by children, families, Educators, staff and management as areas of practice that are working well.

Recording strengths also provides a clear picture to the Regulatory Authority of the practices that the Service is proud of when the QIP is submitted before the assessment and rating visit.

Areas for improvement

Decide which of these improvements:

- need to be dealt with immediately (anything that has been identified as not meeting the National Law and the National Regulations must be addressed as a priority)
- are incorporated into the QIP now
- are a lower priority and can be incorporated into a later version of the QIP (keep a register of these to reflect on later so they are not lost).

It is not necessary to include improvements for every quality area, as long as each of them has been reviewed during the self-assessment process. For example, the Service may have identified several issues in one quality area and none in another.

Plan improvements and include in QIP

The Service will plan how to achieve the improvements by adding the following detail in the QIP:

- o write a goal for each of the improvements that the Service wants to achieve
- o note which element or standard of the National Quality Standard it is related to
- o prioritise whether the goal is a low, medium or high priority
- o set out the steps or strategies that will be used to achieve the goal

- note how success will be measured (the indicators/outcomes the Service will see if the goal has been achieved)
- set a target date for achieving each goal (the date needs to be specific because the aim is to reach the goal).

Implement improvements

To achieve the Service's goals and stay focused on the QIP, delegate responsibility for who will champion each strategy.

Review progress

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- monitor the target dates for achieving the goals
- schedule reviews of the QIP at staff meetings so that everyone stays focused on what needs to be completed and so that progress can be documented regularly in the QIP
- if it has not been possible to achieve a goal by the anticipated date, document the progress made so far and then set some new strategies and a new target date. The goal may need to be rewritten so that it is realistic and achievable
- once achieved, share the outcome with stakeholders.

10.2.4 Undertake Continuous Self-Assessment

The Nominated Supervisor will lead other staff and Educators in the self-assessment process using the Guide to the National Quality Framework - [Section 3 - National Quality Standard and Assessment and Rating](#) to foster critical reflection and honest self-assessment. The following are a range of ways to support the self-assessment process:

- circulate the summary table of quality areas, standards and elements so that each Educator and staff member know exactly what is expected of them under the National Quality Standard
- ask each Educator and staff member to assess whether their practice would meet all the elements and, if it would not, identify any improvements needed

facilitate professional conversations, unpacking one standard at a time and ask Educators and staff members to identify examples of how they or the Service are meeting it; continue this process across the other six quality areas. This approach has been described as 'eating the elephant one bite at a time'

- email Educators and staff members asking them to reflect on a particular element and to provide examples of how their practice or the Service meets the National Quality Standard. Over time, all elements are covered

- before staff meetings, add reflective questions from the guide to meeting agendas so that staff members have time to consider them
- allocate different elements from the guide to individual staff members. Ask the staff member to read the examples of what the Assessor may observe, discuss and sight, and determine whether or not improvements are needed within the Service. Findings are then shared and presented at a staff meeting
- seek children's views by talking with the children about what they like about coming to the Service (their Educator's residence or any event or play session being offered), what they don't like and what they would like changed. Invite the children to draw or write their ideas at each Educator's residence. Gather these up and make a collage and invite the families to contribute suggestions and comments
- ask families for specific feedback about aspects of practice – eg. via email, via a survey, on large posters, on clipboards placed in the foyer and through conversations.

Staff and Educators will use [Section 3 - National Quality Standard and Assessment and Rating](#) to:

- check that they are meeting the requirements of the National Law and National Regulations within each quality area
- evaluate current practices against each of the standards and elements of every quality area
- recognise and note areas of practice that they see as strengths
- note which policies, practices and procedures need to be established or improved
- engage in deeper thinking about practice (by discussing the list of reflective questions provided in the guide under each standard) with colleagues
- recognise the links to the EYLF and MTOP by reading the related quotes that are included under each of the elements in the guide
- review examples of what the Assessor (authorised officer) may observe, discuss, and sight.

10.2.5 Continuous Improvement

The Service encourages a focus on continuous quality improvement through a cycle of review that includes:

- assessing the Service's practice to review quality improvements that may be needed
- implementing those improvements
- reviewing whether further improvements are necessary.

Self-assessment is not over once the regulations and the standards and elements of the National Quality Standard have been reviewed for the first time. The process is a continual one so that all aspects of practice are critically reflected upon, even areas that have been previously recognised as strengths.

Practice can be affected when:

- new families enrol their children
- new Educators join the Service
- new ideas and thinking arise from professional learning
- changes are made to requirements or guidelines.

Coordinators and the Educational Leader will:

- work with Educators to support their capacity to critically reflect and self-assess their practice
- provide feedback on what they notice about the Educator's practice, strengths and areas of development/improvement
- support the development of each Educator's improvement process, including identifying professional development needs
- reflect on each Educator's practice as part of their own self-assessment to consider what they need to do to assist Educators in their journey towards meeting each quality area
- seek feedback from other staff and Educators on their practices, strengths and areas of development.

Educators will:

- reflect on their practice using the process of self-assessment and continuous improvement
- work with Coordinators and Educational Leader to identify strategies for quality improvement
- continue to review and reflect on improvements
- commit to a continual process of self-assessment and quality improvement recognising this is a continuous cycle of reflection.

Review

	Date	Details
Revision 00	07/2015	Original Policy Issued
Revision 01	12/2016	Reviewed
Revision 02	08/2017	Reviewed
Revision 03	11/2020	Reviewed and separated from Policy

Related Documents

Policies

10.1 Governance and Management

Forms

Service Quality Improvement Plan
Coordinator Quality Improvement Plan
Educator Quality Improvement Plan

Reference

Refer to 10.1 Governance and Management Policy