

# Grievance and Conflict

## Resolution Procedure

### National Quality Standard

6	Collaborative partnerships with Families and Community
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### National Regulations

157	Access for parents
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### Policy Objective

For families of every child to have an avenue for comment or complaint about all aspects of the preschool. For families to be able to comment on any action or decision that has consequences for themselves or their children.

For all staff to deal with complaints in a positive manner.

### Rationale

For families to have confidence in the quality of care provided by the preschool, it is important that they are able to influence the nature of the service. Everyone using a child care service has a right to comment or complain about or appeal any action or decision of a service provider that has an impact on the service provided for their child. A complaint mechanism is a formal recognition and protection of a consumer right.

### Who is affected by this Policy?

- \* Management
- \* Educators
- \* Children
- \* Families

### Strategies and Practices

#### All families will be encouraged to:

- \* Participate in the Quality Improvement Plan and assessment procedures.
- \* Give input to the improvement of the centre through assessment meetings.
- \* Make comment through assessment and quality improvement surveys.
- \* Families will be informed of their right to complain, make comment or suggestions.
- \* Any person other than a parent may initiate a complaint on behalf of that parent.

**Families may express complaints, make comment or suggestions by:**

- a) Face to face contact with the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor who will give the option to talk privately if desired.
- b) Writing details in letter form and handing to staff member and identifying themselves as the complainant.
- c) Writing details in letter form, identifying themselves as the complainant, and placing in fee/suggestion box.
- d) Writing details in letter form, remaining anonymous and placing in fee box.

If still unsatisfied they can contact the Preschool's Approved Provider in this case also the Nominated Supervisor.

If still unsatisfied, they are encouraged to contact the Department of Education and Community Services.

If concerned about fees, complaints may be expressed to the Department of Education and Communities at [eced@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:eced@det.nsw.edu.au), or toll free on 1800619113.

Once the centre receives a complaint to the Approved Provider about the conduct of the service, the Approved Provider will:

- \* Give written notice of the complaint to the Department of Education and Communities.
- \* Give written notice to the Department of Community Services of any action taken in response to the complaint as soon as reasonably practicable after the action is taken.

**All complaints will be taken seriously.**

All complaints will primarily focus on children and families with a view to resolving the complaint to their satisfaction wherever possible.

Complaints will be handled in a fair and equitable manner; giving families the respect they deserve without bias and without attempt to unbalance the equality between staff and family.

Staff handling the problem will focus on the problem, rather than the person who makes the complaint, in a positive manner.

Staff will work with families to solve as many complaints as possible.

All complaints will be treated confidentially.

All families will be assured that no family member or child will suffer retribution or discrimination because of the complaint.

**Complaints will be dealt with promptly.**

The investigation of the complaint will wherever possible be conducted by a person within the organisation, who was not involved in the matter which led to the complaint in order to help ensure an unbiased investigation.

The complainant will be kept informed of progress regarding the resolution of their complaint.

Families will have the outcome of the complaint and the reason for it, provided to them in a clear and unambiguous manner.

The rights of staff members must be protected and all staff involvement in the complaints system based on the principles of natural justice. Staff must have the right to be represented and the applicable award conditions must be considered.

If the complaint is against a member of staff, families should be informed of that staff member's response.

Staff members will be sufficiently trained to understand the positive ethics connected with the complaint system and the benefits of encouraging family input.

Staff will be trained and encouraged to identify complaints at the earliest opportunity and given the opportunity to develop skills which allow them to resolve complaints informally if it is within their power to do so.

A register of complaints will be kept of both formal and informal complaints to enable review and remedial action if warranted.

## **References**

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018

## **Resources**

*Australian Human Rights Commission:* <http://www.hreoc.gov.au>

*Early Childhood Australia:* <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/>

*Privacy Act:* <http://www.privacy.gov.au/law/act>

*The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority:* <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

## **Review**

**Last Reviewed:** July 2018

**Date for Next Review:** July 2019