

1.11 Grievance and Complaints

Background

Feedback from families, educators, staff and the wider community is fundamental in creating a Service that meets regulations, meets the needs of enrolled children and their families, and continues to improve the quality of education and care it provides to children.

It is inevitable that feedback will include differing opinions, occasionally resulting in complaints.

Policy statement

This Policy details the Service's procedures for receiving and managing informal and formal complaints. Parents and staff therefore can lodge a legitimate grievance in the knowledge that it will be managed diligently and confidentially.

Strategies and practices

- The services procedure for airing grievance / complaints are displayed in the foyer also forms are available in the foyer to be submitted. QA 6.1.1, 7.3.4. 7.3.5
- Details of the Service's email address and telephone, the email address of the Approved Provider, and the full contact details of the Regulatory Authority and also displayed in the entrance of the Service. QA 7.1.1
- The Service prioritises open, respectful and confidential exchange of information between the Service and its families. Parents are provided with many avenues for verbal and written communication about the Service's operations. Parents are informed when any of their feedback has led to improvements in the way the Service operates. Refer to the Service's *Interacting with Families Policy*. QA 6.1.3, 7.1.2
- The Nominated Supervisor models respect and a problem-solving approach to the receipt of grievances and complaints, and engenders this across the Service. QA 4.2.1
- Educators and staff receive information on ways to receive parents' concerns/complaints and to value the opportunity this feedback affords the Service for quality improvement. QA 6.1.2, 7.1.3
- Staff/educators, students and volunteers are informed of the Service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* before commencing at the Service and are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement to strictly adhere to that Policy. QA 7.1.1
- At all times the parents' right to air a grievance will be respected and no discrimination will be applied to either the family or child/ren as the result of the grievance. QA 7.3.4
- Parents are encouraged to raise informally with the child's primary educator or the Nominated Supervisor any concerns they have about the daily care of their child. QA 7.3.4
- Formal complaints can be raised verbally with the Nominated Supervisor who will document the complaint clearly and objectively on the Service's Grievance and Complaint Form. If the grievance is about the Nominated Supervisor, the matter can be directed to the Approved Provider. QA 7.3.4

- The Service maintains a register of written complaints and actions taken in response through its Grievance and Complaint Register. The register is reviewed regularly (e.g. nature, recurrence, outcome) to determine if the actions taken are consistent with the Service's Quality Improvement Plan and if changes to the Service's Policies are required. Each review is documented on the Grievance and Complaint Analysis Sheet. QA 7.3.4

Procedure for formal written complaint

- Complaints are to be submitted in writing using the Service's Grievance and Complaint Form. Information requested on the form includes the:
 - Name of the person making the complaint
 - Details of the complaint
 - Details of any witnesses. QA 7.3.4
- The complaint will be dealt with in the strictest confidence. The Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider or delegated staff member involved in investigating the complaint will ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to be notified in order to deal with the complaint. If information specific to the complaint needs to be disclosed to others during its resolution, the complainant will be informed prior to this occurring. QA 7.3.1, 7.3.4
- The complaint will be entered into the Service's Grievance and Complaint Register. QA 7.3.4
- The Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider will investigate the complaint in an equitable, transparent and fair manner, and document the findings. Investigations involve consulting with the relevant stakeholders (including any person who may be the subject of the complaint) and reviewing documentation such as attendance records, accident reports and the Service's Policies. QA 7.3.4
- Actions to address the complaint will be determined, and the complainant notified. QA 7.3.4
- Should the complaint made to the Service concern a breach of regulations, the Regulatory Authority will be notified within 24 hours of the complaint being lodged. QA 7.3.3.
- When an issue cannot be resolved at the Service, the complainant can contact the Office of Early Childhood Education and Care. QA 7.3.3
- The same processes as those set out above apply to educators and staff in submitting formal complaints about any aspect of the Service's operations. However, staff grievances are dealt with under its Staff Grievance and Complaint processes. QA 4.2.1, 7.3.4

Responsibilities of parents

- To raise issues and concerns in a timely manner using the processes outlined in this Policy.

Links to other policies

- Educators Professional and Ethics Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy

- Policy and Procedures Review Policy

Sources, further reading and useful websites

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority – <http://www.acecqa.gov.au>/Bhathela, M., Dunn, L., Tregillgas, T. (2008) *Ask a child care adviser (sic): Managing challenging issues with families.* http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/pcf-articles/ACCA_Managing_Challenging_Issues_Sep08.pdf accessed 23 November 2013
- Owens, A. (n.d.). *Managing complaints.* http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/factsheets/qias_factsheet_5.pdf accessed 23 November 2013

Date(s) reviewed:

Date(s) reviewed:

13.1.2017							
05/01/2018							
05/09/2018							

Next review date: 05/09/2019~~8~~