

## Dealing with complaints with Families

Feedback from families, educators, staff and the wider community is fundamental in creating an evolving Childcare Service working towards the highest standard of care and education. It is foreseeable that feedback will include divergent views, which may result in complaints. This Policy details our Service's procedures for receiving and managing informal and formal complaints. Parents can lodge a grievance or complaint with management in the understanding that it will be managed conscientiously and confidentially.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIPS		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality Service.
7.2.1	Continuous Improvement	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS/EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
Sec. 172	Offence to fail to display prescribed information
Sec.174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
168(2)(o)	Education and care service must have policies and procedures... for dealing with complaints
170/1	Policies and procedures to be followed and kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures
173	Prescribed information to be displayed
173(2)(b)	Requires an approved provider to make the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints may be addressed clearly visible at the service
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
183	Storage of records and other documents

### RELATED LEGISLATION

Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017	Family Law Act 1975
<b>A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999</b>	Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related legislation for Child Care Provider Handbook in Appendix G <a href="https://www.dese.gov.au/resources-child-care-providers/resources/child-care-provider-handbook">https://www.dese.gov.au/resources-child-care-providers/resources/child-care-provider-handbook</a>

### PURPOSE

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170).

We aim to investigate all complaints and grievances with a high standard of equity and fairness. We will ensure that all persons making a complaint are guided by the following policy values:

- procedural fairness and natural justice
- code of ethics and conduct
- culture free from discrimination and harassment
- transparent policies and procedures
- opportunities for further investigation
- adhering to our Service philosophy

Our Service believes in procedural fairness and natural justice that govern the strategies and practices, which include:

- The right to be heard fairly
- The right to an unbiased decision made by an objective decision maker
- The right to have the decision based on relevant evidence.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Grievances and complaints can transpire in any workplace. Handling them appropriately is imperative for sustaining a safe, healthy, harmonious and productive work environment. Our Dealing with Complaints Policy ensures that all persons are presented with procedures that:

- value the opportunity to be heard
- promote conflict resolution
- encourage the development of harmonious partnerships
- ensure that conflicts and grievances are mediated fairly and
- are transparent and equitable.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Complaint:** Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. [AS/NZS 10002:2014 Complaint Management Standard]

**Complaints and Grievances Management Register:** Records information about complaints and grievances received at the Service, along with the outcomes. These documents must be securely stored, accessible only to management and the Regulatory Authority. They can provide valuable information to the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor of the Service to ensure children and family's needs are being met.

**Grievance:** A grievance is a formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature. A *workplace grievance* is a complaint raised towards an employer by an employee due to a violation of legalities (workplace policies, employment contract, national standards).

**Mediator:** A person who attempts to assist and support people involved in a conflict come to an agreement.

**Mediation:** An attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement or compromise between disputants through the objective intervention of a neutral party.

**Notifiable complaint:** A complaint that alleges a breach of the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, National Quality Standard or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at the Service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of the complaint being made – (Section

174[2] [b], Regulation 176[2][b]).

If the Director/Approved Provider is unsure whether the matter is a notifiable complaint, it is good practice to contact the Regulatory Authority for confirmation. Written reports must include:

- details of the event or incident
- the name of the person who initially made the complaint
- if appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including a medical or incident report (where relevant)
- contact details of a nominated member of the *Grievances Subcommittee* (or Nominated Supervisor)
- any other relevant information.

Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the ACECQA website: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) and logged using NQA ITS (National Quality Agenda IT System).

**Serious Incident:** An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the Service in contravention of the Regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the Service premises (Regulation 12).

A serious incident should be documented in an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. The Regulatory Authority must be notified within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the Service (Regulation 176(2)(a)). These records are required to be retained for the periods specified in Regulation 183. The Approved Provider will notify the regulatory authority of any incident where there is a reasonable belief that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the service, or any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the service.

## **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

Management and educators will adhere to our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* when dealing with grievances. However, if a grievance involves a staff member or child protection issues, a relevant government agency will need to be informed. (see: Child Protection Policy).

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

It is important for the complainant to feel confident in:

- being heard fairly
- an unbiased decision-making process

Should a conflict of interest arise during a grievance or complaint that involves the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor, other Management will be nominated as an alternative mediator.

Our Service may also engage the resources of an Independent Conflict Resolution Service to assist with the mediation of a dispute. We will ensure that throughout the conflict resolution process the Services Code of Conduct is adhered to.

The Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly visible at the service
- ensure information about our *Dealing with Complaints Policy* is easily accessible to all families
- treat all grievances and complaints seriously and as a priority
- ensure grievances and complaints remain confidential
- ensure grievances and complaints reflect procedural fairness and natural justice

- discuss the issue with the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the verbal or written complaint
  - investigate and document the grievance or complaint fairly and impartially.
- The investigation will consist of:
- reviewing the circumstances and facts of the complaint (or breach) and inviting all affected parties to provide information where appropriate and pertinent.
  - discussing the nature of the complaint (or breach) and giving the accused educator, staff member, volunteer or visitor an opportunity to respond.
  - permitting the accused person to have a support person present during the consultation (for example: Union Representative or family member; however, this does not include a lawyer acting in a professional capacity).
  - providing the employee with a clear written statement outlining the outcome of the investigation.
- advise the complainant and all affected parties of the outcome within 7 working days of receiving the verbal or written complaint.
    - management will provide a written response outlining the outcome and provide a copy to all parties involved.
    - if a written agreement about the resolution of the complaint is prepared, all parties will ensure the outcomes accurately reflect the resolution.
  - should management decide not to proceed with the investigation after initial enquiries, a written notification outlining the reasoning will be provided to the complainant
  - keep appropriate records of the investigation and outcome and store these records in accordance with our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
  - monitor ongoing behaviour and provide support as required
  - ensure the parties are protected from victimisation and bullying
  - request feedback on the grievance process using a feedback form
  - track complaints to identify recurring issues within the Service
  - notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours if a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised. Notification must include any incident where there is a reasonable belief that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the service or any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the service.

#### **Educators will:**

- listen to the family's view of what has happened
- clarify and confirm the grievance or complaint, documenting all the facts prior to the investigation
- encourage and support the family to seek a balanced understanding of the issue
- discuss possible resolutions available to the family. These would include external support options.
- encourage and assist the family to determine a preferred way of solving the issue
- record the meeting, confirming the details with the family at the end of the meeting
- maintain confidentiality at all times
- refer families (as necessary) to Service policies that may assist in resolving the grievance or complaint.

*If the grievance cannot be resolved, it is to be referred to the Nominated Supervisor who will investigate further:*

- if appropriate, collect relevant written evidence. This evidence will be treated in strict confidence and will be held in a secure place
- involve the Approved Provider or Director in the conflict resolution as required
- should it be necessary to interview relevant people concerning the grievance, their involvement should be kept to the minimum necessary to establish the facts
- third parties providing evidence must also be made aware that the matter is to be kept confidential.
- They must also be made aware that the matter is to be kept confidential.

Should the grievance or complaint be lodged against another person(s), these persons, will be interviewed separately and impartially. Individuals must be given the opportunity to respond fully to the allegations and

may have another person present, as a support person, if they wish. If after investigation, it is concluded that the grievance is substantiated:

- both parties will be told of the decision and the reason for it
- immediate and appropriate steps will be taken to prevent the grievance from recurring
- if after investigation, it is concluded that the grievance is not substantiated both parties will be notified of the decision and the reason
- the family will be informed that if they are not satisfied with any decision relating to the grievance procedure that they should consult with an external body for further advice such as the Regulatory Authority
- if the grievance or complaint is of a serious nature, or there is a reasonable belief the complaint is any allegation of sexual or physical abuse the Approved Provider is responsible to inform the Regulatory Authority. [insert details of your state/territory contact]

#### **Families will:**

- be informed of our duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of equity and fairness in relation to the management of complaints. The complaints procedure for families ensures a fair opportunity for all stakeholders to be heard and promotes effective conflict resolution within our Service.
- attempt to discuss their complaints with the relevant educator associated with a particular child and/or family as the first step to resolving the issue
- communicate any concerns they may have in writing addressed to the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor [see: Complaints/Grievance Form]
- raise any unresolved concerns with the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor
- maintain confidentiality at all times.

#### **Complaints relating to the administration of Child Care Subsidy**

Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. The Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.

Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via phone or email:

Phone: 1800 664 231

Email: [tipoffline@dese.gov.au](mailto:tipoffline@dese.gov.au)

#### **Follow-up and review**

To ensure complaints and grievances are handled appropriately, the Nominated Supervisor will:

- evaluate each individual complaint and grievance as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Management Register* to assess that a satisfactory resolution that has been achieved
- review complaints and grievances as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Management Register* to ensure a pattern of similar grievances is not occurring
- review the effectiveness of the Service policy and procedures to ensure all complaints and grievances have been handled fairly and professionally
- consider feedback from staff, educators and families regarding the policy and procedure.
- Families will be asked to complete an **Exit Questionnaire** when they leave the service to check there are no outstanding issues that have led to their leaving.

#### **Source**

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

ACECQA-Using Complaints to support continuous improvement. (2018). <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018->

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. *Child Care Provider Handbook (2018)*

<https://www.dese.gov.au/resources-child-care-providers/resources/child-care-provider-handbook>  
 Australian Human Rights Commission: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au>  
 Commonwealth Ombudsman. (2009). Better practice guide to complaint handling  
<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/publications/better-practice-guides>  
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).  
[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).  
 Fair Work Australia: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/>  
 National Quality Standard. (2017).  
 Privacy Act 1988 (CTH)  
 Queensland Government- Guide for effective complaints management  
<https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/legislationAndGuidelines/Documents/effective-complaints-management-guide.pdf>  
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).  
 Guide to the NQF – Monitoring, compliance and enforcement  
 Aust and NZ Standard Guidelines for complaint management in organisations – AS/NZS10002:2014



## REVIEW

Developed in consultation with:	Staff, families, Licensing Guidelines, National Quality Guidelines
Date:	February / 2003
Scope:	All staff, families, visitors to the centre
Review Cycle:	Every three years from development date or prior if required
Reference:	1. "childcaresdesktop
Review Date:	October 2005
standards	April 2008 – add information on external review options & Licensing
name for Dept of EDC (tas)	January 2012 – review of policy & alignment with NQG February 2016 – to include determining responsible person policy & new
Reviewed By:	May 2019 – to update with new regulations, change set up for ease to read, changes to terminology and include Family Grievance Management Form. July 2021 Presented to families for comment & suggestions, Educators in draft format. Name change to reflect ACEQUA guidelines Dealing with complaints new name, additional related legislation added, new definition of 'complaint' to align with ACEQUA, added child abuse info.

# FAMILY CONDUCT GUIDELINES (Code of Conduct)

*National Quality Standard 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities*

*National Quality Standard 7: Governance and Leadership*

The Family Conduct Guidelines works in conjunction with the Service's Grievance Policy, Enrolment Form, Parent Handbook, Code of Ethics and Child Wellbeing Arrangements. The Family Conduct Guidelines are in place to emphasise the commitment and ethical responsibilities each family adopt when enrolling at the Service.

## **AIM**

The aim of the Family Conduct Guidelines is to provide a clear pathway, supporting families and the Service in communicating and interpersonal skills. This includes acting as an advocate for individual children and discussing more complex and challenging issues that call for astute attention and respect.

It is anticipated that all stakeholders within the Service will adopt the following qualities during their interactions:

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Inclusivity
- Democracy
- Respect
- Confidentiality

## **COMMUNICATION**

It is expected that families will collaborate with their child's Educator/s, working together to support the child in

their learning and development. Our Educators understand that families are busy and often eager to find ways to strengthen the connection between home and the Service. Effective communication builds understanding and trust, for Educators working with families building a positive partnership includes sharing knowledge and experiences to understand the child.

We appreciate when families share information with our Educators about the child. This may include, a restless

night, something the child has disclosed, an activity or experience the child would like to do etc. This helps our Educators to support the child throughout the day.

Communication is vital within our Service, ensuring children's needs are being met. We ask that families nominate their preferred method of communication which will be amended as required, so we can do our best to be open and responsive.

## **MEETING WITH EDUCATORS OR MANAGEMENT**

It is not always possible or effective to discuss issues 'on the spot'. Usually, the most communication between families and Educators occurs at child drop-off and pick-up times. This transition time typically is not conducive to meaningful exchanges; families can be rushed, Educators are understandably focused on children's transitions, and

in the case of full-day programs, Educators who spend the largest amount of time with your child may not be available or not rostered on that day.

We encourage families to arrange a time away from the learning environment, where the Educator can give families their full attention and make decisions that have been given careful consideration.

## RESPECTING OUR EDUCATORS

We request that all stakeholders involved with the Service are respected. This includes respect for our Educators, respect for the children and respect for the families.

If we work to share information, contribute ideas and together, reflect on practices we will have a network for your child that not only supports their time here at the Service, but will also see them thrive.

We all have a common goal: What's best for your child. With that in mind, this journey will be rewarding for all.

## Grievances

If there is an incident that has occurred that families are concerned with, we always want to hear and discuss the issue. We ask families to be mindful about discussing or talking about sensitive issues in front of others, including children.

Families are encouraged to document their concerns by completing a 'Complaints / Grievance Form' outlining the incident or concern.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality is something we will not waiver on and expect the same from everyone involved, Educators and families alike. If you do have concerns regarding your child, please see your child's Educator to arrange a time to

meet. The meeting will be in a private area within the Service. If issues are still unresolved, then contact our Nominated Supervisor [[Nominated Supervisors name](#)] and reschedule a second meeting.

## Child Care Subsidy Obligation

We remind families that there are some issues that the Educators have no influence over. There are also some

issues that the Service has no control over such as Child Care Subsidy, and timing of payments to the Service and

your account.

When families enrol their child into the Service, it is the family responsibility to provide us with the required information to receive the Child Care Subsidy. This includes the correct Customer Reference Number (CRN) and date of birth of the child and parent/guardian the child is linked with.

To receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) families are obligated to confirm the child's enrolment at the Service.

This is the final step to complete the Child Care Subsidy. It is important for families to understand that until this step is

complete, Child Care Subsidy entitlements will not be confirmed.

Families are required to advise if their circumstances have changed. This includes:

- Advising if the child begins primary or secondary school for the first time
- If families recognised activity details have changed
- The Families income has changed

- The Care arrangements have changed
- Personal circumstances have changes
- There has been a change of address
- If the family leaves Australia.

Families are advised that most changes can be made using the Centrelink online account through myGov. Families may incur a debt if they have not notified the change within 14 days.

## **BREACH OF FAMILY CONDUCT GUIDELINES (CODE OF CONDUCT)**

If parents or family members are consistently in breach of these guidelines and following an evaluation by the Nominated Supervisor and/or the Approved Provider, any related enrolment/s may be at risk of being terminated.

## DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Feedback from families, educators, staff and the wider community is fundamental in creating an evolving Childcare Service working towards the highest standard of care and education. In the event that feedback includes divergent views which result in complaints or a grievance, the Director will ensure the grievance is managed conscientiously and confidentially following the procedure below.

Working in conjunction with the (Dealing with Complaints (Families) this procedure provides detailed steps for receiving and managing informal and formal complaints and grievances.

*Education and Care Services National Law or Regulations (R.168, 173, 176 and 183) NQS QA 6 and 7: Element 6.1.2, 6.2, 7.1.2 and 7.2.1 Relationships with families and Governance practices and procedures*

*Related Policy: Dealing with Complaints Policy (General), Dealing with Complaints (Families) and Dealing with Complaints (Staff)*

STEP 1: COMPLAINT PROCEDURE		
1	The name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly visible at the Service	
2	Information about our <i>Dealing with Complaints Policy</i> will be easily accessible to all families, visitors and volunteers	
3	The Director/ Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider will treat all complaints and grievances seriously and as a priority while ensuring complaints or grievances remain confidential	
4	The Director/ Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider will ensure complaints or grievances reflect procedural fairness and natural justice	
5	Families are encouraged to read through the Service's <i>Dealing with Complaints Policy</i> and <i>Family Conduct Guidelines</i> to ensure the most effective and appropriate method of communication is used when raising the complaint or grievance.	
	Families are encouraged to contact their children's educator directly to make an appointment to discuss the complaint or grievance and raise their concerns. (In many cases an informal resolution can be achieved by communication and discussion). Complaints should be discussed privately and at an appropriate time.  If families feel uncomfortable approaching the educator directly, we encourage them to contact Service Management to arrange a formal meeting.	
6	If the family feels as though their grievance or complaint has not been resolved when approaching the educator, management will be contacted to arrange a formal meeting. They will contact the family within 24 hours of receiving the grievance or complaint.	
7	If any complaint or grievance is made verbally to an educator, a record of the conversation must be made and shared with the Nominated Supervisor. This record, although informal, should be kept in the Complaints Register.	
8	Staff and families are encouraged to submit a written complaint through the <i>Complaints/ Grievance Form, located in reception</i>	

STEP 2: UPON RECEIPT OF A COMPLAINT/FEEDBACK		
1	The Director/ Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider will discuss the issue with the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the verbal or written complaint and will investigate and document the complaint or grievance fairly and impartially	

2	<p>Management and educators will adhere to our <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> when conducting an investigation into complaints or grievances. However, if a complaint or grievance involves a staff member or a child protection issue, a relevant agency will need to be informed. (See: Child Protection Policy.)</p> <p><a href="#">Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse or harm NSW</a></p> <p>The Approved Provider will notify the regulatory authority of any incident where there is a reasonable belief that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the service, or any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the service.</p>
3	<p>Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy (CCS) should speak with the Director/ Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via phone or email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: 1800 664 231</li> <li>• Email: <a href="mailto:tipoffline@education.gov.au">tipoffline@education.gov.au</a></li> </ul>
4	<p>A meeting will be arranged between the complainant and management of the service. The <i>Record of conversation Form</i> may be used during the meeting to fairly and impartially document the complaint or grievance.</p>

STEP 3: INVESTIGATING THE COMPLAINT	
1	<p>The Director will begin an investigation of the complaint/ grievance/ feedback by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reviewing the circumstances and facts of the complaint (or breach) and inviting all affected parties to provide information where appropriate and pertinent</li> <li>discussing the nature of the complaint (or breach) and giving the accused educator, staff member, volunteer, or visitor an opportunity to respond</li> <li>permitting the accused person to have a support person present during the consultation (for example: Union Representative or family member)</li> <li>providing the employee with a clear written statement outlining the outcome of the investigation.</li> </ol>
2	<p>Management will use the <i>Complaint/Grievance Investigation Guide and Form</i> to record the investigation conducted, if an investigation is required.</p>
3	<p>Should the Director decide not to proceed with the investigation after initial enquiries, a written notification outlining the reasoning is to be provided to the complainant.</p>
4	<p>Should a conflict of interest arise during a complaint or grievance that involves the Approved Provider or Director/ Nominated Supervisor, Outside Professional will be sourced as an alternative mediator.</p>
5	<p>Our Service may also engage the resources of an Independent Conflict Resolution Service to assist with the mediation of a dispute. We will ensure that throughout the conflict resolution process the Services Code of Conduct is be adhered to.</p>

STEP 4: EVALUATION OF THE INVESTIGATION		
1	The Director will advise the complainant and all affected parties of the outcome within 7 working days of receiving the verbal or written complaint or grievance	
2	Management will provide a written response outlining the outcome and provide a copy to all parties involved	
3	If a written agreement about the resolution of the complaint or grievance is prepared, all parties will ensure the outcomes accurately reflects the resolution and sign in agreement	
4	The Director/ Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider will monitor ongoing behaviour and provide support as required, and ensure the parties are protected from victimisation and bullying.	

STEP 5: KEEPING RECORDS OF COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK		
1	The Director will keep appropriate records of the investigation and outcome and store these records in accordance with our <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> and <i>Record Keeping and Retention Policy</i>	
2	The Director will request feedback on the complaint or grievance process using a feedback form and review the effectiveness of the Service policy and procedures to ensure all complaints and grievances have been handled fairly and professionally	
3	The Director will track complaints to identify recurring issues within the Service through the <i>Complaints Register</i> .	

STEP 6: NOTIFICATIONS OF COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK		
1	<p>The Director will notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours if a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised. If the Director is unsure whether the matter is a notifiable complaint, it is good practice to contact the <a href="#">Regulatory Authority</a> for confirmation. Written reports must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of the event or incident</li> <li>• the name of the person who initially made the complaint</li> <li>• if appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including a medical or incident report (where relevant)</li> <li>• contact details of a nominated member of the Grievances Subcommittee (or Nominated Supervisor)</li> <li>• any other relevant information</li> </ul>	
2	Written notification of complaints must be submitted to the Regulatory Authority using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the ACECQA website: <a href="http://www.acecqa.gov.au">www.acecqa.gov.au</a> and logged using NQA ITS (National Quality Agenda IT System).	

## REVIEW

Developed in consultation with:

Staff, families, Licensing Guidelines, National Quality Guidelines

Date:

May / 2021

Scope:

All staff, families, visitors to the centre

Review Cycle:

Every three years from development date or prior if required

## COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT FORM (Family)

This form is to be used to record details of meetings held between the Service and families to address and resolve a complaint or grievance submitted, as per our *Dealing with Complaints Policy*. A copy of this document should be recorded in the Complaints/Grievance Register.

### COMPLAINTS HISTORY

Name of person submitting complaint					
Date and time complaint was received by Service		Date		Time	
Name of employee who received complaint notification					
Complaint was received by		Complaint was responded to within 24 hours?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Email    Attach to this form		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Complaint is a notifiable incident / allegation? See Appendix A		If 'yes', notification of the complaint has been made to the Regulatory Authority?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Date		Time
Nature of complaint (action or decision of an educator/staff member; the health, safety or wellbeing of a child; service's response to an incident; other reason)					
Complaint was responded to by (name of employee)					
		Date and Time			
Addressing complaint (Response / steps taken to address complaint)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting arranged <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Provide details here					

## RECORD OF MEETING TO ADDRESS/ RESOLVE COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE

Date		Venue		Meeting Opened	
Attendees representing family					
Attendees representing Service					
Record of discussion points (circumstances and facts)			Action/s to be taken		Person responsible
					To be addressed by (date)
Further meeting required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If 'Yes', date, time, and venue for next scheduled meeting			
Best person representing family to contact by telephone if required		Best contact number for family representative		Best times to make contact	
Person representing the Service responsible for making telephone contact				Meeting closed at	

## FOLLOW UP

<p>Management will provide a written response outlining the outcome and provide a copy to all parties involved within 7 days.</p>	<p>Written response provided by: On (date):</p>
<p>Should management decide not to proceed with the investigation after initial enquiries, a written notification outlining the reasoning will be provided to the complainant.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Not required Written response provided by: On (date):</p>

## EVALUATION- CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT [consider effectiveness in responding to and resolving complaint.]

<p>Has a satisfactory resolution been achieved?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Was the Service policy and procedures effective in providing guidance for the handling of the complaint/grievance?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Was the Service policy and procedures effective to ensure the complaint/grievance was handled fairly and professionally?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Do all parties agree that the complaint/grievance was handled fairly and professionally?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Feedback from Staff, educators and families regarding the policy and procedure. (Consider family survey or other feedback methods)</p>	
<p>Action to be taken if any questions above have been answered with 'No'</p>	

## APPENDIX A

Under the National Law and Regulations, the approved provider must notify the regulatory authority of certain incidents and allegations while a child or children are being educated and cared for by the service.

- serious incidents
- **complaints**
- circumstances at the service which pose a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of children
- any incident or allegation that physical or sexual abuse of a child or children has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the service,
- any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the service.

### Complaints

The approved provider must notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any complaint alleging that a serious incident has occurred while the child is being educated and cared for or complaints alleging that the Law has been contravened (Section 174(2)(b))

*Source: ACECQA*