



Dealing with Complaints

Reviewed: 10/08/2021 Next Review: Term 3, 2022

Education and care services regulation/s	Regulation 168(2)(o) Education and care services must have policies and procedures Regulation 173 Prescribed information to be displayed Regulation 176 Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
NSW Department of Education policy, procedure or guidelines	The following department policies and relevant documents can be accessed from the department's website : Complaints Handling Policy School Community and Consumer Complaint Procedure Preschool Notification Fact Sheet Preschool Notification Guideline Code of Conduct
National Quality Standard(s)	Quality Area 7 7.1 Governance Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
Leading and operating department preschool guidelines	Leading and operating department preschool guidelines (staff only)
School policy or procedure	NSW Department of Education Complaints Handling Policy

Introduction:

While most complaints should be resolved informally with the relevant staff member, there are provisions for the use of formal procedures depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint. All staff need to be aware of their responsibility to comply with the DoE Code of Conduct Procedures.

Informal or minor complaints by a parent or caregiver will be dealt with by the relevant preschool staff at the time of complaint or as soon as practically possible. Informal or minor complaints that cannot be resolved by the preschool staff will be directed to the Preschool Nominated Supervisor (School Principal).

Formal or serious complaints alleging that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised, or that the law has been breached, are to be directed to the Preschool Nominated Supervisor (School Principal). The Principal will then make all relevant notifications within the prescribed time frames. If a complaint relates to a breach of a regulation or a serious incident, Early Learning must be notified within 24 hours of the complaint being received.

Our preschool values the feedback of educators, staff, families and the wider community in helping to create a service that meets regulations and the needs of enrolled children and their families.

We encourage open communication through opportunities to respond and give feedback on the program. A component of this feedback is the ability to put forward a complaint and have this managed appropriately with due consideration for accountability and quality improvement.

Procedures

- Complaints are dealt with in an open, respectful and confidential manner.
- Families who seek to make a complaint are requested to make an appointment with the preschool teacher.
- Initially, the preschool teacher will seek to address and resolve complaints respectfully and informally, as soon as possible. This process may involve a period of investigation.
- If a complaint cannot be resolved by the teacher, is considered a serious complaint or related to child protection, it will be referred to the principal immediately.
- Families are requested to make an appointment with the principal, if the complaint is related to child protection or is considered serious in nature.
- Any complaints made to a SLSO (School Learning Support Officer) or an AEO (Aboriginal Education Officer) will be referred to the early childhood teacher or principal
- Complaints will be dealt with in a confidential and professional manner, as per the NSW Department of Education Complaints Handling Policy.
- Complaints of a child protection nature should be referred promptly to the principal and the Department of Justice and Community Services (DJC).
- If a staff member has concerns related to the behaviour or actions of another employee, contractor or volunteer, they should speak to the principal who will follow the relevant DoE policy.
- Complaints about the school principal can be made to the relevant Director Educational Leadership and EPAC.
- Documentation of any complaints, investigations, resolutions or outcomes are stored in the students file and/or with the school principal..
- Families are informed in the preschool handbook, on the information board at the front entrance foyer of the preschool and via this procedure, that they are able to make a complaint if necessary.
- Displayed in the preschool entrance, is the photo and name of the school principal and a statement noting this is the person a complaint can be made to.

- Also displayed in the entrance is a statement advising families that if their complaint is of a more serious nature, or relates to the breach of a regulation, they may choose to contact our regulator, by email or telephone;

*NSW Early Childhood Education Directorate,
Department of Education ececd@det.nsw.edu.au
Contact Early Learning at earlylearning@det.nsw.edu.au
Ph: 1800 619 113*

- If a complaint relates to a breach of a regulation by the preschool, *DoE Early Learning* will be notified within 24 hours.
- Our preschool implements the NSW Department of Education's Complaints Handling Policy.

School Principal, Early Childhood Teacher and Educators

The principal is responsible for ensuring:

- the preschool is compliant with legislative standard related to this procedure at all times
- all staff involved in the preschool are familiar with and implement this procedure
- all procedures are current and reviewed as part of a continuous cycle of self-assessment

The preschool educators are responsible for working with leadership to ensure:

- all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure
- storing this procedure in the preschool and making it accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers
- being actively involved in the review of this procedure, as required, or at least annually
- ensuring the details of the procedure's review are documented

References: 10 August 2021

[Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics](#)