### Dealing with complaints procedure

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| National Quality Standard Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations | Associated department policy, procedure or guideline | Reference document(s) and/or advice from a recognised authority |
| NQS: 7.1  Regulations: 173, 176 | Leading and operating department preschool guidelines  [Complaints handling policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2002-0051)  [Staff complaint procedures [PDF 623 KB]](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/policy-library/staff-only/implementation-documents/Staff_Complaints_Procedure_2017.pdf)  [School community and consumer complaint procedure [PDF 489 KB]](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/policy-library/public/implementation-documents/School-complaint-procedure_AC.pdf)  [Making a complaint about NSW public schools – guide for parents and carers](https://education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback/guide-for-parents-carers-and-students) | [Complaints handling guide – upholding the rights of children and young people [PDF 9.1 MB]](https://www.childsafety.gov.au/system/files/2022-09/nocs-complaint-handling-guide.pdf)  ACECQA information sheet – [Using complaints to support continuous improvement [PDF 609 KB]](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/QA7_UsingComplaintsToSupportContinuousImprovement.pdf)  [Raising concerns about early childhood education and outside school hours care services [PDF 405 KB]](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/early-childhood-education/investigation-feedback-and-complaints/media/documents/Raising_concerns_flyer_for_families.pdf)  ACECQA’s policy and procedures guidelines – [Dealing with complaints [PDF 229 KB]](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/DealingComplaintsGuidelines.pdf) |

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| **Staff roles and responsibilities** | |
| **School principal** | The principal as Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader and Responsible Person holds primary responsibility for the preschool.  The principal is responsible for ensuring:   * the preschool is compliant with legislative standards 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. * These tasks may be delegated to other members of the preschool team, but the responsibility sits with the principal. |
| **Preschool supervisor** | The preschool supervisor supports the principal in their role and is responsible for leading the review of this procedure through a process of self-assessment and critical reflection. This could include:   * analysing complaints, incidents or issues and what the implications are for the updates to this procedure * reflecting on how this procedure is informed by relevant recognised authorities * planning and discussing ways to engage with families and communities, including how changes are communicated * developing strategies to induct all staff when procedures are updated to ensure practice is embedded. |
| **Preschool educators** | The preschool educators are responsible for working with leadership to ensure:   * all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure * this procedure is stored in a way that is accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers * they are actively involved in the review of this procedure, as required, or at least annually * details of this procedure’s review are documented. |
| **Procedure** | |
| **Who a complaint be made to** | * The preschool’s service approval details are clearly displayed at the preschool entrance. It includes the preschool’s phone number and notes that any complaints are to be directed to the school principal.   + Parents are advised through the parent information booklet to speak to the preschool educators if they have any concerns or a complaint, and that if they do not feel the issue has been resolved they can contact the principal via the school office. * The service approval details also note the name and contact number of the regulatory authority. Signage within the preschool provides this information – *Raising concerns about early childhood and outside school hours care services.* * If a staff member has concerns related to the behaviour or actions of another employee, contractor or volunteer, they must notify the school principal who will seek advice from the *Performance and Ethical Standards Directorate* (PES). * Complaints about the school principal can be made to the relevant *Director Educational Leadership* and PES. Phone 02 7814 3733 or email [PES@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:PES@det.nsw.edu.au). |
| **Dealing with complaints** | * Our preschool implements the *NSW Department of Education’s Complaints Handling Policy.* * Complaints are dealt with in an open, respectful and confidential manner. * Initially, the preschool teacher will seek to address and resolve complaints respectfully and informally, as soon as possible. * If a complaint cannot be resolved by the teacher, is a serious complaint or related to child protection, it will be referred to the principal immediately. * Should an SLSO or AEO receive a complaint, they are to refer the matter to the teacher, supervisor or principal as soon as possible. * Details of any complaints made are documented on Sentral as a Data Record. * The outcome of the complaint is provided to the family within 14 days of the complaint being made, via letter from the principal. If a complaint results in improvements or changes in preschool operations, they are clearly outlined within this letter and all families are provided with updated documentation or procedures. |
| **Notification of a serious complaint** | * If a formal complaint is made alleging that the Law has been contravened or that a serious incident has occurred or is occurring, notification must be made to Early Learning (phone 1300 083 698) within 24 hours of the complaint being received. * Our preschool deals with complaint in a manner that is child focussed. Children are provided with opportunities to make a complaint i.e. drawing, or small group discussions with an unhurried manner. Children are made aware of where to go to go if they need help and that there will be no consequences of making a complaint. * Complaints about children exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours will be reported to the principal as required by the Departments Complaints Handling Policy. |

| Record of procedure’s review |
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| **Date of review and who was involved** |
| 2.8.2021. Neil Bourke, Rebecca Donaldson, Sally Egan, Jessica Le. |
| **Key changes made and reason/s why** |
| Adopted DoE template. |
| **Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders** |
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| Record of procedure’s review |
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| **Date of review and who was involved** |
| 10.8.2022. Sally Egan, Rebecca Donaldson. |
| **Key changes made and reason/s why** |
| Nil changes – annual review. |
| **Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders** |
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| Record of procedure’s review |
| **Date of review and who was involved** |
| 24.10.2023. Sally Egan, Rebecca Donaldson, Layla Al Ghrabi, Thi Nguyen, Francesca Peterson. |
| **Key changes made and reason/s why** |
| Updated wording changes in line with DoE changes to the procedure scaffold to include Child safe standards. This includes details of how complaints will be dealt with in a child focussed manner. |
| **Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders** |
| All preschool staff engaged in collaborative review of procedure.  Updated copy provided to Senior Executive by email 24.10.2024. |