

Policy 23

Grievance and Complaint Policy

Policy Statement

Wideview Outside School Hours Care Service will maintain a complaints and grievance management procedure to ensure that all educators, families, and community members know that complaints and grievances will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and fairly. Complaints and grievances will be investigated and documented in a timely manner. Our complaints and grievance management procedure will be documented in the parent and staff handbook. We will identify complaints and grievances as opportunities to improve the quality of our service. We always strive to maintain a positive working environment. We endeavour to ensure that all work-related problems, complaints and/or concerns are addressed as quickly and effectively as possible through fair and transparent grievance procedures.

Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations and National Quality Standard

QUALITY AREA		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
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.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion, and participation in the program.
6.2.3	Community engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
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	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
7.2.1	Continuous improvement	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
173	Prescribed information to be displayed
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

Procedure

1. Grievance/Complaint Procedures

- 1.1 The service will support an individual's right to complain and will help them to make their complaints clear and to resolve them.
- 1.2 A complaint can be informal or formal.
- 1.3 Families will be provided with guidelines detailing the grievance procedure, in the parent handbook.

- 1.4 The name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints are directed to is displayed visibly when entering the service (r173) this is located at the parent information.
- 1.5 All confidential conversations with individuals who have a complaint or grievance will take place in a quiet place away from children, other families or staff that are not involved.
- 1.6 The highest standards of confidentiality will be practiced and expected of all parties involved during and after the investigation.
- 1.7 People directly involved in the grievance process will be expected to continue to conduct themselves in and around the service in a professional manner.
- 1.8 Any problem, complaint or concern arising should be dealt with as close to the event as possible, in order to avoid an escalation of the issue.
- 1.9 If an individual has a complaint or comment about the service, they will be encouraged to talk to the Responsible Person on shift or Service Manager to discuss their concern and come to a resolution to address the issue.
- 1.10 If the complaint is not handled at this level to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint, they should discuss the issue with the Service Manager or if needed, the Parent Management Committee, either in writing or verbally.
- 1.11 If the complaint is further directed to the Parent Management Committee, they will discuss the issue with the Service Manager and develop a strategy for resolving the problem, this would be discussed further with the individual or if necessary, a meeting will be organised to resolve the problem.
- 1.12 All formal complaints will be recorded and dated indicating the issue of concern and how it was resolved. All information on complaints and grievances will include evidence that complaints are investigated within satisfactory timeframes and have led to amendments to policies and procedures where required.
- 1.13 The Service Manager or Management Committee will inform the person making the complaint of what has been decided regarding the issue. Staff will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of. This could be done verbally or if the issue has been dealt with on a more formal basis, then the committee or Manager will write personally to the individual making the complaint.
- 1.14 If any complaint cannot be resolved internally to the person's satisfaction, external options may be offered such as an unbiased third party.
- 1.15 All complaints that come about as a result of a serious incident or alleged serious incident occurring, will be notified to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours as per regulations.
- 1.16 Malicious or vexatious claims will not be tolerated and will be the subject of disciplinary action where appropriate
- 1.17 Either party may withdraw their grievance at any time. However, where the grievance identifies other issues of concern, management may decide to investigate those other issues, regardless of whether the grievance is withdrawn or resolved.
- 1.18 Where the grievance is between the management team and staff, and concerns standards of work performance or practice, Disciplinary procedures will be followed.
- 1.19 The management team will deal with most grievances. Executive members of the committee are authorised to deal with grievances, only as necessary.

1.20 The Management team, in consultation with the committee, will investigate the grievance(s) as appropriate.

This investigation will involve:

- Interviews with both parties and/or witnesses
- Assessment of relevant documentation e.g. job descriptions, policies etc
- Preparation of a clear description of the issue
- Arranging a formal meeting between parties

1.21 A formal meeting may be required, and the purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Identify the issue(s) of concern and persons who are involved
- Arrange all parties to put forward their views
- Identify alternative solutions
- Attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of the issue(s).

1.22 At formal grievance resolution meetings all parties are entitled to invite a support person to attend. This person may offer support and advice, however, cannot provide input to the meeting.

1.23 A confidential written record of the outcome of the meeting will be given to all participants who are to acknowledge their agreement by signing the record. A copy will be kept with WOOSHC files.

1.24 As appropriate, the Executive Committee /P&C will be informed of the outcome of the meeting.

1.25 Parent Management Committee will ensure that outcomes are reviewed and included in new job descriptions or centre policies as appropriate.

1.26 If one party remains dissatisfied with the meeting's outcome(s) then this should be put in writing to the management team asking that the process, be reviewed or stating that they intend to pursue the grievance further through other suitable avenues.

Sources

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia (2011).
- National Quality Standards
- The Fair Work Act (2009)
- Community Services Complaints Appeals and Monitoring Act, 1994.
- The Privacy Act (1988)
- Philosophy
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Parent Handbook
- Staff Handbook

Policy review information -

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its Policies and Procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur, and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice

Review Date	Date completed	By Whom	Collaborated	Comment
Aug 2020	Aug 2020	Brandi (Manager)	Staff Committee Parents	
Aug 2021	31 Aug 2021	Brandi (Manager)		
Aug 2022	23 Aug 2022	Brandi (Manager)		
Aug 2023	31 Aug 2023	Brandi (Manager)		
Aug 2024				