



## Complaint Management Policy

### Rationale

Good relationships between families and the Children's Centre give children a better chance of success. This policy provides information about avenues of communication, which strengthen the partnership between parents and the Children's Centre. It acknowledges the importance of the relationship between caregivers / parents and the teachers and other staff and provides the steps to follow in the event of a concern.

We recognise that sometimes things go wrong and you may feel that your expectations are not being met. If you have an unresolved complaint or would like to provide feedback, we would like to hear from you. It's important to work together, talk, listen and find solutions in a courteous and respectful manner, so we can improve our services.

The **Department for Education** (department) promotes and values feedback and works to manage complaints in order to improve performance, systems and service delivery. The department is committed to resolving complaints and providing an accessible, transparent and fair process to everyone.

All complaints will be taken seriously. When complaints are received, they will be assessed, prioritised, documented and recorded. Resolution will occur at a local level (with the original decision maker or educator) wherever possible and as quickly as possible. Most complaints are resolved quickly, but some complex matters may take more time and if this is the case, we will advise you.

### Concerns or complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the department relating to services, products, employees or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is expected.

It is important that the person making the complaint can talk directly to the decision maker if they are not satisfied with a decision. The staff member will make themselves available by phone or arrange a meeting time to talk about the decision and to hear concerns.

### How can I make a complaint?

Steps for raising your complaint:



#### **Step 1:**

Arrange a time to talk to the person concerned. Your concern deserves time in order to be resolved. Let the person know about the details of your concern with a chat, note or telephone call prior to an arranged meeting. A time can be set up which suits you both. This means all will be prepared and have all the necessary information. Stay calm, respectful and honest in your approach. Written or verbal complaints should focus on the facts or details – avoid personal insults, inflammatory statements and threatening or intimidating comments.

**You should not approach children or the parent/caregiver of any child directly** (including email or phone).

If your complaint is about the Director of the preschool, or you are not comfortable reporting to the Children's Centre person involved, it may be necessary to go straight to Step 3.



**Step 2:**

The Children's Centre will look into your concern and get back to you as soon as possible. The Children's Centre will aim to keep you informed and resolve the concern as soon as possible – ideally within 15 working days.

**Step 3:**

If you are not satisfied (or at any time you wish to get advice) you can contact the **CUSTOMER FEEDBACK UNIT** on **1800 677 435** or CFU online.

The Customer Feedback Unit will:

- Assess your complaint
- Decide what action is needed
- Let you know what has been done and when you can expect to hear about the outcome.

Expectations - Parents / Children / Staff Can Expect

- To follow the Policy when lodging a complaint or concern
- To be listened to
- To have opportunities to put their own point of view and express opinions and concerns
- To be treated fairly, respectfully and equitably
- To be kept informed
- To be informed of options, advice and support available when raising a complaint or concern
- Not to be discriminated against

**Step 4:**

Contact the SA Ombudsman on: **(08) 8226 8699**  
**ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au**

**Unreasonable conduct**

Staff safety and wellbeing is vital when dealing with unreasonable conduct at a school or preschool. There's a need to balance the right for someone to make a complaint with the rights of staff safety and respect, and the rights of others to equal time and resources.

There are a number of actions that can be taken by the school or preschool if a person making a complaint is unreasonable.

Unreasonable may include:

- Constant phone calls, visits or emails to staff
- Swearing, yelling, intimidation or offensive remarks
- Making demands to staff on how the complaint should be managed

Depending on the severity and frequency of the behaviours, actions can range from changing or limiting access to staff, students and school premises through to involving police.

**Our commitment**

We know that when we can work together, things can be better. We are committed to a resolution, we have experience in getting things right and we want the opportunity to resolve issues in a fair and timely manner. Be assured, we take customer feedback and complaints seriously.