

Complaints

* Quality Area 7 Leadership and Service Management
* National Quality Standard 7.3
* ECS National Regulations Part 4.7 Sections 173, 174, 175, 176

**INTRODUCTION**

Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families.

Muswellbrook Preschool believes that in this partnership we:

* value each other’s knowledge of each child
* value each other’s contributions to the child’s life
* trust each other
* communicate freely and respectfully with each other

Our service values the feedback of educators, staff, families and the wider community as a mechanism to support

the continuous improvement of our service.

**Making a Complaint:**

* Families may make a complaint directly to the child’s educator, the Approved Provider or the Nominated Supervisor
* Educators will discuss complaints procedures with children and encourage them to raise any issues they have.

**Muswellbrook Pre School Kindergarten will:**

**Respond promptly**

* All complaints will be acknowledged and responded to as soon as practicable. Complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner and complainants will be kept informed about the progress of their complaint and anticipated timeframes.
* Allegations of suspected harm or risk of harm to a child or possible victims of crime, will be actioned immediately by urgent referral or reporting the relevant agency.

**Managing a Complaint**

* Where possible complaints will be dealt with immediately, by the child’s educator as this is the person with the closest relationship with the family.
* If the complaint is about an issue that the educator considers to be outside their control, or the family does not feel they wish to share it with the educator, the complainant will be directed to the appropriate person for their complain to be resolved.
* Confidentiality must be maintained and if there is a need to involve a third party, the educator will inform the family prior to the involvement of the third party.
* The complaint will be documented and any legal requirements in relation to the complaint considered, such as the need to notify regulatory authorities
* Educator or Director is to arrange to meet with the family to discuss workable strategies to resolve issue.
* If issues are complex concerns must be made in writing and any meeting minuted and a copy signed by all parties and copies made for records.
* Implement action plan where appropriate
* The approved provider to meet with family. Where mediation is required all parties will have the right to agree to the appointment of a mediator.

**Managing a Notifiable Complaint**

* Complaints alleging that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised, or that the law has been breached must be reported by the Approved Provider to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of the complaint being made (Section 174(2)(b), Regulation 176(2)(b)). Written reports must include:
  + Details of the event
  + The name of the person who made the complaint
  + If appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including medical or incident report (where relevant)

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)

**The Approved Provider will:**

* When a complaint is ‘notifiable’, the Regulatory Authority must be notified within 24 hours.
* Be responsible for investigating and dealing with the complaint as outlined in this policy, in addition they are to co-operate with any investigation by the Regulatory Authority.
* Identify, prevent and address potential concerns before they become formal complaints
* Ensure that the name and telephone number of who complaints may be addressed to is displayed prominently at the main entrance of the service
* Ensure that this policy is available for inspection at the service at all times

**Nominated Supervisor will:**

* Advise parents and any other new families of the complaints policy and procedures on enrolment
* Respond to and resolve issues as they arise where practicable
* Discuss minor complaints directly with the party involved as a first step to resolution
* Provide and maintain a Complaints Register.
* Inform parents of the services complaints policy and record the complaints in the Complaints Register.
* Notify the Approved Provider if the complaint escalates or is unable to be resolved in a timely manner
* Provide information and cooperate as required to the Approved Provider

**Follow up and Review:**

* Each complaint is to be viewed as an opportunity for improvement
* We will analyse the complaint and determine if any policy or procedure changes are required
* The Approved Provider will follow through to determine that the complaint has been successfully resolved to everyone’s satisfaction. Families will be contacted to determine that they are satisfied with the way the issue was resolved and staff will be consulted about the outcome of the complaint.

**External Review Contacts:**

Referred externally when complaints cannot be resolved internally

* Referral may be made to:
* Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate

Telephone: 1800619113

* Department of Fair Trading

Telephone: 133 220

* Independent Legal Advice

**ALL COMPLAINTS WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL**

Reviewed on 26 October 2016

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Signed by | Name | Signature | Date |
| Committee |  |  |  |
| Nominated Supervisor |  |  |  |

Due for Review in October 2018

Links to other policies/documents

* *Grievance Policy*
* *Staff Grievance Policy*
* *Confidentiality Policy*