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Complaints & Grievance Policy January 2025

1. Purpose and Objectives:

- 1.1 The objective of this procedure is to ensure complaints and grievances are resolved by negotiation through procedural fairness and discussions between the parties are conducted in a respectful, confidential manner.
- 1.2 Little Leaps Speech Therapy is committed to the maintenance of good working relationships with and between its clients, employees, in the workplace. It is, however, recognised that from time to time a grievance may arise which needs to be resolved in the interests of good relationships.
- 1.3 The procedures described in this document are designed to assist parties involved with a complaint or grievance in maintaining good working relationships and in resolving any conflicts or issues which arise that have a negative impact on client or working relationships.
- 1.4 The procedures for dealing with grievances have the following objectives:
 - To provide all parties with the opportunity to have their concerns addressed in a fair, equitable and prompt manner.
 - To ensure that confidentiality is maintained.
 - To ensure all parties have equal access to the procedures and continue access to therapy services.
 - To have a strong emphasis on problem solving.
 - To ensure complaints and grievances are resolved with minimum stress to all concerned.
 - To achieve constructive outcomes for conflict situations between all parties where possible.
 - To consider and pursue alternative outcomes where appropriate.

2. Application, Steps and Process

- 2.1 In the first instance, the person making the complaint are encouraged to seek resolution of the grievance informally between the immediate parties concerned. A simple apology may finalise the matter at that point.
- 2.2 If a complainant is not satisfied with the above or it has not resolved, the party making the complaint shall inform the Director of Little Leaps Speech Therapy of the nature of the complaint/grievance in writing.
- 2.3 The Director can be contacted via phone, 0421 172 655 or email, samara@littleleapsspeechtherapy.com.au.
- 2.4 Once your complaint has been received, we will define a clear understanding of what the party making the grievance is wanting as an outcome, will investigate and reply within a reasonable time frame, 5 business days. Little Leaps Speech therapy will document the substance of any meetings held, and document the process undertaken.
- 2.5 If the complainant feels that resolution has not occurred, they are required to advise the Little Leaps Speech Therapy Director accordingly. The Directors may refer the matter for professional external mediation, and if still unresolved, the matter may be referred to the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre (ACDC) or Fair Work Commission for resolution.



2.6 You are entitled to include external supports to assist you in this interaction. Assistance can be provided by a person of your choosing such as friend/family member, translator, community visitor, advocate or anyone you deem acceptable to support.

2.7 At any stage during this resolution process an individual can escalate their feedback or complaint to an external agency. If you are not satisfied with the response that Little Leaps Speech Therapy comes to, or how the process was handled, you are entitled to complain to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

3. Note:

3.1 All parties must co-operate to ensure that these procedures are carried out as quickly as reasonably possible.

3.2 Work must continue as normal whilst the complaint or grievance is being resolved through these procedures, unless he or she has a reasonable concern about an imminent risk to his or her health or safety.

3.3 Legitimate attempts to resolve the problem must be made at each level by all parties at Little Leaps Speech Therapy and referrals to an external body should be regarded as a last resort.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Little Leaps Speech Therapy staff are responsible for:

- Managing complaints/grievances in a timely, respectful, and private manner.
- Ensuring this policy and procedure is understood by clients, staff and contractors.
- Adherence to the process detailed above.
- Providing the process in a timely, respectful, private, and confidential manner, where procedural fairness applies.
- Supporting all parties appropriately through this process.
- Engaging in external professional mediation where appropriate.
- Aligning behaviour to the Speech Pathology Australia Code of Ethics (2020).
- Aligning behaviour with the Code of Conduct for Certain Health Care Workers.
- Aligning behaviour with the Professional Standards of Speech Pathology in Australia.

4.2 Clients are responsible for:

- Raising any grievance matter in a timely manner to avoid unnecessary escalation of issues and ensures that concerns can be resolved quickly so client services can proceed.
- Participating in complaint resolution activities.

4.3 Overall, Little Leaps Speech Therapy takes any complaint seriously and will assess all complaints equitably and in a timely manner. Little Leaps Speech Therapy requires parties keep matters raised as being confidential.

5. Variation and Review

5.1 Little Leaps Speech Therapy will review this policy every five (5) years or if new legislation is introduced or changed as a result of feedback, complaints or risk management.

