Bullfrog Children's Centre

DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS POLICY

Date last reviewed	March 2026
Next review date	March 2027

What areas does this policy cover

- **Dealing with Complaints**

Policy Statement

Bullfrog Children's Centre is committed to fostering positive, respectful and collaborative relationships with children, families, educators and all members of the service community. We recognise that concerns, complaints and grievances provide valuable opportunities to improve service quality, strengthen partnerships and promote positive outcomes for children.

The service is committed to managing complaints and grievances in a fair, timely, transparent and confidential manner, consistent with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. We will ensure that all persons are treated with dignity and respect, have the opportunity to be heard, and are supported to resolve concerns through open communication and constructive problem-solving.

Bullfrog Children's Centre will maintain effective complaints management procedures that comply with legislative requirements, protect privacy and confidentiality, and support a culture that is free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The service is committed to ensuring that children, families, educators and visitors feel safe and empowered to raise concerns without fear of adverse consequences.

Background Statement

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to Dealing with Complaints. Bullfrog Children's Centre sees dealing with Complaints as a priority. We aim to promote an appropriate response to all situations.

Legislative Requirements

Area	Legislation / Regulation	NQS	EYLF
Complaints and Grievance Management	Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, s174 Education and Care Services National Regulations 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 176	QA7 – Governance and Leadership QA6 Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities	Principle: Partnerships
Family Communication and Participation	Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)	QA6 Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities	Principle: Partnerships; Practice: Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork
Privacy and Confidentiality	Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)	QA7.1 Governance	Principle: Secure, Respectful and

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Area	Legislation / Regulation	NQS	EYLF
			Reciprocal Relationships
Workplace Grievances and Fair Treatment	Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)	QA7.1 Governance	Practice: Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork
Equity and Non-Discrimination	Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)	QA5 Relationships with Children; QA6 Collaborative Partnerships	Principle: Equity, Inclusion and High Expectations

Induction and ongoing training

On induction all new Employees are required to familiarise themselves with all Policies and Procedures of Bullfrogs Children's Centre. Should information be updated or there are changes to this policy or the Legislative Requirements associated with this policy, Employees will either be informed or will undergo training at the next staff meeting.

Policy reviewed

This policy and procedures will be reviewed by Management, Employees, Families and Children annually. Management will review, then forward to Employees and Families to review via Kinderloop. Children will review as part of a talking mat process.

Implementation

Bullfrog Children's Centre is committed to managing complaints and grievances promptly, fairly, confidentially and in accordance with legislative requirements. Complaints are viewed as opportunities for service improvement and strengthening partnerships with children, families, educators and the broader community.
The service will:

- Encourage open communication and early resolution of concerns.
- Ensure all complaints are acknowledged and addressed in a timely manner.
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy throughout the complaints process.
- Record complaints and actions taken in the complaints register.
- Ensure notifiable complaints are reported to the Regulatory Authority within the required timeframe.
- Provide access to information about complaints procedures to families, children, educators and visitors.
- Promote procedural fairness, natural justice and conflict resolution practices.
- Review complaints to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

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Procedure

Making a Complaint
Written guidelines detailing complaint procedures are available in the Parent Handbook and displayed in the foyer.

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

Responsiveness
All complaints will be acknowledged and responded to as soon as practicable.

- Complaints will be managed in a timely manner.
- Complainants will be kept informed of progress and anticipated timeframes.
- Allegations involving suspected harm, risk of harm to a child, or possible victims of crime will be actioned immediately through urgent referral or reporting to the relevant agency.

Managing a Complaint
Where possible, complaints will be addressed immediately by the child's educator and reported to the Nominated Supervisor.
Details of the complaint will be recorded on a Complaints and Grievance Form.
If an educator considers the complaint beyond their authority or capacity to resolve, it will be referred to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
Where confidentiality needs to be shared with another person to assist resolution, or where legislative requirements require information sharing, the family will be informed before further discussions occur.

Steps Involved

- The complaint will be documented and legislative requirements considered, including any requirement to notify the Regulatory Authority.
- The complainant will be invited to provide information regarding how the matter could be resolved to their satisfaction.
- Where possible, concerns will be resolved immediately.
- If immediate resolution is not possible, the complainant will be advised that the matter will receive priority attention.
- Complex issues may require concerns to be submitted in writing.
- Where mediation is required, all parties will have the right to agree to the appointment of a mediator.
- Allegations of suspected harm, risk of harm to a child, or possible victims of crime will be actioned immediately through urgent referral or reporting to the relevant agency.

Notifiable Complaints
Complaints alleging that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised, or that legislation has been breached, must be reported by the Approved Provider to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of the complaint being made.
Notifications must be submitted using the appropriate forms through the ACECQA NQA ITS Portal.

Direct Complaints
Families may make a complaint directly to the Regulatory Authority where they believe:

- The safety, health or wellbeing of a child or children has been compromised while receiving education and care.
- Relevant legislation has been contravened.

Contact details for the Regulatory Authority are available in the Family Handbook and displayed in the service foyer. Or https://www.acecqa.gov.au/help/contact-your-regulatory-authority

Conflict of Interest
Where a conflict of interest exists between the complainant and the person about whom the complaint is made, the Approved Provider will arrange for an independent mediator.
Both parties will be provided with an opportunity to be heard fairly and may bring a support person to mediation meetings.

Follow Up and Review
Each complaint will be viewed as an opportunity for improvement.
Following resolution:

- The complaint will be analysed to determine whether policies, procedures or practices require amendment.
- The Approved Provider will ensure that complaints and grievances have been resolved satisfactorily.
- Families may be contacted to determine their level of satisfaction with the process and outcome.
- Educators may be consulted regarding operational outcomes and improvements.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
Approved Provider	The Approved Provider is responsible for: • Notifying the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours when a complaint is assessed as notifiable in accordance with National Regulation 176(2)(b). • Ensuring all notifiable complaints and serious incidents are managed in accordance with legislative requirements. • Investigating and responding to complaints, including those reported directly to the Regulatory Authority. • Identifying, preventing and addressing concerns before they escalate into formal complaints. • Ensuring the name and contact details of the Regulatory Authority are prominently displayed at the service. • Advising families and new members of the service about the Grievances and Complaints Management Policy and procedures upon enrolment. • Ensuring the policy is available for inspection at all times. • Monitoring outcomes and implementing improvements arising from complaints.
Nominated Supervisor	The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for: • Responding to and resolving concerns as they arise where practicable. • Discussing minor complaints directly with the parties involved as an initial step toward resolution. • Informing complainants about the Grievances and Complaints Management Policy. • Recording all complaints and grievances in the service register. • Notifying the Approved Provider where complaints escalate or cannot be resolved promptly. • Providing information and reports to support investigations. • Maintaining privacy and confidentiality throughout the process.

	• Working cooperatively with the Approved Provider in investigations and resolution processes.
Educators	Educators are responsible for: • Ensuring grievances and complaints are managed in accordance with this policy. • Encouraging children and families to raise concerns respectfully and openly. • Reporting grievances and complaints to the Nominated Supervisor. • Maintaining accurate documentation relating to complaints. • Supporting the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider as required throughout investigations and resolution processes.
Families	Families are responsible for: • Raising concerns directly with the person involved where appropriate and safe to do so. • Communicating concerns relating to the management or operation of the service as soon as practicable. • Following the service's complaints process to support timely resolution. • Raising unresolved issues or serious concerns with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or relevant staff member.
Children	Children are encouraged and supported to: • Express concerns, worries or complaints in ways that are appropriate to their age and development. • Seek assistance from educators when they are unhappy or concerned. • Participate in discussions about resolving issues that affect them. • Have their views listened to and respected. • Feel safe, supported and protected when raising concerns.