

## C-7 Grievance Procedures

### National Quality Standards (NQS)

4.2	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.
4.2.1	Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.
4.2.2	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision making and operation of the service.
7.2.1	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

### Education and Care Services National Regulations

Reg. 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Reg. 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Reg. 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Reg. 173	Prescribed information to be displayed

### Policy Statement

We will maintain a positive working environment for staff, parents, and Committee members. We will do this through addressing all work-related problems, complaints, or concerns as quickly and effectively as possible. The procedure encourages ownership of issues and participation in the resolution process. The highest standards of confidentiality will be always maintained.

### Related Policies

- Disciplinary Action Policy
- Maintenance of Records Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Relief Staff Policy
- Role of Management Committee Policy
- Staff Orientation and Induction Policy
- Staff Professionalism and Code of Conduct
- Volunteers/students/visitors Policy

## Procedure

### General Grievance Procedure

Staff and Committee members will be given copies of the Grievance Procedure.

To facilitate communication between staff and management, the management will appoint one of their members as the Staff Liaison Officer (or this will be handled by the President of the Committee). The Staff Liaison Officer is to be the first point of contact for every Grievance concern or issue.

Individuals directly involved in a grievance will be expected to conduct themselves at and around the Centre in a professional and courteous manner. This includes to staff, committee members, parents and children.

Any problem, complaint or concern arising involving staff, committee members, and/or parents should be dealt with by the persons as close to the situation as possible to avoid escalation of the issue.

Malicious or vexatious claims will not be tolerated and will be the subject of disciplinary action where appropriate (see C-8 Disciplinary Action Policy).

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. A formal documentation is to be signed by both parties recording this.

All complaints must be in writing before they can be taken further.

### Informal Grievance Procedure

All persons involved in the grievance should attempt to resolve the issue through informal discussion and use of problem-solving techniques. All Grievances shall be forwarded in writing to the Staff Liaison Officer or President of Committee. The Staff Liaison Officer or President of Committee shall attempt informal discussion and resolution. The issue then may be taken to the Management Committee, who shall then deal with the issue in a formal way as outline in the policy.

Staff and/or Committee Meetings will provide regular opportunities to raise and discuss general issues or concerns about the Centre. All discussions will be conducted in a confidential manner and will involve only relevant persons. Only when all parties agree there is a benefit, should the discussion broaden to involve children and/or parents as appropriate.

Where the resolution of grievance has not been satisfactory through the informal procedure a formal approach shall be taken.

### Formal Grievance Procedure

Where the resolution of a grievance has not been satisfactorily achieved through the informal procedure, then a more formal approach will be taken.

Grievance between educators:

- as appropriate, the Director or the Educators Liaison member of the Committee will be briefed about the grievance and its current status.
- the below procedure will be followed Grievance between committee members:

Grievance between committee members:

- the whole committee will be briefed
- the below procedure will be followed

Grievance between staff and person in the role of Staff Liaison Officer/President of Committee:

- Should include another member of the Management Committee, as an independent person to act temporarily in the role of Staff Liaison Officer

The school Principal may be notified of the Grievance if needed as per Lease agreement.

The grievance(s) will firstly be investigated by the Director or Management Committee as appropriate. The 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

A meeting will be conducted by a neutral third person. This person will manage the conduct of the meeting, remain impartial and have no input to the content of the meeting, and will prepare a written record of the outcome(s) of the meeting. Where the Centre cannot identify a suitably impartial person, the Management Committee will agree to invite a qualified mediator or School Principal to assist. If staff are directly involved, the Director may be present.

The meeting will:

- identify the issue(s) of concern and persons who are involved
- arrange all parties to be involved and to put forward their views
- identify alternative solutions
- attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of the issue(s)
- Reinforce that the resolutions agreed to shall be adopted
- Reinforce the confidential nature of all information presented to all parties without exception (Refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy)

At formal grievance resolution meetings all parties are entitled to invite a support person to attend. This person does not provide input to the meeting but may offer support and advice to their party during the meeting.

Should the support person attempt to provide direct input, the chair of the meeting shall provide three warnings, after which the support person may be asked to leave. Another support person may be called upon immediately to replace them, providing here is minimal disruption to the resolution or procedure of the meeting. All support persons are strictly bound to privacy and confidentiality regarding the issue(s) of concern.



The calling of a meeting to resolve the issue(s) is to be held without undue lengthy delay or postponement. The meeting should aim for an attempt at resolution within 10 working days of the Management Committee being formally notified.

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 signed copy will be kept with staff files.

The neutral party will inform the Management Committee of the meeting's outcome(s). Management will ensure that outcomes are included in job descriptions or Centre policies as appropriate.

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

## Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard
- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Privacy Act 1988
- Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act (1993) No.2
- Network of Community Activities Factsheet – 'Complaints/Grievance Procedures'

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