

Communication and Complaints

Policy Statement

We believe that children, families, staff, partner schools and stakeholders have an important role in reviewing our service and we value their comments. We aim to ensure that parents feel free to communicate any feedback and complaints they have in relation to the service, staff, management, programs or policies without fearing negative consequences, and that they are made aware of the mechanisms to do this. Our priority is to maintain and improve the quality of our service.

Policy Considerations

- *The Education and Care Services National Law Sections 172, 174*
- *The Education and Care Services National Regulations 168, 170, 171 172, 173 and 176*
- ACECQA Dealing with Complaints Policy Guidelines
- Australian and New Zealand Standard Guidelines for complaint management in organisations – AS/NZS 10002:2014
- Commonwealth Ombudsman – Better practice complaint handling guide
- Guide to the NQF
- Children and Young People Act 2008
- Privacy Act 1988
- The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child

Procedure

- We will support rights of children, families, staff, partner schools and stakeholders to complain and will help them to make their complaints clear and try to resolve them.
- A complaint can be informal or formal and can be anything which is considered unfair, or which makes someone unhappy with the service.
- Handling of complaints will be approached with a child focus, protecting the rights and privacy of children as individuals and as group.
- All complaints and grievances will be treated as confidential and due discretion applied by all those involved.
- Any complaints or grievances can be made:
 - a. Verbally to our staff (all confidential conversations with the complainant will take place in a quiet place away from children and others not involved) and / or
 - b. In writing to the service Coordinator
 - c. Directly to the management team via email; or
 - d. Anonymously through the contact us page of the Kids Biz website: www.kidsbizoshc.com.au
- Acknowledgement of complaints should occur as soon as possible following the complaint being lodged.
- Complaints can be dealt with immediately or recorded for further investigation as needed including the date and description of the issue of concern and how it was resolved.
- The Team Leader/Coordinator or management representative should inform the complainant of any action has been or will be taken regarding the issue. Staff will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of. This could be done verbally or if the issue has been dealt with on a more formal basis, written advice may be provided.

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- Complaints will be approached with a focus on children's needs and consideration given to the child's age and individual needs.
- Complaints will be communicated with the school, Education Directorate or Catholic Education office as needed and appropriate.
- Where a complaint received is considered to be a serious complaint, advice of the complaint should be immediately taken to the management team, partner schools and the reported the ACT Education Directorate as appropriate and in line with regulatory requirements and 24-hour timeframe.
- Complex complaints should be given due consideration and time to enable an understanding to be established and an appropriate response provided.

**Management of complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours
Regulation 168 (o) (ii)**

- In addition to general complaints any complaints that allege a child is exhibiting harmful sexual behaviour will be prioritised for efficient response.
- Complaints may include allegations of exhibited behaviours that are harmful to the child themselves or others.
- Advice of the complaint should be immediately taken to the management team, partner primary schools and the reported the ACT Education Directorate where appropriate.
- Information provided in the complaint will be approached with a child focus with consideration to the child's age and information contained within the complaint.
- Children should not be viewed prejudicially recognising that children are likely to have limited, different or no understanding of sexual behaviour with consideration to their age and individual circumstances.
- Further information should be requested where needed and follow up clarification may be sought.
- Further reporting, including mandatory reporting, will form part of the complaint management process as appropriate.
- Allegations may be refuted, or information and context disputed by the child, or their families. Responses should be based on factual information without prejudice to the child or children involved.
- The Team Leader/Coordinator or management representative should inform the complainant of any action has been or will be taken regarding the issue. Staff will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of. This could be done verbally or if the issue has been dealt with on a more formal basis, written advice may be provided.
- Response to complaints should be considered in a supportive manner to support children and families in building positive behaviours avoiding blame.
- Support provided to families of a child allegedly exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours may include linking families with community and government support organisations to facilitate age-appropriate education about safe sexual behaviours, treatment options and access to counselling as appropriate.

Related Documents

- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Child Safe Environment
- Staffing
- Interactions with Children
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Governance and Management

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Kids Biz Holidays & Sports OSHC Policies & Procedures

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