



Jump

Carey Early
Development

Family Grievance Policy

Policy Statement

Feedback from families, educators, staff and the wider community is fundamental in creating an evolving Childcare Service working towards the highest standard of care and education. It is foreseeable that feedback will include divergent views, which may result in complaints. This policy details our Service's procedures for receiving and managing informal and formal complaints. Parents can lodge a grievance with management in the understanding that it will be managed conscientiously and confidentially.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
Quality Area 7: Governance and Leaderships		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality Service.
7.2.1	Continuous Improvement	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

Education and Care Services National Regulations	
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedure
173	Prescribed information to be displayed
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
183	Storage of records and other documents

Related Policies

Child Protection Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Code of Conduct	Record Keeping and Retention Policy
Fees Policy	Responsible Person Policy
Interactions with Family, Educators and Staff Policy	Staff Grievance Policy
	Student, Visitors and Volunteers Policy

Practice

Our Services are committed to responding positively to families' concerns and enquiries; we want to

hear our families voices. Children, families and staff are valued and encouraged to voice their concerns in an appropriate and constructive way. A grievance procedure is the process by which solutions are sought to resolve disputes in a fair, equitable and prompt manner. Grievances should be resolved as informally and quickly as possible by the parties involved. When the persons directly involved cannot resolve grievances informally, a formal grievance process is implemented.

Definitions

- **Complaint:** An issue of a negligible nature that can be resolved within 24 hours, and does not require a comprehensive investigation. Complaints include a manifestation of discontentment, such as poor service, and any verbal or written complaint directly related to the Service including general and notifiable complaints. Complaints do not include staff, industrial or employment matters, work health and safety matters unless associated with the safety of children.
- **Grievances Management File:** Records information about complaints and grievances received at the Service, along with the outcomes. These documents must be securely stored, accessible only to Management and the Regulatory Authority. They can provide valuable information to the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor of the Service to ensure children and family's needs are being met.
- **Grievance:** A grievance is a formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature. For example: If the service is in breach of a regulation causing injury or possible harm to a child.
- **Mediator:** A person who attempts to assist and support people involved in a conflict come to an agreement.
- **Mediation:** An attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement or compromise between disputants through the objective intervention of a neutral party.
- **Notifiable complaint:** A complaint that alleges a breach of the Regulation and Law, National Quality Standard or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at the Service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of the complaint being made (Section 174[2] [b], Regulation 176[2][b]).

Process

We aim to investigate all complaints and grievances with a high standard of equity and fairness. We will ensure that all persons making a complaint are guided by the following policy values:

- Procedural fairness and natural justice
- Code of ethics and conduct
- Culture free from discrimination and harassment
- Transparent policies and procedures
- Opportunities for further investigation
- Adhering to our Service philosophy

If families have a complaint against a staff member, they should discuss the problem with the relevant staff member concerned, or the Team Leader. If the parent feels further action is necessary after the discussion with the relevant staff member, they should approach Senior Leadership and discuss their concern.

The parent can call or put in writing to inform Senior Leadership. Senior Leadership will respond in writing to the parent after discussing the matter with the staff member involved and offer the parent the opportunity to meet and discuss their concerns.

Families are encouraged to email, phone or complete a family voice form to provide any feedback, input or to have their concerns or complaints addressed. These forms are available in each service and families can place them in the locked confidential box available in each service. Each contribution is acknowledged and responded to.

The parent can, in writing, lodge a complaint regarding their grievance with the Director or the Approved Provider of the Licence. If the Director is unsure whether the matter is a notifiable complaint, it is good practice to contact the Regulatory Authority for confirmation. Written reports must include:

- details of the event or incident
- the name of the person who initially made the complaint
- if appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including a medical or incident report where relevant
- contact details of a nominated member of the Nominated Supervisor
- any other relevant information

Management and Educators will adhere to our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* when dealing with grievances. However, if a grievance involves a staff member or child protection issues, a government agency may need to be informed.

Conflict of Interest

It is important for the complainant to feel confident in:

- being heard fairly
- an unbiased decision-making process

Should a conflict of interest arise during a grievance or complaint that involves the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor, other Management will be nominated as an alternative mediator.

Our Service may also engage the resources of an Independent Service to assist with the mediation of a dispute. We will ensure that throughout the conflict resolution process the Services Code of Conduct is adhered to.

Complaints relating to the administration of Child Care Subsidy

Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Nominated Supervisor in the first instance. The Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances. Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via: P: 1800 664 231 E: tipoffline@dese.gov.au

Procedure

Families will:

- be informed of our duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of equity and fairness in relation to the management of grievances. The grievance procedure for families ensures a fair opportunity for all stakeholders to be heard and promotes effective conflict resolution within our Service
- attempt to discuss their grievances with the relevant educator associated with a particular child and/or family as the first step to resolving the issue
- communicate, preferably in writing via office@jump.asn.au any concerns they may have
- maintain confidentiality at all times
- raise any unresolved concerns with the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider

Nominated Supervisor

Jo de Hoop or Rosemary Redden E. office@jump.asn.au T: 9394 9175

Approved Provider

Tim Dorsman or David Kilpatrick E. tdorsman@carey.asn.au E. dkilpatrick@carey.asn.au or

Carey Community Resources Inc. PO Box 4010, Harrisdale WA 6112

Educators will:

- listen to the family's view of what has happened
- maintain confidentiality at all times
- refer families to Service policies that may assist in resolving the grievance
- if appropriate, collect relevant written evidence. This evidence will be treated in strict confidence and will be held in a secure place

The Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly visible at the service
- ensure information about our *Grievance Policy* is easily accessible to all families
- treat all grievances seriously and as a priority
- ensure grievances remain confidential
- ensure grievances reflect procedural fairness and natural justice
- discuss the issue with the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the verbal or written complaint
- should it be necessary to interview relevant people concerning the grievance, their involvement should be kept to the minimum necessary to establish the facts
- third parties providing evidence must also be made aware that the matter is to be kept confidential
- investigate and document the grievance fairly and impartially. The investigation will consist of:
 - reviewing the circumstances and facts of the complaint or breach and inviting all affected parties to provide information where appropriate and pertinent
 - discussing the nature of the complaint or breach and giving the accused an opportunity to respond
- keep appropriate records of the investigation and outcome and store these records in accordance with our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* and *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*.
- monitor ongoing behaviour and provide support as required
- ensure the parties are protected from victimisation and bullying

- advise the complainant and all affected parties of the outcome within 7 working days of receiving the verbal or written complaint:
 - management will provide a written response outlining the outcome and provide a copy to all parties involved
 - if a written agreement about the resolution of the complaint is prepared, all parties will ensure the outcomes accurately reflect the resolution
- should management decide not to proceed with the investigation after initial enquiries, a written notification outlining the reasoning will be provided to the complainant
- request feedback on the grievance process using a feedback form
- track complaints to identify recurring issues within the Service.
- notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours if a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised.

Should the grievance be lodged against another person(s), these person(s) will be interviewed separately and impartially. Individuals must be given the opportunity to respond fully to the allegations and may have another person present, as a support person, for example: Union Representative or family member, however, this does not include a lawyer acting in a professional capacity. If after investigation, it is concluded that the grievance is substantiated:

- both parties will be told of the decision and the reason for it
- immediate and appropriate steps will be taken to prevent the grievance from recurring
- if after investigation, it is concluded that the grievance is not substantiated both parties will be notified of the decision and the reason
- the family will be informed that if they are not satisfied with any decision relating to the grievance procedure that they should consult with an external body for further advice such as the Regulatory Authority
- if the grievance is of a serious nature, the Nominated Supervisor is responsible to inform the Regulatory Authority

Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the [ACECQA](#) and logged using the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS).

Evaluation

To ensure complaints and grievances are handled appropriately, the Nominated Supervisor will:

- evaluate each individual complaint and grievance as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Register* to assess that a satisfactory resolution that has been achieved
- review complaints and grievances as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Register* to ensure a pattern of similar grievances is not occurring
- review the effectiveness of the service policy and procedures to ensure all complaints and grievances have been handled fairly and professionally
- consider feedback from staff, educators and families regarding the policy and procedure.

Attachments

Family Voice Form

Best Practise

[A New Tax System \(Family Assistance\) Act 1999](#)
[Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[Child Care Provider Handbook in Appendix 1](#)
[Commonwealth Ombudsman: Better practice guide to complaint handling](#)
[Family Law Act 1975](#)
[Rights of the Child](#)

Policy Reviewed	Previous Modifications	Next Review Date
Jan 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Updated links to the Sept 2022 released Regulations · Added the Rights of the Child, Family Law Act and Family Assistance Act 	Jan 2024
May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Updated to new format · Minor grammar changes 	May 2023
June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Related policies, NQS, and Regulations added · Updated to uniform formatting 	June 2022
August 2018	Created	