



## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

New Lambton District OOSH (NLDOOSH) will maintain a complaints process that ensures educators, families and community members know that complaints are taken seriously and investigated promptly and fairly. Complaints will be investigated and documented in a professional and timely manner.

We will identify complaints and grievances as opportunities to improve the quality of our service.

### **Procedures**

- a. NLDOOSH will support an individual's right to lodge a complaint, will assist individuals to make their complaints clear and will try and resolve them.
- b. A complaint can be informal or formal. It can be anything an individual believes is unfair or which makes them unhappy with the service.
- c. Our complaints and grievance management process will be communicated via our website and staffing policy. In addition, the name and contact number of the person to whom complaints should be addressed will be on display in our front foyer area.
- d. A report will be made to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of the service receiving the complaint.
- e. All confidential conversations with individuals who have lodged a complaint will take place in a quiet place away from children, other parents or educators not involved.
- f. If an individual has a complaint or comment about the service, they will be encouraged to talk to the Nominated Supervisor who will arrange a time to discuss their concern and come to a resolution to address the issue.
- g. If the complaint is not handled at this level to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint they should discuss the issue with the Chairperson or staff liaison person of the Management Committee, either in writing or verbally.
- h. The Management Committee will discuss the issue with the Nominated Supervisor and develop a strategy for resolving the problem. This would be discussed further with the individual or, if necessary, a meeting will be organised with the Nominated Supervisor and the individual to resolve the problem.

- i. All complaints will be recorded and dated indicating the issue of concern and how it was resolved. All information on complaints and grievances will include evidence that complaints are investigated within satisfactory timeframes and have led to amendments to policies and procedures where required.
- j. The Nominated Supervisor or Management Committee will inform the person making the complaint of what has been decided regarding the issue. Staff will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of. This could be a verbal notification or if the issue has been dealt with on a more formal basis then the committee or Nominated Supervisor will write personally to the individual making the complaint.
- k. If any complaint cannot be resolved internally to the person's satisfaction, external options will be offered such as an unbiased third party.

Complaints between child/ educator, educator/ child, child/ child, family/ family

- a. Confidentiality and respect for the child will be shown throughout the process.
- b. Issues raised regarding children/ educators, educator/ child, child/ child, family/ family should be referred to the Centre Co-ordinator.
- c. Under NO Circumstances should a parent or family approach another child or family at the centre in regard to any complaint.
- d. Freedom of expression and complaints may be made orally or in print to the Co-ordinator.
- e. If the complaint involves the Co-ordinator, a senior staff member will be asked to manage the investigation and/or mediation.
- f. A meeting will be set where all parties nominated will be heard independently.
- g. When all necessary information and/or evidence has been collected the Co-ordinator or senior staff member may need to contact parents and/or committee management.
- h. The appropriate form of action will be decided, pending the severity of the complaint. All relevant parties will be informed of the action plan.
- i. An Action Plan will be implemented immediately.
- j. A review of the situation will occur within the appropriate timeline stated on the action plan.
- k. 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, which include ACECQA (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority) and CS (Community Services).

## Considerations

Name	Reference
Education and Care Services National Regulations	4.6, 168, 173
National Quality Standard	7.3.4
Other NLDOOSH policies/ documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Management Committee Policy</li><li>• Confidentiality Policy</li></ul>
Other	Community Services Complaints, Appeals and Monitoring Act 1994 (NSW)

## Policy status

Policy developed	May 2012
Last reviewed	October 2024
Due for review	April 2026
Policy owned by	Centre Coordinator