

## Yorke town Community Children's Centre

### Grievances and Complaints Management Policy

**Policy Number**                      **13**

#### **Policy statement**

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- The service's Grievances and Complaints Management Policy values:
  - procedural fairness and natural justice;
  - a code of ethics and conduct;
  - free from discrimination and harassment;
  - transparent policies and procedures; and
  - avenues for recourse and further investigation.
- The Grievances and Complaints Management Policy ensures that all persons<sup>1</sup> are presented with procedures that:
  - value the opportunity to be heard;
  - promote conflict resolution;
  - encourage the development of harmonious partnerships;
  - ensure that conflicts and grievances are mediated fairly; and
  - are transparent and equitable.
- This site has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of equity and fairness in relation to grievances and complaints management and procedures.
- In meeting the service's duty of care, management and staff agree to implement and endorse the service's Grievances and Complaints Management Policy.
- The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1993* states that employers have a duty of care to their employees to ensure that the working environment supports emotional and mental wellbeing.
- The Department of Education and Children Services Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct guides the Grievances and Complaints Management Policy and procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this policy, 'persons' include children, families, staff, carers, carers' family, management, ancillary staff (administrative staff, cleaners, maintenance personnel), students, volunteers, visitors, local community, school community, licensee.

## **Strategies to resolve grievances and complaints**

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### **Privacy and confidentiality**

Please see *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

### **Grievances and complaints management procedure**

1. Where possible address your concerns to the person involved.
  2. Discuss it with the Director, who will notify the Governing Council if appropriate.
  3. Take the matter to the Department of Education and Children's Services.
- You may also use the Suggestion Box to make recommendations regarding improving of our practices for minor grievances.
  - All conversations regarding a grievance will take place in a private area away from children, other parents and staff who are not involved. Confidentiality is respected at all times.
  - Outcomes of major grievances will be advised in writing by either the Director or the Governing Council.

## **Applying strategies to different stakeholders**

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### **Children**

- Please refer to:
  - Children's Behaviour Policy
  - Child Protection Policy.

### **Families**

- In the first instance families are encouraged to address any concerns regarding a child, staff or management to the Rural Care and Kindergarten staff. If the concern is not resolved families are welcome to discuss it with the Director, who will notify the Management Committee if appropriate. Families are also able to write to the Management Committee or use the Suggestion Box in the Entrance Foyer.
- If you feel that the Management Committee does not resolve your concerns, you have the right to take the matter to the relevant government department. (The Department of Education and Children's Services for Kindergarten)

### **Staff and Management**

- Staff and Management will be familiar with *Guide to Resolving Grievances and Complaints* for DECS Employees.

- A copy of *Guide to Resolving Grievances and Complaints* will be kept in the filing cabinet for staff to access.

### **Community**

- Community members are asked to make an appointment with the Director.
- If the concern is not resolved community the Director will notify the Governing Council if appropriate.
- If you feel that the Governing Council does not resolve your concerns, you have the right to take the matter to The Department of Education and Children's Services.

### **Dealing with the media**

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Please refer to the Department of Education and Children's Services Dealing with media.

[www.decs.sa.gov.au](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au)

### **Role models**

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#### **Staff/carers, students and volunteers as role models**

- Children learn through example and role modelling as an important strategy to encourage children to manage conflict appropriately.
- Staff students and volunteers are required to comply with the Grievances and Complaints Management Policy.

### **Policy review**

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- The service will review the Grievances and Complaints Management Policy and procedures every 12 months.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures.
- Staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be actively involved.

### **Links to other policies**

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- Child protection
- Confidentiality and privacy
- Guiding children's behaviour
- Meeting children's individual and group needs
- Occupational health and safety
- Equity and Diversity

### **Sources and further reading**

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- *Children's Services Act*
- *Guide to Resolving Grievances and Complaints for DECS Employees 2007*
- *Complaint Resolution for Employees Policy and Procedures*

- *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cwlth)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act SA 1984*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth)*

**Policy created date**                      August 2008

**Policy review date**                     August 2009

**Signatures**

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Chairperson – Governing Council

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Director

## Yorketown Community Children’s Centre Grievance Procedure

Good relationships within the Centre and community give children greater chance of success as learners. In the event of a grievance the following guidelines are used.

Principals of this Procedure Document

- Everyone has a responsibility to treat others with Integrity, Respect and is Accountable for all their actions in accordance with the DECS Code of Conduct.
- Meetings to discuss grievances will be suspended if any person/s behave in a way that is victimising, unwelcome, offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening a person or group in accordance with this sites Equity and Diversity Policy.

Children with a grievance will... with adult support	Families with a grievance will...	Staff with a grievance will...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask the person to stop the behaviour that has caused the grievance by putting their hand out and saying in a strong voice <b>“Stop it, I do not like it when you...”</b></li> <li>2. Play in another area or with other equipment if possible.</li> <li>3. If the behaviour continues ask an adult for support.</li> <li>4. The adult will help by talking to the child who is bullying/ harassing.</li> <li>5. Assist in communicating the grievance and acknowledgement of the actions that caused the grievance.</li> <li>6. Carry out the sites behaviour guidance policy and notify parents if necessary.</li> <li>7. Set up a behaviour guidance management plan if necessary.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b><u>Please do not</u></b> come about a major grievance without prior arrangement.</li> <li>2. Arrange a mutually agreeable time to speak to the relevant staff member about the grievance. Seek advice from outside professionals if necessary.</li> <li>3. Let the Director know <i>in writing</i> what you consider to be the issue and what remedies may be sought.</li> <li>4. Allow a reasonable timeframe for the issue to be addressed.</li> <li>5. If the grievance is not addressed arrange a time to speak with the Governing Council Chairperson or member.</li> <li>6. If the grievance is still unresolved the Director will arrange a time for you to discuss the issue with the Regional Director.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrange a mutually agreeable time to speak to the person concerned. Seek advice from outside professionals if necessary.</li> <li>2. If the grievance is not resolved let the Director know <i>in writing</i> what you consider to be the issue and what remedies may be sought.</li> <li>3. The Director will acknowledge the complaint, analyse the issues, clarify the complaint and remedy sought. The Director will decide whether this procedure is appropriate or an alternative procedure. An ED155 form may be used to report an incident.</li> <li>4. If appropriate, the Director will arrange for formal investigation of the complaint including a conference with the parties and an external mediator if necessary. More than one session may be necessary until resolution is gained.</li> <li>5. The parties will be informed of the outcome of the complaint <i>in writing</i> and the case will be closed.</li> </ol>

