Preschool dealing with complaints procedure

| **National Quality Standard Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations** | **Associated department policy, procedure or guideline** | **Reference document(s) and/or advice from a recognised authority** |
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| **NQS: 7.1**  **Regulations: 173, 176** | [Leading and operating department preschool guidelines](https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/teaching-and-learning/leading-and-operating-department-preschool-guidelines)  [Complaints handling policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2002-0051)  [Staff complaint procedures [PDF 623 KB]](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/policy-library/staff-only/implementation-documents/Staff_Complaints_Procedure_2017.pdf)  [School community and consumer complaint procedure [PDF 489 KB]](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/policy-library/public/implementation-documents/School-complaint-procedure_AC.pdf)  [Making a complaint about NSW public schools – guide for parents and carers](https://education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback/guide-for-parents-carers-and-students) | [Complaints handling guide – upholding the rights of children and young people [PDF 9.1 MB]](https://www.childsafety.gov.au/system/files/2022-09/nocs-complaint-handling-guide.pdf)  ACECQA information sheet – [Using complaints to support continuous improvement [PDF 609 KB]](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/QA7_UsingComplaintsToSupportContinuousImprovement.pdf)  [Raising concerns about early childhood education and outside school hours care services [PDF 405 KB]](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/early-childhood-education/investigation-feedback-and-complaints/media/documents/Raising_concerns_flyer_for_families.pdf)  ACECQA’s policy and procedures guidelines – [Dealing with complaints [PDF 229 KB]](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/DealingComplaintsGuidelines.pdf) |
| **Pre-reading and reference documents** | | |
| ACECQA National Quality Standard Information Sheet: [Using Complaints to Support Continuous Improvement](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA7_UsingComplaintsToSupportContinuousImprovement.pdf)  [Making a Complaint About Our Schools](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/about-us/rights-and-accountability/media/documents/Making-a-complaint-about-our-schools.pdf)  - family information sheet  [Guide to the Child Safe Standards](https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/g_CSS_GuidetotheStandards.pdf)  [Community Complaint Procedure](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2002-0051-01) | | |
| **Staff roles and responsibilities** | | |
| **School principal** | The principal as Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader and Responsible Person holds primary responsibility for the preschool.  The principal is responsible for ensuring:   * the preschool is compliant with legislative standards related to this procedure at all times * the people working with children are safe and supported (CSS 5 – see [Guide to the Child Safe Standards)](https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/g_CSS_GuidetotheStandards.pdf) * all staff involved in the preschool are familiar with and implement this procedure * all procedures are current and reviewed as part of a continuous cycle of self- assessment. * analysing complaints, incidents or issues and what the implications are for the updates to this procedure * reflecting on how this procedure is informed by relevant recognised authorities | |
| **Preschool educators** | The preschool educators are responsible for working with leadership to ensure:   * all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure * storing this procedure in the preschool and making it accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers * being actively involved in the review of this procedure, as required, or at least annually * ensuring the details of this procedure’s review are documented. * planning and discussing ways to engage with families and communities, including how changes are communicated * developing strategies to induct all staff when procedures are updated to ensure practice is embedded | |
| **Procedure** | | |
| **Making a complaint** | * The preschool’s service approval details are clearly displayed at the preschool entrance. It includes the preschool’s phone number and notes that, *any complaints are to be directed to the school principal*. * The service approval details also note the name and contact number of the regulatory authority. Families are informed that they can make a complaint to the regulatory authority by the signs posted in the front foyer, verbally and through regular newsletters. * If a staff member has concerns related to the behaviour or actions of another employee, contractor or volunteer, they must notify the school principal who will seek advice from the Professional and Ethical Standards (PES). Phone 7814 3722 or email pes@det.nsw.edu.au * Complaints about the school principal can be made to the relevant Director Educational Leadership and PES. | |
| **Dealing with complaints** | * Our preschool implements the *NSW Department of Education’s Complaints Handling Policy.* * Complaints are dealt with in an open, respectful, and confidential manner. * Initially, the preschool teacher will seek to address and resolve complaints respectfully and informally, as soon as possible. * If a complaint cannot be resolved by the teacher, is a serious complaint or related to child protection, it will be referred to the principal immediately. * If an SLSO or AEO receives a complaint, they must contact their Nominated Supervisor immediately. * Details of any complaints made are documented. Complaints are recorded in the principal’s office in a diary. | |
| **Notification of a serious complaint** | * If a formal complaint is made alleging that the Law has been contravened or that a serious incident has occurred or is occurring, notification must be made to Early Learning (phone 1300 083 698) within 24 hours of the complaint being received. | |

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| Implementing the child safe standards | * Our preschool deals with complaints in a manner that is child-focused. * Teachers and educators provide time and space for children to talk about their fears, concerns and safety needs. They are listened to and feel supported. * Children’s input and feedback is sought to make the preschool a place that everyone feels safe, for example, the children contribute to the development of safety rules for different areas of the preschool or pieces of equipment and the group suggest phrases that can be used when needed by children and staff to prompt a child to be respectful of others. * Each child’s identity is acknowledged and valued through home cultures and languages being visible in learning experiences, displays and resources * Children are believed and their concerns or complaints are taken seriously and acted upon, including being informed of the outcome of their complaint, as appropriate. * Concerns and complaints are welcomed and considered a valuable source of information that can be used to help enhance the quality of the preschool’s processes, procedures and practices. * The preschool program provides intentional opportunities for children to share their opinion and feelings on matters affecting them and contribute to decision-making in a way that is meaningful and appropriate for their age. * The preschool culture values and responds to children’s voices. * Complaints about children exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours will be reported to the principal, as required by the department’s Complaints Handling policy. |

#### **Record of procedure’s review**

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| Date of review | 24/06/2024 |
| Who was involved | ECT in consultation with the preschool supervisor and preschool educator team.  The principal approved changes and access to current procedures is available to the executive team and anyone who may relieve in the preschool.  Nadia Mills, Katie Bassett-White, Cristal Lawson, Marsha Harris, Rylee Wall, Janette Bussell |
| Key changes made and reason why | Updated to remove EPAC details  Updated to include PES Details and [Community complaint procedures (nsw.gov.au)](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2002-0051-01) |
| Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders | Principal: emailed **24/06/2024**  Staff: emailed **24/06/2024; Team meeting 26/06/2024**  Parents: KInderloop Post  Please note, parents must be notified at least 14 days prior to a change that may have a significant impact on their service’s provision of education and care or a family’s ability to use the service. |

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| Date of review | 06/12/23 |
| Who was involved | Nadia Mills, Christina Ashby, Cristal Lawson |
| Key changes made and reason why | After a direct complaint made, we felt it appropriate to review our complaints handling procedure.  We also took the opportunity to add a section, explicitly calling out how we embed the new child-safe standards in relation to complaints handling.  We updated links to key reference documents in the reference table at the top of the procedure. |
| Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders | Principal:06/12/23  Staff:06/12/23  Parents:06/12/23  Please note parents must be notified at least 14 days prior to a change that may have a significant impact on their service’s provision of education and care or a family’s ability to use the service. |

#### Record of procedure’s review (master – copy before use)

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| --- | --- |
| Date of review |  |
| Who was involved | ECT in consultation with the preschool supervisor and preschool educator team.  The principal approved changes and access to current procedures is available to the executive team and anyone who may relieve in the preschool. |
| Key changes made and reason why |  |
| Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders | Principal:  Staff:  Parents:  Please note, parents must be notified at least 14 days prior to a change that may have a significant impact on their service’s provision of education and care or a family’s ability to use the service. |

| Record of procedure’s review |
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| **Date of review and who was involved** |
| March 2023 Cara Becroft |
| **Key changes made and reason/s why** |
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| **Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders** |
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