

Ballina River Street Children's Centre

Complaints and Feedback Policy

POLICY CREATED DATE:	POLICY REVIEW DATED:
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Introduction

Ballina River Street Children's Centre values the feedback of educators, staff, families and the wider community in helping to create a service that meets regulation and the needs of enrolled children and their families. We encourage open communication through opportunities to respond and feedback on the program.

A component of this feedback is the ability to put forward a complaint and have this managed appropriately with due consideration for accountability and quality improvement. .

Goals - What are we going to do?

We will:

- Provide opportunities for consultation, evaluation and review of the service operation and delivery of the education and care program;

- Develop a process for making and managing complaints;

- Communicate the option and process of making a complaint;

- Handle complaints diligently and confidentially.

Strategies - How will it be done?

Feedback:

Communications will aim at all times to be open, honest and confidential. Ballina River Street Children's Centre will offer a variety of ways to communicate and provide feedback including:

- Day books

- Daily Program - will have a section dedicated to comments or feedback on the program and activities

- Interactions

- Formal feedback and comments

- Surveys

- Family meetings

With permission, educators may write comments on behalf of families to help with evaluations of the program and encourage further family input. Families are provided the service's email address and phone details at orientation. Families will be encouraged to converse with educators at pick up and drop off times, and may email or call throughout the day.

Feedback from families is encouraged and educators and staff will take this feedback into account in ongoing planning and quality improvement. Families will be informed as to how their feedback has contributed to improvements in the service through information notice board displays, emails, and/or newsletters.

Complaints

The nominated Supervisor will:

1. Develop a process for managing complaints. This process includes:
 - a. Receiving complaints;
 - b. Addressing and investigating complaints;
 - c. Documenting complaints.
2. Communicate information on the process to families through enrolment and orientation processes and information.
3. Provide contact details for putting forward a complaint.
4. Ensure every complaint is managed and is an opportunity for quality improvement.
5. Discuss the process for managing complaints with the educator and staff team.
6. Provide or arrange training on complaints management.

Sample process (Information for families)

1. Families make a formal complaint about aspects of our service and no person will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of that complaint.
2. Complaints should be forwarded to:
 - Name of Service
 - Name of Approved Provider
 - Name of Nominated Supervisor
 - Address and Phone
3. Your complaint will be dealt with in the strictest confidentiality. Any educator or staff member involved in handling complaints will ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to be notified in order to deal with the complaint. If information specific to the complaint needs to be disclosed to others during its resolution, the complainant will be informed.
4. Your complaint will be documented by an educator or staff member, and placed on the complaints register. The complaint will then be forwarded on to the most appropriate person to investigate the complaint. This will include the Nominated Supervisor and the approved provider.
5. Actions to address the complaint will be determined. Once the outcomes or resolutions are agreed on, all persons involved in the original complaint will be notified and informed of any actions for improvement that will take place as a result of the complaint.
6. The Department of Education and Communities will be notified of any complaint made to the service alleging a breach of regulation within 24 hours of the complaint being made.

Sample process (Information for educators and staff)

Please note - this is not a grievance procedure. Matters of staff grievance should be dealt with under a grievance policy relating to staff.

1. Educators and staff may make a formal complaint about aspects of our service and no person will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of that complaint.

2.. Complaints should be forwarded to:

- Name of Service
- Name of Approved Provider
- Name of Nominated Supervisor
- Address and Phone

3. Your complaint will be dealt with in the strictest confidentiality. Any educator or staff member involved in handling complaints will ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to be notified in order to deal with the complaint. If information specific to the complaint needs to be disclosed to others during its resolution, the complainant will be informed.

4. Your complaint will be documented, and placed on the complaints register. The complaint will then be forwarded on to the most appropriate person to investigate the complaint. This will include the Nominated Supervisor and the approved provider.

5. Actions to address the complaint will be determined. Once the outcomes or resolutions are agreed on, all persons involved in the original complaint will be notified and informed of any actions for improvement that will take place as a result of the complaint.

6. The Department of Education and Communities will be notified of any complaint made to the service alleging a breach of regulation which alleges that the safety health or wellbeing of a child was or is affected, or that the service has broken the Education and Care Services National Law within 24 hours of the complaint being made.

Evaluation

Continuous improvement of our service occurs where there is reflection and constructive feedback given from the service community, which results in positive change and improvement.

Complaints are managed well, lead to quality improvement and are conducted in a safe manner in a secure environment.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000

Sources

- NSW Ombudsman (2004) 'Effective Complaint Handling'. NSW Ombudsman
- NSW Ombudsman (2009) "Complaint Handling Kit". NSW Ombudsman
- Community Childcare Cooperative Sample Policies - www.ccccnsw.org.au