

# GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES



## (for parents/educators/children)

### Statement

The Norwood OSHC service takes grievances about the service, its staff, educators, practices and procedures seriously. There are processes in place to ensure all grievances are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner. The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be applied when managing all grievances.

### The service will address grievances by:

- a) Ensuring a clear, accessible and documented procedure is made available to all families, educators and children.
- b) Ensuring that the process is fair to all parties involved.
- c) Ensuring that they are dealt with promptly.
- d) Maintaining confidentiality.
- e) Maintaining records of grievances, processes and outcomes.
- f) Notifying the regulatory body of any grievance that alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised, or that the law has been breached.

### General

The Grievances Policy and procedures are made available to families through the OSHC website and on enrolment. The Grievances Policy and procedures is also available to families at the service. Educators may access the Grievances Policy and procedures through the policies folder and staff handbook issued on employment. Children will access the grievances procedure through the Student Committee poster clearly displayed.

### A Grievance can be made in the following manner:

- verbally in person or by phone
- in writing by mail or email
- staff meetings
- Child/parent feedback book
- noted in the day book

### Procedure for families lodging a grievance

1. If a parent/caregiver feels they have a grievance, or are unhappy or uncomfortable with any aspect of their child's care, they are encouraged to discuss the concern with the Director.
2. Concerns may relate to any issue and should be dealt with as soon as possible to ensure that the problem does not worsen or is left unresolved.
3. The welfare and care of all children at Norwood Out of School Hours Care is a priority of all educators. As our time is committed to all children while they are in care it is requested that a time be made to discuss the issue, with the Director, away from the program time.
4. If the parent/caregiver feels that the issue has not been resolved by consultation with the Director, then the Chairperson of the Norwood OSHC Committee will be contacted. To assist in resolving any concerns the Chairperson may recommend expressing the issue/s in writing and tabling the letter at a Management Committee Meeting.
5. The Norwood Out of School Hours Care Committee will then deal with the issue accordingly. All suggestions and grievances will be respectfully dealt with and welcomed by the service as an opportunity for improvement.

**The procedure should consider the following:**

- Families are requested to not discuss grievances in front of children.
- Grievances regarding any aspect of the service should be addressed with the Director in the first instance. If the grievance is about the Director, it should be addressed to the Chairperson of the NOSHC Management Committee.
- In the event that you feel uncomfortable in dealing with a grievance personally, you may nominate an advocate to mediate on your behalf.

**Procedures for Educators lodging a grievance**

1. If an Educator feels they have a grievance, or are unhappy or uncomfortable with any aspect of their employment, they are encouraged to discuss the concern with the Director.
2. Concerns may relate to any issue and should be dealt with as soon as possible to ensure that the problem does not worsen or is left unresolved.
3. The welfare, health and safety of all Educators at Norwood Out of School Hours Care is a priority of management. Due to the commitment to children while they are in care it is requested that a time be made to discuss the issue, with the Director, away from the program time.
4. If the Educator feels that the issue has not been resolved by consultation with the Director, then the Chairperson of the Norwood OSHC Committee will be contacted. To assist in resolving any concerns the Chairperson may recommend expressing the issue/s in writing and tabling the letter at a Management Committee Meeting. The Norwood Out of School Hours Care Committee will then deal with the issue accordingly.

**Comments and Suggestions**

**These may be raised;**

- at staff meetings
- passed on to the Assistant Director or Director in person
- noted in the Day Book
- Noted in the Incident Folder

**The procedure should consider the following:**

- If the grievance is of an industrial nature, the requirements of the relevant Award must be addressed and followed. External advice may need to be sought.
- In the interest of the children and the professional operation of the service, these grievances will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and confidentially.
- Some grievances may be resolved by presenting the matter for discussion at a staff meeting.

**Procedures for children lodging a grievance**

The opportunity for and direction on how children can lodge a grievance should be fully explained to them and clearly visible on a poster. Such issues may be in relation to incidents with other children, issues with an educator or of a general nature.

As stated in the 'Convention on the Rights of the child' a child has the right to express both their views and opinions which will be taken into account in any matter affecting the child (Article 12 & 13 UNICEF)

A grievance may be lodged with the OSHC Student Committee, passed onto an Educator or given to the Director.

**These may be raised by:**

- A note or letter
- Verbally
- Email
- Placed on the suggestion board

### **The procedure should consider the following:**

- Both children and Educators will take children's grievances seriously and attend to them as a matter of priority whilst maintaining confidentiality. Where educators are unable to take appropriate action regarding a child's grievance, educators will inform the Director.
- Grievances relating to an Educator or Educator's conduct are to be directed to the Director. Children may have a family member or other representative to assist them raise their concerns.
- A grievance on aspects of the program are to be directed to the Student Committee or posted on the suggestion board. Children are encouraged to give feedback and make suggestions which will ultimately be incorporated into our program routines as an opportunity for improvement.

### **Grievance handling process**

The Nominated Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that any grievance that alleges a breach of legislation or a serious incident is reported to the Approved Provider\*. The [Approved Provider] will be responsible for ensuring that the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board is notified within 24 hours of any grievance that alleges a breach of legislation or where the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised.

- The Approved Provider and/or Director will:
  - Investigate grievances promptly and thoroughly with the understanding that the complainant will not be disadvantaged through the process.
  - Listen/read the grievance and document the exact details of the grievance.
  - Seek further information, to clarify the issues and investigate the grievance, including speaking to other parties involved as required.
  - Seek additional advice from Educators and other agencies, including legal advice, as required.
  - Refer to any State or National Regulations or organisational policy that may provide clarity to the grievance, as required.
  - Assess the grievance fairly and determine the best possible resolution.
  - Inform the complainant of the outcome in writing or verbally, as required, in a timely manner.
  - Ensure that the grievance process and its outcome are documented and that all documentation is treated and stored confidentially.
- Grievances not resolved at this level will be referred to the OSHC Management Committee.
- Families have a right to lodge a grievance directly with the Regulatory Authority.

#### **National Law & Regulations:**

Section: [21](#), [51\(2\)](#), [56](#), [56A](#), [161](#), [161A](#), [162](#), [162A](#), [165-74](#), [175](#), [188](#)

Regulations: [31](#), [55-6](#), [158](#), [161-2](#), [167-74](#), [174A](#) [175-6](#), [176A](#), [177](#), [180-1](#), [183-5](#)

#### **Resources/References:**

1. DECD Responding to Concerns from Families and Caregivers at [www.crisis.sa.edu.au/files/links/Responding\\_to\\_Concerns.pdf](http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/files/links/Responding_to_Concerns.pdf)
2. NCAC OSHCQA Factsheet # 15 at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) (go to NCAC Archive)
3. DECD Parent Grievances Policy: A Guide to Raising a Concern or Grievance at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy index](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy%20index)
4. DECD Grievance Resolution for Employees at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/ policy index](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy%20index)
5. DECD Grievances: Parent Concerns and Grievances Procedure at [www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy index](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/policy%20index)
6. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) UNICEF

#### **National Quality Standard:**

- 4.2 Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.
- 6.1 Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
- 7.1 Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
- 7.2 Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.