



Coowarra Out Of School Hours

Care Service Inc

Grievance Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

At Coowarra OOSH we aim to maintain a positive working environment for educators and for the committee. We will do this through addressing all work related problems, complaints or concerns as quickly and effectively as possible. The procedure encourages participation of concerned persons in the resolution process. The highest standards of confidentiality will be practised at all times.

The Organisation will maintain a grievance and complaints management system to ensure that all Staff, children, families, volunteers and community members know that any grievance or complaint will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and fairly.

We will identify grievances and complaints as opportunities to review the quality of our Organisation. Confidentiality will be practiced at all times.

PROCEDURE

- On commencement all Educators and Management Committee Members will be made aware of the centre's Grievance Procedure through relevant policies.
- The Organisation will support an individual's right to make a complaint and will help them to try to resolve them.
- All persons involved in the grievance should attempt to resolve the issue through informal discussion and use problem solving techniques
- If individuals have a grievance or complaint that they feel has not been resolved properly then they can approach any member of the current Committee to make a formal complaint.
- Either party may withdraw their grievance or complaint at any time. However, where the grievance or complaint identifies other issues of concern, Committee may decide to investigate those issues.
- Organisation will ensure that all individuals involved in the complaint process are provided with a high level of equity and fairness in relation to the grievance process and complaint management procedures
- All grievances and complaints are to be treated seriously, fairly and impartially.
- Persons directly involved in a legitimate grievance process will be expected to continue to conduct themselves at and around the centre in a professional manner.
- Any problem, complaint or concern arising between Educators or between Committee Members should be dealt with by the persons



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concerned as close to the event as possible in order to avoid escalation of the issue. Educators and management are not to discuss grievances with people who are not involved in the issue, unless the discussion is with a person in management who is dealing with the issue.

- Grievance and complaints management are to be mediated fairly and the process is transparent to all parties involved.
- Organisation is to ensure that privacy and confidentiality is maintained at all times throughout the process, ensuring that only individuals who are directly impacted by the complaint or grievance are involved. However there may be instances where third parties will need to be involved if we are required by legislation to do so e.g. - if it is a child protection issue, work place bullying etc
- Wherever possible, grievances and complaints should be resolved as soon as possible on an informal level. Where the informal process fails or if any of the parties involved wish to pursue a more formal process then the matter is to be taken further.
- If an individual or group have a grievance or complaint they should discuss the issue with the Coordinator, or Responsible Person.
- This will provide an opportunity to discuss the issue and hopefully come to a satisfactory resolution.
- This conversation should be documented by the Staff member who received the complaint and discussed and resolved the issue, with the date, who made the complaint, nature of complaint and resolution. This should be filed at the Service and a copy given to the Nominated Supervisor and/or Management.
- If the issue can not be resolved at the informal level then the issue will need to escalate to a more formal process.
- All formal grievances and complaints are to be in writing to avoid confusion and misinterpretation of the issue and to ensure clear, precise and transparent documentation. These should outline the complaint, and what the desired action or resolution to the issue may be
- An estimated timeframe for resolution should be communicated to all parties, as well as steps that will be taken to resolve the issue (e.g. – interview other parties, investigation, mediation, third parties becoming involved etc.). Accurate documentation of the process needs to be kept at all times.
- Each complaint is to be treated individually and steps taken to resolve the issue will vary depending on individuals involved, circumstances of the grievance or complaint and wishes of all parties involved. Communication with all parties involved will be maintained at all times so everyone is aware of what is happening.
- If the complaint is about an individual, then that individual is to be provided the opportunity to respond to the complaint/grievance. Individuals have the right to seek assistance and support from a support person (e.g. – union representative) of their choice when



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responding to a complaint/grievance against them. They will receive feedback in relation to any outcomes.

- Wherever possible, all complaints and grievances should be resolved in a way that is satisfactory to all involved.
- Coordinator and/or Manager will inform all parties, in writing, of outcomes and decisions made regarding the issue.
- If the complaint is not handled to the individual's satisfaction by Coordinator or Manager then the issue should be brought to the attention of the Committee, in writing.
- Committee will discuss the issue with the Manager or Coordinator 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 Manager and/or Coordinator, Committee representative and individuals/groups who made the complaint to resolve the problem. All meetings and discussions will be minuted.
- Written records will be kept of all communication and meetings between all parties involved.
- Complaints, will be recorded accordingly and dated indicating the issue and/or concern and how it was resolved, include any evidence to support resolution and outcomes. It should also be documented if the complaint or grievance resolution resulted in practice or Policy changes at the Service.
- All confidential conversations with individuals who have a grievance and complaint will take place in a quiet place away from children, other parents or Staff not involved.
- At formal grievance resolution meetings all parties are entitled to invite a support person to attend. This person does not provide input into the meeting, but may offer support and advice to their party during the meeting.
- The Nominated Supervisor must notify the Regulatory Authority of any complaints made at the Service operated by the approved provider Coowarra OOSH– Please see Reporting to the Regulatory Authority Policy
- Where resolution is not achieved, the Manager or Committee are to advise all parties of their rights to seek external advice and make a written report. Agencies they may access can include but not limited to:

NSW State Ombudsman Office: Level 24, 580 George Street, Sydney
NSW 2000 Tollfree: 1800 451 524 (02) 9286 1000

Email: nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au



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Web page: <http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/contact-us>
Early Childhood Education Directorate: NSW Department of Education:
(NSW Regulatory Authority)

Locked Bag 5107, Parramatta, NSW 2124 Tollfree: 1800 619 113
Email: ececd@det.nsw.edu.au

Web Page: www.education.nsw.gov.au
Level 13, 175 Liverpool St, Sydney NSW 2000 Ph: 13 13 94

Web Page: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au>
Activity Centres Incorporated is a community based not for profit
Organisation managed by a Parent Committee

Fair Work Ombudsman

Grievances/Complaints from Children

- Children have the right to voice grievances and/or complaints and have these issues taken seriously and dealt with equally and fairly.
- Where children have a grievance/complaint against another child's behaviour towards them at the Service, Staff are to follow the Behaviour Management Policy and Anti-Bullying- Children Policy.

Where children make a complaint against a Staff Member at a Service:

- Children may make a grievance or complaint against a Staff Member at a Service to any Staff member they feel comfortable with.
- Staff Member receiving the complaint should inform the Coordinator of the complaint and document the conversation with the date and nature of the complaint, and the resolution the child is seeking. If the complaint made by the child is about the Coordinator then the complaint should be forwarded onto the Manager.
- If the issue is of a child protection matter then steps outlined in our Child Protection Policy and our Reporting to the Regulatory Authority Policy must be followed.
- Parents of the child will be informed that the child has made a complaint against a Staff Member and that this complaint/grievance is under investigation or has been resolved. If quick resolution was found then this should also be documented and disclosed to the family.
- If the child complaint, through investigation, is found to be baseless then this will be discussed with child and family, and the evidence to support this conclusion presented.
- If the child complaint is found to be legitimate, child and family will be informed of the steps taken by Management to rectify the issue (eg – additional training, procedure change etc.).



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- If the Staff Member who the complaint is made against is found to not be following our OSHC Code of Professional Standards or not following Code of Conduct Policy, Conditions of Employment Policy or Staff Professionalism Policy then disciplinary action will be taken in line with our Disciplinary Action Policy.

Where the child makes a complaint against another adult (parent of another child etc.)

- Children may make a grievance or complaint against an adult at the Service (e.g. parent of another child) to any Staff Member they feel comfortable with.
- Staff Member receiving the complaint should inform the Coordinator of the complaint and document the conversation with the date and nature of the complaint, and the resolution the child is seeking.
- If the issue is of a child protection matter then steps outlined in our Child Protection Policy and our Reporting to the Regulatory Authority Policy must be followed.
- Parents of the child will be informed that the child has made a complaint against an adult who is in the Service community and that this grievance/complaint is under investigation or has been resolved. The Parent/s will be informed to not approach the other adult that we will mediate the issue if need be. If quick resolution was found then this should also be documented and disclosed to family.
- Other adult, who complaint is about will be approached, and provided the opportunity to respond to the complaint made and a resolution sought.
- Child and family of child, who made initial complaint will be informed of the resolution and conversation with adult.

Grievances/Complaints from Parents/Guardians

- Parents/Guardians have the right to voice grievance and/or complaints and have these issues taken seriously and dealt with equally and fairly.
- Where parents have a grievance/complaint against another child's behaviour, Staff may be required to follow Behaviour Management Policy and Anti-Bullying- Children Policy.

Where parents/guardians make a complaint against a Staff Member at the Service:

- Parents/guardians are to make a complaint against a Staff Member at the Service to the Coordinator, Manager or Committee in writing.
- If parent/guardian approaches a Staff Member, who is not the Coordinator, Manager or member of Committee, then that Staff Member is to direct the parent/guardian that they need to see one aforementioned personnel.



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- The letter of complaint should clearly state date and nature of the complaint, and the resolution the family is seeking.
- If the complaint made by the parent/guardian is about the Coordinator then the complaint should be made in writing to the Committee.
- Staff Member who the complaint has been made about will be informed about the complaint and be provided with an opportunity to respond to the complaint.
- If the issue relates to a child protection matter then steps outlined in the Child Protection Policy and Reporting to the Regulatory Authority Policy, must be followed. NSW Ombudsman may also need to be contacted in relation to the complaint.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint the Staff Member may have to be stood down, until the investigation process is finalised. This will be determined by the Co-ordinator and Committee on a case by case basis.
- If the complaint, through investigation, is found to be baseless then this will be discussed with the Parents so that everyone is aware of steps taken. Family will be informed as to what evidence has led to this conclusion.
- If the Staff Member who the complaint is made against is found to not be following our OSHC Code of Professional Standards or not following conditions signed in their Letter of Employment, Code of Conduct Policy, Conditions of Employment Policy or Staff Professionalism Policy then disciplinary action will be taken in line with our Disciplinary Action Policy.

Where the parent/guardian makes a complaint against another adult (parent of another child etc.)

- Parents may make a grievance/complaint against an adult at the Service (e.g. parent of another child) in writing.
- Staff Member receiving the complaint should inform the Coordinator of the complaint and document the conversation with the date and nature of the complaint, and the resolution the Parent is seeking.
- If the issue is of a child protection matter then steps outlined in our Child Protection Policy and Reporting to the Regulatory Authority Policy must be followed.
- The Parent/Guardian will be informed by Staff to not approach the other adult, that we will mediate the issue if need be. If quick resolution was found then this should also be documented and disclosed to Parent.
- The adult, who complaint is about will be approached, and provided the opportunity to respond to the complaint made and a resolution sought. They will also be informed not to approach the Parent who made the complaint and we will mediate the issue if necessary.



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- The individual who made initial complaint will be informed of the resolution and conversation with adult.

Grievance/Complaint between Staff:

- Any grievance/complaint made by Staff about another Staff Member should be provided in writing to the Coordinator.
- The grievance/complaint will be mediated between the Staff Members by the Management Team. A resolution will be sought as soon as possible.
- Committee will be informed of the grievance between Staff if the grievance is ongoing and can't be resolved.
- **NOTE:** Where the issue of grievance is between Management and Staff and concerns standards of work performance or work practice, then Staff Discipline Policy will be followed.

Dealing with the Media

- If at any time a situation attracts media attention it is the organisations responsibility to protect the interests and wellbeing of all parties involved.
- To avoid placing anyone's privacy at risk or providing incorrect information only the Manager or members of the Executive Committee are to respond to media claims. All other Staff and members of the Committee are to decline to comment.
- Legal representation will be sought if deemed necessary by Executive Committee.

How to lodge a complaint and or grievance to Activity Centres Incorporated

In writing via post

- Management Committee OR Director/Co-ordinator
PO Box 378 St Clair, NSW 2747

In Writing Via email

- coowarraoosh@optusnet.com.au

In Person

By Phone

- 0410 655 563 or 9670 5541



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CONSIDERATIONS

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation
National Regulation 168	Element 7.3.4 (Processes are in place to ensure that all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service Philosophy - OSHC Code of Professional Standards - Conditions of Employment Policy, - Code of Conduct Policy, - Staff Professionalism Policy, - Disciplinary Action Policy, - Child Protection Policy, - Behaviour Management Policy - Reporting to the Regulatory Authority Policy.

UPDATED AND ENDORSED: January 2023

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