



Policy No: CE-POL-035/1/2016

## Parent Complaint Policy (Under Review)

**Custodian:** Management  
Committee

**Custodian Contact:**  
[dl.5363.administration@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:dl.5363.administration@schools.sa.edu.au)

**Version No:** 1

**Approved By:**

Josephine Salisbury  
chairperson

On behalf of the Management  
Committee.

**Approval Date:** 15/6/16

**Next Review Date:** 15/6/18

**Supersedes:** New policy

### 1 Purpose:

To ensure that parent complaints are handled in a fair, efficient and effective manner.

### 2 Scope:

Approved Provider  
Nominated Supervisor  
Certified Supervisors  
Educators  
Parents & Children

### 3 Supporting Documents:

[Consumer complaints management and resolution policy \(DECD\) \(157 KB\)](#)

DECD Consumer Complaints Management and Resolution Procedure

### 4 Policy Details:

A parent can raise a concern or complaint if they think that the Centre or a staff member has:

- done something wrong
- failed to do something it should have done
- acted unfairly or impolitely.

Your concern or complaint may be about:

- the type, level or quality of services
- the behaviour and decisions of staff
- a policy, procedure or practice.

The Director and other education department staff will work alongside you to agree on a plan of action and a timeframe for resolving your issues or concerns.

Sometimes a complaint is about something we have to do because of state or federal law. In such cases we are able to talk to you about the matter and help you understand the requirements and why they exist.

## 5 Procedures:

### **Before you begin**

There are some points to keep in mind if you have a complaint about public education and care:

- Clearly identify the issue and let us know what you would like us to do about it.
- Write down key points to refer to when you report the problem.
- A friend or representative from a support organisation can attend any meeting with you. This person is not there to speak for you or to answer questions on your behalf. It's important that it's your opinions and feelings that are voiced and heard by all parties.
- If an interpreter is required, please let us know prior to any meeting.
- Written or verbal complaints should focus on the facts or details of what happened - avoid personal insults, inflammatory statements and threatening or intimidating comments.
- It's best to only discuss your complaint with people directly involved in the complaint or resolution process. This will help limit damage that can be caused by rumours.
- When a lawyer is engaged by one of the parties, the issue becomes a legal matter and will be referred to the Legal Services Unit of the department.

### **Making a complaint**

#### **1. Tell the Centre first**

Contact the Centre to arrange a time to meet with the educator or have a discussion with them on the phone. They will look into your concerns and get back to you as soon as possible.

If the matter is not resolved, or if your complaint is about an educator, you may want to meet with or write to the Director. They will work with you and the staff member to resolve the issue.

The Centre will aim to resolve your concern or complaint as soon as possible - ideally within 15 working days.

#### **2. If you are unsatisfied contact the Education Complaint Unit**

If you are not satisfied, contact the Education Complaint Unit.

Email: [DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au](mailto:DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au)

Phone: 1800 677 435 (standard call rates apply for calls from mobile phones).

The complaint unit will:

- assess your complaint
- decide what action is needed
- let you know what has been done and when you can expect to hear about the outcome.

The department's chief education officer or the executive director of the Office for Children and Young People, and the Chief Executive's office will be advised by the Education Complaint Unit of the outcome of the review. One of these senior leaders will make a decision about your complaint.

In most cases you can expect to hear of a decision within 35 working days.

### **Where to get help**

You can contact the unit on 1800 677 435 to discuss your concern or complaint, or to seek advice about resolving school problems. Staff will follow up with you to check about progress.

### **Will I be treated fairly?**

You will not be discriminated against if you make a complaint. All staff are bound by the [Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector](#) which requires staff to act impartially, fairly and equitably.

You can ask for your identity to be confidential when making a complaint. However, keep in mind:

- this may limit options for investigating and negotiating a resolution
- while every effort will be made to comply with your request, freedom of information requirements may result in your identity becoming known.

You can make an anonymous complaint. However:

- the extent to which it can be investigated is limited as staff cannot liaise with you about the complaint
- anonymous complaints raise issues in relation to natural justice - those who have allegations made about them have a right to know the particulars of the allegation.

## **6 Related Legislation and Regulations**

## **7 Definitions of Terms:**

DECD-Department of Education and Child Development

## **8 References:**

[www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning](http://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning) (accessed online 19/516)

## 9 Reviewing Strategy and History:

Review should be conducted bi-annually to ensure compliance with this procedure

Version No.	Reviewed By	Approved By	Approval Date	Review Notes
1	Management Committee	Josephine Salisbury Chairperson	15/6/16	New Policy

Under Review