



Complaints and Feedback

Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management

Relevant Legislation

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) ACT 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 168, 173, 176
National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care: Element 6.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.1

Aim / Rationale

Yass Montessori Pre-School 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. Open communication is encouraged and the Pre-School will respond to feedback provided about the service.

Policy Goals

- ✧ 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 (in accordance with the Confidentiality Policy).
- ✧ Encourage feedback provided to staff members and the Committee which will be taken into account in ongoing planning and quality improvement.
- ✧ Allow families to build rapport with staff and educators at pick up and drop off times, and may call or email throughout the day.
- ✧ Take all complaints seriously and manage them appropriately with due consideration for accountability and quality improvement.
- ✧ Grow and improve when constructive feedback is provided by the community.
- ✧ Communicate openly, honestly and confidentially.

Strategies: What will we do?

Application of this policy

The Yass Montessori Pre-School will:

- ✧ Enable feedback and evaluation of the Pre-School's education program and service delivery through consultation, evaluation, and review.
- ✧ Explain the process for making and managing complaints including
 - Receiving complaints.
 - Addressing and investigating complaints.
 - Documenting complaints.
 - Responding to or acting upon complaints.
- ✧ Communicate options to parents and staff for making a complaint, and regularly provide contact details for putting forward a complaint (which are below and will be put in the newsletter from time to time and enrolment documents).
- ✧ Discuss the process for managing complaints with the staff team.
- ✧ Handle complaints promptly and confidentially.
- ✧ Ensure every complaint is managed and is an opportunity for quality improvement.
- ✧ Investigate and undertake complaints management training from time to time.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

How parents, staff or visitors can make a complaint:

Yass Montessori Pre-school will offer a variety of ways to communicate and provide feedback including:

- ✧ Ensure verbal or written comments or feedback on the program and activities can be made.
- ✧ Greeting and chatting to families on arrival and departure.
- ✧ Providing avenues for families to provide formal feedback (such as by emailing or writing to the Administrator or Director).
- ✧ Conducting surveys and discussing programming.
- ✧ Holding meetings/information session with families from time to time.
- ✧ The Department of Education will be notified of any complaint made to the service alleging a serious breach of regulation within 24 hours of the complaint being made.
- ✧ Via Storypark.

Staff are able to raise complaints quickly to enable a quick resolution. Staff may raise concerns through staff meetings, Committee Meetings, Annual Pre-School evaluation and through a private appointment with the Director or President of the Parent Committee.

Parents and Committee members are encouraged to raise concerns/complaints as quickly as possible to enable a quick resolution. Parents and committee members may raise concerns at Monthly Committee Meetings, Annual Pre-School evaluation and through a private appointment with the Director.

Complaints should be forwarded by email to director@yassmontessori.com.au, or by mail to:

**The Director
Yass Montessori Pre-School
262a Comur St (PO Box 357), Yass NSW 2582**

Serious complaints to an external organisation

If a parent or staff member has a serious complaint or concern about the Director or the President, the matter can be raised with the:

NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate
Locked Bag 5107
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124
Phone: 1800 619 1100

RESOLUTION

Yass Montessori Pre-School aims to resolve complaints quickly and effectively and complaints should be provided to the individual staff member in the first instance. Where this is not possible, the Director should be advised as soon as possible. It is preferable that all complaints are resolved quickly and where possible informally.

If unable to be resolved informally, a family may make a formal complaint about aspects of our service. No child will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of a family or parent making a complaint. Complaints will be dealt with the strictest confidentiality.

Any educator or staff member involved in handling complaints, either verbal or in writing, will ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to be notified 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 as soon as practicable and prior to the disclosure.

Formal complaints must be in writing and serious issues should be raised with the Director directly at the earliest opportunity.

Verbal complaints will be documented by a 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 usually includes the Nominated Supervisor and the Approved Provider.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved with staff or the Director directly, a complaint may be escalated to the Committee for resolution. Decisions regarding complaints will be kept within the Pre-School Policy Guidelines. Policy is set by the elected Committee representing the points on a majority votes basis.

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.

The Pre-School reserves the right to withdraw membership of any member in accordance with its Constitution and policies for inappropriate conduct or malfeasance.

Evaluation

With permission from families, educators may write comments on behalf of families to help with evaluations of the program and encourage further family input.

Families will be informed as to how their feedback has contributed to improvements in the Pre-School through information notice board displays, emails and/or newsletters.

Procedures and Forms

Feedback

Links to other Policies

Confidentiality
Staff Handbook
Enrolment
Child Protection

Sources and References

NSW Ombudsman (2004) Effective Complaint Handling.

NSW Ombudsman NSW Ombudsman (2009) Compliant Handling Kit.

NSW Ombudsman. DEEWR child Care Services Handbook 2011-2012. (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations). www.deewr.gov.au

Privacy Law www.privacy.gov.au/law

UNICEF (n.d) fact sheet: A summary of the rights of the child under the Convention on the Rights of the child (March 2011). www.unicef.org

Early Childhood Australia (ECA). Code of Ethics
www.earlychildhoodaustralia.or.au/codeofethics

DEEWR (2009). Belonging Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia www.deewr.gov.au

ECA Code of Ethics (2006)

Community Child Care Cooperative: NQF in a Box: www.ccccnsw.org.au

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
2011	Developed	2013
April 2014	Reviewed	2018
June 2020	Updated – correct contact details for complaints	2022 or when procedure, practice or legislation changes