

CURIOSITY

Early Learning Centre

Grievance (Families) Policy

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| Publication Date: | January 2020 |
| Review Date: | September 2022 |
| Policy Officer: | Jacqui Gliddon – ELC Director |
| Related to National Quality Framework (Law and Regulations & National Quality Standards) | <p>Section 174 (2) (b) An approved provider must notify the regulatory authority of a complaint that alleges a serious incident has occurred or is occurring while a child is being educated and cared for by a service, or that the National Law and or National Regulations have been contravened.</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Regulation 168 (2-o) – The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that the service has in place policies and procedures in relation to the matters set out in sub regulation 2.</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Regulation 171 – The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that copies of the current policies and procedures required under regulation 168.</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Regulation 173 (2-b) – Prescribed information to be displayed.</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Regulation 176 (2-b) - Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority.</p> <p>National Quality Standard 6 – Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities 6.1 – Supportive relationships with families – Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role. 6.1.2 – Parent views are respected – The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing. 6.2 – Collaborative partnerships – Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.</p> <p>National Quality Standard 7 – Governance and Leadership 7.1.2 – Management systems – Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service. 7.2.1 – Continuous improvement – There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.</p> |
| Related Policies, Guidelines, Standards and Frameworks | <p>TBC Relating Polices</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Code of Conduct Policy</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Family Communication Policy</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Grievance (Families) Policy</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Grievance (Staff) Policy</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Respect for Children Policy</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Responsible Person Policy</p> <p>CURIOSITY ELC Student and Volunteer Workers Policy</p> |

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL PARA VISTA

Any person charged with implementation of this policy may, in circumstances which require special consideration, waiver from the procedures set out in this policy so as to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all relevant persons at the time of implementation, whilst ensuring the spirit of this Policy is not compromised.

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| | Good Shepherd Lutheran School – Grievance Policy |
| Policy Officer Phone: | School: 8264 7966 ELC: 7127 2820 |
| Policy Sponsor: | David Wilksch (GSLS, School Principal) |
| Applies to: | CURIOSITY Early Learning Centre at Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Para Vista |
| Key Words: | Complaints, guideline, management, Educator’s, staff, families, volunteers, positive outcomes. |
| Definitions: | <p>NQS – National Quality Standards</p> <p>EYLF – Early Years Learning Framework</p> <p>ELC – Early Learning Centre</p> <p>GSLS – Good Shepherd Lutheran School</p> <p>Staff Team – All rostered Educators and volunteers</p> <p>Complaint – An issue of a negligible nature that can be resolved within 24 hours and does not require a comprehensive investigation. Complaints include a manifestation of discontentment, such as poor service, and any verbal or written complaint directly related to the ELC (including general and notifiable complaints). Complaints do not include staff, industrial or employment matters, occupational health and safety matters (unless associated with the safety of children).</p> <p>Complaints and Grievance Register – Records information about complaints and grievances received at the ELC, along with the outcomes. This register must be kept in a secure file, accessible only to Educators and Department of Early Childhood Education and Care. The register can provide valuable information to the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor of the service to ensure children and family’s needs are being met.</p> <p>Grievance – A grievance is a formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature. For example: If the ELC is in breach of a regulation causing injury or possible harm to a child.</p> <p>Mediator – A person who attempts to assist and support people involved in a conflict come to an agreement.</p> <p>Mediation – An attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement or compromise between disputants through the objective intervention of a neutral party.</p> <p>Notifiable Complaint – A complaint that alleges a breach of the Regulation and Law, National Quality Standards or alleges that the health, safety, or wellbeing of a child at the service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor to the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care within 24 hours of the complaint being made (Section 174(2)(b), Regulation 176(2)(b)). Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the ACECQA website: www.acecqa.gov.au and logged using NQA ITS (National Quality Agenda IT System).</p> <p>Serious Incident – An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma, or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services, or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the centre in contravention of the Regulations, or is mistakenly locked in/out of the centre premises (Regulation 12).</p> <p>Privacy and Confidentiality – Management and Educators will adhere to our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy when dealing with grievances.</p> |

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| | However, if a grievance involves a staff member or child protection issues, a government agency may need to be informed. |
| Status: | Active – 10/01/2020 |
| Version | 1.0 |
| Policy Approved: | Approved by: GSLS Management Representative Name: <u>DAVID WILKSCH</u> Signature: <u>[Signature]</u> CURIOSITY ELC Director Name: <u>Jacqui Gliddon</u> Signature: <u>[Signature]</u> Date: <u>10.1.2020</u> |
| Review Period: | 3 Years |

Version Control

| Version | Action: | Date: |
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| Policy .v1 | Endorsed | |
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Policy Statement

This policy is in place to ensure that CURIOSITY Early Learning Centre remains a community of learners that embraces not only the children in our care but the unique families that they are treasured by. Our ELC is a place where no-one is a stranger, and everyone is welcome! However, we identify that when life gets tough or issues compound, we often find it most difficult to behave in ways that positively reflect what we value – that’s human nature.

As a Christian ELC, we seek to be a place of physical, social and psychological safety for all where legal requirements are fulfilled, and where caring, cooperative and respectful relationships contribute to supportive communities that reflect the values of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are committed to working in open, active partnerships with parents and caregiver to resolve any concerns regarding the wellbeing, relationships, sense of belonging or developmental progress with the life of their child.

Aim

CURIOSITY Early Learning Centre places a high priority on ensuring that our families have a simple structure, that when implemented to tackle challenges and problems, will lead to appropriate outcomes and serve to maintain and strengthen relationships. We welcome opportunities to critically reflect on areas of continuous improvement as we know that the environment and the families we interact with are forever evolving.

This policy aims to provide an efficient, fair and accessible framework for resolving concerns and ensures that the concern handling process is transparent, consistently applied, accountable and is dealt in a sensitive and confidential manner. We aim to investigate all complaints and grievances with a high standard of equity and fairness, ensuring that the following policy values are followed:

- Procedural fairness and natural justice.
- Code of ethics and conduct.
- Culture free from discrimination and harassment.
- Transparent policies and procedures.
- Opportunities for further investigation.
- Adhering to our ELC Statement of Philosophy.

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This policy applies to staff, parents, visitors and children of CURIOSITY Early Learning Centre.

Procedure

Matthew 18:15-17 – “If a fellow believer hurts you, go and tell him – work it out between the two of you. If he listens, you’ve made a friend. If he won’t listen, take one or two others along so that the presence of witnesses will keep things honest, and try again. If he still won’t listen, tell the church. If he won’t listen to the church, you’ll have to start over from scratch, confront him with the need for repentance, and offer again God’s forgiving love.”

Some of the best opportunities we have to foster and promote the values and grow our community, are times of adversity, challenge and high emotion. We all hold the responsibility to look for and acknowledge the love of God in all situations and build others up. Issues or concerns within the community are most effectively dealt with if they are raised in the following ways.

Step 1 – Stop and prayerfully reflect on the situation.

Step 2 – Make an appointment to talk to the person with whom you have the concern of with who is closely related to your concern. Give forward notice of the subject you wish to discuss as this will facilitate the preparation and ensure the issue is directed to the appropriate person. Approaching an ELC Staff member in the busyness of the morning or afternoon routine is not an appropriate time to discuss issues and does not offer a platform for confidentiality.

Step 3 – Meet with the staff member, demonstrate respect and use appropriate problem solving and or conflict resolution strategies to formulate positive action for the future.

It is recommended you take time to:

- Identify the facts.
- Take turns to speak the facts known about the problem.
- When each is speaking the other must listen without interjection.
- Explore why the facts present a problem.
- Share feelings: How has the problem affected you personally?
- Make a plan: Jointly commit to some future action and goals within the guidelines of ELC policy and acknowledging the Statement of Philosophy.
- Follow up: Schedule an evaluation meeting to measure progress and to ensure both parties remain accountable to the action plan.

If you consider that the issue you have raised is not being resolved appropriately, it is important that you state this to the person at the conclusion of the meeting.

Step 4 – If the issues are not resolved, make an appointment with the Director or if the grievance is against the Director, make a time with the GSLS Principal.

Step 5 – Meet with the Principal. Results of this meeting may include:

- Data is collected and the situation is monitored.
- Further discussions and problem solving with those involved.
- External/professional support for the child or family may be sought.

Implementation Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor

To ensure that complaints and grievances are managed in an honorable and timely manner, the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- Treat all grievances seriously and as a priority.
- Ensure grievances remain confidential.
- Ensure grievances reflect procedural fairness and natural justice.

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- Discuss the issue with the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the verbal or written complaint.
- Investigate and document the grievance fairly and impartially.
- Offer a translator if the complainant does not have English as their first language.

The investigation will consist of:

- Reviewing the circumstances and facts of the complaint (or breach) and inviting all affected parties to provide information where appropriate and pertinent.
- Discussing the nature of the complaint (or breach) and giving the accused educator, staff member, volunteer, or visitor an opportunity to respond.
- Permitting them the accused person to have a support person present during the consultation (for example: Union Representative or family member; however, this does not include a lawyer acting in a professional capacity).
- Providing the employee with a clear written statement outlining the outcome of the investigation.
- Advise the complainant and all affected parties of the outcome within 7 working days of receiving the verbal or written complaint.
- Management will provide a written response outlining the outcome and provide a copy to all parties involved.
- If a written agreement about the resolution of the complaint is prepared, all parties will ensure the outcomes accurately reflects the resolution and sign in agreement.
- Should management decide not to proceed with the investigation after initial enquiries, a written notification outlining the reasoning will be provided to the complainant.
- Keep appropriate records of the investigation and outcome and store those these records in accordance with our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*.
- Monitor ongoing behaviour and provide support as required.
- Ensure the parties are protected from victimisation and bullying.
- Request feedback on the grievance process using a feedback form.
- Track complaints to identify recurring issues within the ELC.
- Notify the Department of Education and Communities within 24 hours if a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised.

Responsibilities of the Educators

To ensure that complaints and grievances are managed in an honorable and timely manner, the Educators will:

- Listen sensitively to families who have a complaint or a grievance and refer them to the ELC Grievance (Family) policy. Directing the family member to the Director or Nominated Supervisor allows for a solution to be achieved quicker.
- Refrain from discussing complaints or grievances with other staff members.
- Be willing to support the investigation process with the Director in collecting data and information to find a resolution.
- Have the assurance that their confidentiality will be upheld throughout any investigative process when appropriate.

Responsibilities of the Families

To ensure that complaints and grievances are managed in an honorable and timely manner, the ELC families will:

- Use their discretion when speaking to others about their concerns.
- Not get involved in complaints or grievances that do not concern them. This is not ethical or helpful in managing individual circumstances.
- Refrain from using social media as the forum to air any form of grievance relating to the ELC. This is viewed by the ELC as a serious breach of 'contract' and failure to support the ELC's vision and values.
- Ensure that they use the procedure within this policy to raise their concerns before going to external regulators.
- Be aware that if grievances are aired in an inappropriate manner, the parent/s will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal and or Chair of Council. Due to the importance that CURIOSITY ELC places on building and maintaining positive community relationships, repeated deviation from this protocol may result in the termination of enrolment.

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ACECQA National Quality Standards Website - <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

ACECQA Guide to the National Quality Framework Resource - <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-10/Guide-to-the-NQF.pdf>

ACECQA, Using Complaints to Support Continuous Improvement, accessed 8/12/2019, https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA7_UsingComplaintsToSupportContinuousImprovement.pdf

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The Australian Human Rights Commission and Early Childhood Australia – Supporting young children's rights statement of intent (2015-2018).

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CURIOSITY Early Learning Centre Standard Collection Notice

1. CURIOSITY Early Learning Centre (ELC) collects personal information, including sensitive information, about children and parents or guardians before and during a child's enrolment at the ELC. The primary purpose of collecting this information is to enable the ELC to provide educational services for your child that meet National Quality Standards. Allied to this, information will also be used for enrolment and administrative purposes.
2. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the ELC's legal obligations, particularly to enable the ELC to discharge its duty of care.
3. Laws governing or relating to the operation of ELC's require that certain information be collected. These include relevant Public Health and Child Protection laws.
4. Health information about children is 'sensitive information' within the terms of the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) under the *Privacy Act*. We may ask you to provide medical information and reports about your child to inform our practice and ensure your child's medical needs are met to the best of our ability.
5. The ELC, as required, either by law or as appropriate for proper discharge of our duties, will disclose personal and sensitive information to others for administrative and educational purposes. This includes disclosure to other schools, government departments, medical practitioners and people providing services to the ELC, including specialist visiting teachers, sports coaches and volunteers and counsellors.
6. Personal information collected from children is regularly disclosed to their parents or guardians. On occasions, information and photos regarding learning journey's and other achievements, activities and similar information is published in the ELC iNewsletters, online platforms such as Storypark, Good Shepherd Lutheran School iNewsletters, website and, magazines. The ELC will obtain separate permissions from the children's parent or guardian prior to publication of photographs or other marketing avenues through the School Enrolment Form.
7. The ELC may store personal information in 'the cloud' which may mean that it resides on servers which are situated outside of Australia.
8. Parents or guardians may seek access to personal information collected about them by contacting the Director of the ELC. There will, however, be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the ELC's duty of care to the student, or where children have provided information in confidence.
9. The ELC's Privacy Policy also sets out how you may register a complaint about a breach of privacy and how the School will deal with such a complaint.
10. The ELC also, from time to time, engages in fundraising activities. Information received from you may be used to make an appeal to you. It may also be disclosed to organisations that assist in the ELC's fundraising activities solely for that purpose. We shall not disclose your personal information to third parties for their own marketing purposes without your consent.
11. If you provide the ELC with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, we encourage you to inform them that you are disclosing that information to the ELC and why. The ELC does not usually disclose this information to third parties unless permission is granted.

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