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## Complaints, Grievance and Resolution Policy

### AIM

CPCK will:

- Respect the individuality of the members of our community and staff
- Have a set process to deal with conflict, complaints or objections
- Provide parents and staff with guidelines to follow if a situation occurs that they feel is not appropriate. This will enable the grievance to be resolved as quickly and as amicably as possible
- Strive to provide a workplace where people feel safe
- Create a culture in which ideas can be shared and valued to create respect for different views and ideas.
- Recognise that conflict is inevitable within the workplace and recognises the need for conflict to be resolved in a positive and respectful manner

### RATIONALE

- In accordance with our philosophy to promote the development of positive relations with families in our Preschool community
- In accordance with our WH&S management system, promote and facilitate a happy and harmonious environment for all children and staff, to decrease the risk of stress in the workplace
- Promote open communication between staff to enable staff to be self-sufficient and resilient to enable them to resolve conflict without the necessity to report to the management committee unless no resolution is imminent

### IMPLEMENTATION

Guidelines can be referred to with assisting and aiding the resolution of any grievances whether they are between staff or staff and parents. These guidelines focus on the following points:

- Maintaining a Grievance record and developing an action plan to aid resolution which will be retained in the 'Grievances, serious incident/accident and illness register' stored in the office
- Reference to a grievance resolution procedure
- Displaying the grievance resolution process in the foyer for parents under the title 'What should I do if I have a grievance?'
- Using outside sources such as a mediator or union representative if required
- Documenting and reporting as necessary, any Complaints and Incidents to ACECQA via form NL01

### FEEDBACK

Communications will aim at all times to be open, honest and confidential.

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CPCK will offer a variety of ways to communicate and provide feedback including:

Incidental Interactions

Formal feedback and comments

Surveys

Family meetings

Invitations to add to our Quality Improvement Plan clipboard on display in the foyer

A suggestion box being situated in the foyer

With permission, teachers and educators may write comments on behalf of families to help with evaluations of the program and encourage further families voices being reflected within the centre.

Families are provided the service's email address and phone details at orientation. Families will be encouraged to converse with educators at pick up and drop off times, and may email or call throughout the day.

Feedback from families is encouraged and educators and staff will take this feedback into account in ongoing planning and quality improvement.

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

### **Sample process (Information for families)**

1. Families make a formal complaint about aspects of our service. No person will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of a complaint being made.

2. Complaints should be forwarded to:

Name of Service:	Collaroy Plateau Community Kindergarten Inc.
Name of Approved Provider	Collaroy Plateau Community Kindergarten Inc.
Name of Nominated Supervisor	Susan Sorensen
Address and Phone	41-43 Hall Ave. Collaroy plateau NSW 2097 0299826167

3. Your complaint will be dealt with in confidence. Any educator or staff member involved in handling complaints will ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to be notified in order 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.

4. Your complaint will be documented by a teacher, educator or 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 can include the centre Director, Nominated Supervisor and /or the Approved provider (Management Committee).

5. 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.

6. The Department of Education will be notified of the complaint made to the service alleging a breach of regulation within 24 hours of the complaint being made.

### Sample process (Information for educators and staff)

1. Teachers, Educators and staff may make a formal complaint about aspects of our service. No person will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of that complaint.

2. Complaints should be forwarded to:

Name of Service	Collaroy Plateau Community Kindergarten Inc.
Name of Approved Provider	Collaroy Plateau Community Kindergarten Inc.
Name of Nominated Supervisor	Susan Sorensen
Address and Phone	41-43 Hall Ave. Collaroy plateau NSW 2097 0299826167

3. Your complaint will be dealt with in confidence. Any teacher, educator or staff member involved in handling complaints will ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to be notified in order 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.

4. Your complaint will be documented, and placed on the complaints register. The complaint will then be forwarded on to the most appropriate person to investigate the complaint. This may include the Director, Nominated Supervisor and/or the Approved provider (Management Committee).

5. Actions to address the complaint will be determined. Once the outcomes or resolutions are agreed upon, 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.

6. The Department of Education will be notified of any complaint made to the service alleging a breach of regulation which alleges that the safety health or wellbeing of a child was or is affected, or that the service has broken the Education and Care Services National Law within 24 hours of the complaint being made.

### Sources

NSW Ombudsman (2004) 'Effective Complaint Handling'. NSW Ombudsman

NSW Ombudsman (2009) "Complaint Handling Kit". NSW Ombudsman

S174 of the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

*Last Reviewed: March 2019*

*Next Review: March 2022*

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## **Steps for resolving conflict and grievance within the workplace**

When people work together, conflict is often unavoidable because of differences in work goals and personal styles. Follow these guidelines for handling conflicts and grievances within the workplace.

### **1. Talk with the other person.**

- Ask the other person to name a time when it would be convenient to meet.
- Arrange to meet in a place where you won't be interrupted.

### **2. Focus on behaviour and events, not on personalities.**

- Say "When this happens ..." instead of "When you do ..."
- Describe a specific instance or event instead of generalizing.

### **3. Listen carefully.**

- Listen to what the other person is saying instead of getting ready to react.
- Avoid interrupting the other person.
- After the other person finishes speaking, rephrase what was said to make sure you understand it.
- Ask questions to clarify your understanding.

### **4. Identify points of agreement and disagreement.**

- Summarise the areas of agreement and disagreement.
- Ask the other person if he or she agrees with your assessment.
- Modify your assessment until both of you agree on the areas of conflict.

### **5. Prioritise the areas of conflict.**

- Discuss which areas of conflict are most important to each of you to resolve.

### **6. Develop a plan to work on each conflict.**

- Start with the most important conflict.
- Focus on the future.
- Set up future meeting times to continue your discussions.

### **7. Follow through on your plan.**

- Stick with the discussions until you've worked through each area of conflict.

- Maintain a collaborative, “let’s-work-out-a-solution” attitude.

## 8. Build on your success.

- Look for opportunities to point out progress.
- Compliment the other person’s insights and achievements.
- Congratulate each other when you make progress, even if it’s just a small step. Your hard work will pay off when scheduled discussions eventually give way to ongoing, friendly communication.

## WORKPLACE CONFLICT RESOLUTION TIPS AND STRATEGIES

**Workplace Conflict Resolution Tips and Strategies for Managers and HR** Workplace conflict is one of the greatest causes of employee stress. Taking simple steps to resolve conflict immediately can prevent many workplace conflicts from escalating. Employee stress, and many related health complaints, as well as workers’ compensation and bullying claims, can be prevented by managers acting quickly to resolve issues between co-workers, or between themselves and co-workers. Following are some tips and strategies to help you resolve workplace conflict, if you are looking for [Workplace Conflict Resolution Training](#) by a Workplace Mediation Expert Click on the link.

### ***Workplace Conflict Resolution Tips and Strategies***

1. **Act immediately.** Conflicts do not go away. Unresolved conflicts can lie dormant for days, weeks or months, only to explode on another occasion. Avoiding conflict is one of the main causes of claims being made against an organisation. Workers that make claims often feel that no one has listened or done anything to resolve the conflict. They feel they have no choice but to seek the help of professionals. Unresolved workplace conflicts can quickly impact on workplace climate or culture (in smaller organisations). Whole teams are quickly affected as conflict spreads and other employees become involved. Productivity, performance and workplace relationships are impacted quickly when conflict takes hold.
2. **Meet with people involved in the conflict separately.** Get a clear understanding of the issues before you try to intervene. People often have very different perceptions of what has occurred. Understanding their perceptions will help you to focus on what is important to each person, and to find common ground.
3. **Perception is reality.** Focus on what the people involved need and what’s important to them, not on trying to judge who is right or wrong. Often both people have contributed something to the situation. Judging who is right and wrong, and particularly commenting on these judgements, can escalate conflict quickly.
4. **Decide whether to mediate or to call in others to help.** Once you have discussed the issues with all or both of the people involved, decide whether you will be able to mediate yourself or you will need the help of HR or external mediators. Managers often successfully resolve simple disputes involving two people that have only been alive for a few hours, days or weeks. Generally complex and long-standing issues involving a number of people are best left for experienced mediators to deal with. These kinds of workplace conflicts are often sensitive and require high-level skill to bring them to a resolution.

5. **Arrange the next stage as soon as possible.** While it can be difficult to arrange meetings in busy work places ensure resolving the conflict is a top priority. Generally the longer the conflict goes on for, the harder it is to resolve.

## How to Mediate / Resolve Workplace Conflict

### (Workplace Conflict Resolution Tips and Strategies for Managers wishing to resolve basic workplace conflict)

1. **Meet with all of the people involved individually (as above).** Based on your individual meetings you will now have a clearer picture of the key issues, what each person considers important and the common ground. These are the key ingredients to a successful mediation – satisfying each person’s needs (and much as possible) and bringing the people together, based on common ground.
2. **Arrange to meet with both (/all) people.** Encourage each person to summarise their view, uninterrupted. This is essential as often people involved in conflict do not feel heard. Sometimes resolving workplace conflict is as easy as providing a forum for people to express their views.
3. **Pay careful attention to each person’s concerns.** Sometimes people have shifted since your first meeting with them. Do not bring up issues that they decide are not important at the joint meeting. They may have changed their mind and this can create unnecessary conflict. Listen really carefully to all the issues so that you can ensure that all the concerns raised are addressed. Take notes if you and the people involved are comfortable with you doing so.
4. **Summarise the key issues once you have heard from all the people concerned.** Ensure that you pay close and equal attention to everyone’s needs. Failing to do so may lead to others feeling that you are biased towards one person or another.
5. **Encourage the people involved to discuss options for resolution.** Always try to get more than three options on the table so you don’t just have their positions.
6. **Reality test the options.** Use “What if...” questions to help ensure that the proposed solutions are practical and will work back on the job.
7. **Negotiation.** If people start freely negotiating at this stage, do not interrupt them. This is your chance to sit back and listen. If they get stuck at any stage try summarising what they have achieved so far and remind them of the agreements they have reached.
8. **Ensure everyone involved is satisfied before concluding the meeting.** Check in with each person that they feel heard and have had their needs met to some extent. Explaining to people at the outset that resolution is often about meeting their most important needs, not all their needs, helps with setting up realistic expectations.

***Mediation is a complex process involving high-level skill. Mediators use careful language to ensure that they do not add to highly sensitive situations. If you do not feel confident that you can successfully resolve the issues, call someone who can help you or advise you on where to get help to resolve your workplace conflict.***

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