



WOODSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

Complaints Policy

Policy Statement

The Woodside Primary School OSHC service takes complaints about the service, its staff, educators, practices and procedures seriously. There are processes in place to ensure all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner.

The Woodside OSHC Service fosters positive and harmonious relations between all individuals involved with the Service including Parents, Staff and OSHC Advisory Committee (O.A.C.). All individuals involved with Woodside OSHC Service have the right to be in a harmonious and responsive environment at all times. Solutions are sought to all disputes, issues or concerns that affect the operation of the Service in a fair and prompt manner.

Background

Under the Education and Care Services National Law, the Approved Provider (Woodside Primary School Governing Council) has a legal responsibility to notify the Regulatory Authority (Education Standards Board) of certain matters within a stated period. One of these matters is where a complaint is made in relation to either of the following:

- a complaint alleging that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised
- that the law has been breached.

Complaints of this nature are to be identified at the site, as notifiable complaints' and the Approved Provider must inform the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.

The following details are required in the notifiable complaint report:

1. Date complaint received
2. Complainant's name and contact details
3. Name of child/children to whom complaint relates (if relevant)
4. Copy of written complaint (or written summary) and any other relevant documentation (including correspondence, photographs, statements)
5. Steps taken/actions planned by the site in response to the complaint.

The school Principal or nominee, as line manager of the OSHC Director, is informed when there are complaints. The Principal will then report to the Governing Council. The Governing Council must follow the DfE Parent Complaints Policy at

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department>

The service will address complaints by:

- Ensuring a clear, accessible and documented complaints procedure is made available to all families, educators/staff and children.
- Ensuring that the process is fair to all parties involved.
- Ensuring that complaints are dealt with promptly.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Maintaining records of complaints, processes and outcomes.

- Notifying the regulatory body of any complaint that alleges the safety, health or well-being of a child was or is being compromised, or that the law has been breached.

General

The Complaints Policy and procedures are made available to families through the Family Handbook given to families on enrolment and the full policy available at the service and on the School's website at <http://www.woodsideps.sa.edu.au/oshc.html>

Children can access the complaints procedure through conversations with educators, clearly displayed posters at the service and through discussions with families.

Complaints can be made in the following manner:

- verbally—in person or by phone to the Director or the Principal
- in writing—via email or mail
- suggestion and feedback book.

Procedure for families lodging a complaint

The complaints procedures must be mindful of the following:

- Families are requested to not discuss complaints in front of children. It may be that an appointment with the Director will need to be made.
- Complaints regarding any aspect of the service should be addressed with the Director in the first instance. If the complaint is about the Director, it should still be addressed to the Director who will discuss with the Principal.
- In the event that you feel you are unable to discuss your complaint with the director or in the event that discussion with the director proves unsatisfactory, your complaint can be directed to the Principal.
- In the event that you feel uncomfortable in dealing with a complaint personally, you may nominate an advocate to mediate on your behalf.
- We welcome your feedback and suggestions at all times. These may help us to continuously improve our service. A suggestion book is located in the OSHC at the sign in/out station.
- If the family still feels, after discussion with the Director, action is necessary, they should ask the Director to raise the issue at the next OSHC Advisory Meeting (OAC). Alternatively the parent may write directly to the OAC to explain the problem
- The OAC will advise the Director of its decision and the Director will convey that decision to the parent concerned, or the OAC will write directly to the parent or family concerned to advise of the decision. If the parent still feels the problem is not resolved they can request a meeting with the Chairperson to discuss the matter further. The Chairperson will discuss the issue further at the next OAC meeting, at which time the committee's final decision will be made. The Chairperson will write directly to the parent or family to advise of the final decision.
- Families have a right to lodge a complaint directly with the Regulatory Authority if they deem this necessary but would prefer discussion about the complaint before it gets to that stage. The contact details of the Regulatory Authority are in the front cover of the suggestion book.

Procedures for educators lodging a complaint

The complaints procedures must be mindful of the following:

- If the complaint is of an industrial nature, the requirements of the relevant Award must be addressed and followed. External advice may need to be sought.
- From time to time staff conflicts arise. In the interest of the children and the professional operation of the service, these grievances are investigated promptly, thoroughly and confidentially.
- Some complaints may be resolved by presenting the matter for discussion at a team meeting.
- In the event that you feel you have a problem with any aspect of the service, please make a time to speak with the Director.
- If you feel the Director has not dealt with your complaint satisfactorily, you may approach the Principal.
- Staff may have a union representative or other person present at any meeting or interview and may withdraw from the process at any time.

Procedures for children lodging a complaint

The opportunity for children to make complaints should be fully explained to them. Such complaints may be in relation to incidents with other children, issues with educators or of a general nature.

The complaints procedures should be mindful of the following:

- Educators will take children's complaints seriously and attend to them as a matter of priority whilst maintaining confidentiality. Where educators are unable to take appropriate action regarding a child's complaint, educators will inform the director.
- Complaints relating to educators, educator conduct or aspects of the program are to be directed to the Director. Children may have a family member or other representative to assist them raise their concerns.
- Children are encouraged to give feedback and make suggestions.

Complaint handling process

The Nominated Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that any complaint that alleges a breach of legislation or a serious incident is reported to the Approved Provider (WPS Governing Council). The Approved Provider will be responsible for ensuring that the Education Standards Board is notified within 24 hours of any complaint that alleges a breach of legislation or where the safety, health or wellbeing of a child was or is being compromised.

The Approved Provider and/or Director will:

- Investigate complaints promptly and thoroughly with the understanding that the complainant will not be disadvantaged through the process.
- Listen/read the complaint and document the exact details of the complaint.
- Seek further information, to clarify the issues and investigate the complaint, including speaking to other parties involved as required.
- Seek additional advice from line managers and other agencies, including legal advice as required.
- Refer to any State or National Regulations or organisational policy that may provide clarity to the complaint, as required.
- Assess the complaint fairly and determine the best possible resolution.
- Inform the complainant of the outcome in writing or verbally, as required, in a timely manner.

- Ensure that the complaint process and its outcome are documented and that all documentation is treated and stored confidentially.

Resources/References

1. DfE Responding to Concerns from Families and Caregivers at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department>
2. OSHCQA Factsheet # 15 at www.acecqa.gov.au (go to NCAC Archive)
3. DfE Parent Complaints: <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department/feedback-and-complaints/make-complaint-department>
4. DfE Complaint Resolution for Employees at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us>
5. DfE Complaints: Parent Concerns and Complaints Procedure at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/parents-and-families>