**CONSIDERATIONS**

***Philosophy***  The services approach to handling complaints in a way that upholds the rights of natural justice and supports partnerships and ongoing communication with families; children’s rights and interests are paramount.

***Legislation*** Educational and Care Services National Regulations, Educational and Care Services National Law Act 2010, Privacy Act 1988

***Children's Needs*** Respectful and warm relationships between families and educators, ongoing harmonious positive environment at the centre

***Parents Needs*** That their primary influence in their children’s lives is respected and supported, ability to voice concerns in a positive and confidential manner, that their concerns are taken seriously and acted upon, opportunities to influence decisions about their child’s experiences at the centre, to be kept informed about any issues or incidents that affect their child within the service.

***Educators Needs*** Regular open two way communications with families, time to speak with families about any concerns, confidence that complaints will be dealt with in a positive and open manner.

***Management*** That families will approach management or the nominated supervisor to raise ***Needs*** problems or concerns, to manage concerns or complaints about the service promptly and effectively.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Denman Children’s Centre 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 dues consideration for accountability and quality improvement.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

* We will aim for communications to be open, honest and confidential.
* Our service will offer a variety of ways to communicate and provide feedback including;
* Daily program- will aim to have a section dedicated to comments or feedback on the program and activities
* Interactions
* Formal feedback and comments
* Surveys family meetings
* With permission, educators may write comments on behalf of families to help with evaluations of the program and encourage further family input.
* Families are provided the services email address and phone number at orientation (See parent handbook). Families will be encouraged to converse with educators at pick up and drop off times, and are encouraged to email or phone 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 improvement to the centre through information notices board displays, email and/ or newsletters.

**The Nominated Supervisor will:**

* Develop a process for managing complaints. This process will include:
* Receiving complaints
* Addressing and investigating complaints
* Documenting complaints
* Communicate information on the process to families through enrolment and orientation processes and information
* Provide contact details for putting forward a complaint.
* Ensure every complaint is managed and is an opportunity for quality improvement.
* Discuss the process for managing complaints with the educators and staff team.
* Copy of the current Educational and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations is available in the centre for all to read at any time.

**Making a Complaint (information for families)**

* Families make a formal complaint about aspects of our service and no person will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of that complaint.
* Where possible complaints will be dealt with on the spot by the child’s educator as this is usually the person with the closest relationship with the family. If the complaint is about an issue that the educator considers to be outside their control, or the family does not feel they wish to share it with the educator, the family may be directed to the Nominated Supervisor or other appropriate person. Complaints should be forwarded to:
* Denman Children’s Centre

Lisa Wrobel – President

Laura Tassell – Director

Ogilvie St

Denman NSW 2328

Ph: 02 65472355

* Your complaint will be dealt with in the strictest confidentiality. 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.
* All confidential conversations/ discussions with parents/ guardians will take place in a quite area away from children, other families and educators who are not involved.
* Your complaint will be documented by an 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 will include the Nominated Supervisor and the approved provider.
* 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 Early Childhood Education Directorate NSW Department of Education will be notified of any complaint made to the centre alleging a breach of regulation with 24 hours of the complaint being made via the NQA ITS <https://public.nqaits.acecqa.gov.au/Pages/Landing.aspx>.

**Making a complaint (Information for educators and staff)**

*Please note – this is not a grievance procedure. Matters of staff grievance should be dealt with under a grievance policy relating to staff.*

* Educators and staff may make a formal complaint about aspects of the centre and no person will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of that complaint.
* Complaints should be forwarded to:
* Denman Children’s Centre
* Lisa Wrobel – President or

Thomas Short – Vice President or

Laura Tassell – Director

Ogilvie St

Denman NSW 2328

Ph: 02 65472355

* Your complaint will be dealt with in the strictest confidentiality. Any educator or staff member involved in handling complaints will ensure that the 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 with others during its resolution, the complainant will be informed.
* 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 will include the Nominated Supervisor and the Approved Provider.
* 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 Department of Education and Communities will be notified of any complaint made to the centre alleging a breach of regulation which alleges that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child has or is affected, or that the centre has broken the Education and Care Services National Law within 24 hours of the complaint being made.

**Procedures for dealing with complaints**

* The centre will develop grievance procedures for dealing with the following possible complaints:
* Complaints made by a child
* Complaints made by a family member
* Complaints made by educators
* Complaints made by committee members

**Follow up and review**

* Each complaint will be viewed as an opportunity for improvement. After the complaint or grievance has been dealt with it will be analysed to find out how the problem occurred and determine if the centre should implement any changes to the policy or operational procedures to avoid similar problems in the future.
* Management will follow through to determine that complaints and grievances have been successfully resolved to everyone’s satisfaction. Families will be contacted to determine if they are satisfied with the way the issue was resolved, and educators will be consulted about the outcome from an operational view point.
* Families will be asked to complete an ‘Exit Questionnaire when they leave the centre to check there are no outstanding issues that have lead to their leaving and to be given the opportunity to provide feedback that could lead to further improvements to the centre.

**SOURCES**

* Community childcare co-operative – sample policy

**Related Policies**

* Confidentiality Policy
* Grievance procedures
* Code of conduct
* Code of ethics

This policy was last reviewed in November 2023