



## LIWARA CATHOLIC OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS POLICY

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

It is important to all staff at Liwara Catholic Outside School Hours Care that parents are comfortable with the care provided to their children and that they feel able to advocate on their children's behalf if concerns arise. Our service welcomes any feedback regarding areas for improvement and encourages parents to offer feedback where necessary. We aim to resolve all concerns as quickly as possible. However, when grievances cannot be resolved informally, a formal grievance process will be implemented. Guidelines for addressing concerns will be provided to each family upon enrolment.

### **RATIONALE**

Parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns or grievances they may have in a timely manner. Processes are in place to ensure that all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner (NQS Element 7.3.4). The Education and Care Regulatory Unit must also be notified of any serious complaints which allege a breach of legislation (NQS Element 7.3.3).

### **PROCEDURES**

#### **For parents making a complaint**

If a parent has a concern about an issue at the centre the matter should be discussed with the relevant staff member or nominated supervisor. Concerns about the implementation of the program or the care of a child should be referred to the educator responsible for the program or the nominated supervisor.

If the parent still believes action is necessary after discussion with the educator/ nominated supervisor the matter should be referred to the centre manager. The matter can be referred to the centre manager either in person or in writing.

The centre manager is responsible for initiating a process to resolve any dispute or complaint within the centre.

In cases where the matter cannot be resolved between the centre manager and the parent an external mediator may be engaged.

Where a dispute or complaint involves the centre manager the matter may be referred directly to the Executive Director of Catholic Education.

Complaints or concerns relating to non-compliance with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations (WA) 2012* can be referred to the Education and Care Regulatory Authority at Level 1, 111 Wellington Street, East Perth, WA 6004, Telephone 6210 3333.

The name, address and phone number of the Education and Care Regulatory Authority will be displayed on a noticeboard at the entrance to the service.

A current copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations (WA) 2012* will be available at the service for parents to read.

The process outlined above by which parents can make a complaint is explained to parents in detail at enrolment.

### **Procedures for educators to address parent concerns:**

All complaints will be dealt with promptly and confidentially.

Where possible complaints will be dealt with immediately but if the complaint is an issue that the educator considers to be outside her/his control, the parent may be directed to the nominated supervisor or centre manager (depending on the issue).

All confidential conversations/discussions with parents will take place in a quiet area away from children, other parents and staff who are not involved.

When a parent wishes their grievance to remain confidential this will be honoured. However, the parent will be advised that issues cannot always be resolved satisfactorily if they choose to remain anonymous.

Should a staff member need to discuss the issue further with the appropriate staff member the parent will be informed.

### **Management Procedures:**

All complaints will be handled sensitively and respectfully.

The person receiving the complaint will clarify issues by actively listening and questioning the parent to further understand the issues. If the issues are complex the complainant may be asked to put their concerns in writing.

The complaint will be documented and any legal requirements in relation to the complaint will be considered.

The parent will be asked to provide suggestions about how the situation could be rectified to their satisfaction.

If possible the problem will be resolved immediately. If this is not possible the complainant will be advised that the issue will be given high priority and dealt with as soon as possible.

Where mediation is required all parties will have the right to agree to the appointment of the mediator.

If the problem is about an issue that is outside the control of the service, the person receiving the complaint will explain this to the parent and let them know who they should contact if they wish to take the matter further.

Issues will be followed up and the outcome provided to the parent as soon as possible.

Each complaint will be viewed as an opportunity for improvement. After the complaint has been dealt with it will be analysed to find out how the problem occurred and determine if any changes to policy or operational procedures should be implemented to avoid similar problems in the future.

### **References:**

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2012), *Education and Care Services National Regulations (WA) 2012*. ACECQA, NSW.

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2011), *The Guide to the National Quality Standard*, ACECQA, NSW.

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2011), *The Guide to the Education and Care Services Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations*, ACECQA, NSW.

National Privacy Principles - <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-act/the-privacy-act>

**Review History**

Previous Review	Year of Review	Next Review
April 2015	February, 2017	February, 2019