

	<b>Complaints Procedure</b>
	<b>Procedure Category: Governance, Management and Administration</b>
	<b>Date Created:</b>
	<b>Procedure Name: GMA1 Complaints Procedure</b>

The purpose of this operational procedure is outlining how parents, visitors and staff may make a complaint about some aspect of our service or the actions of members of our team.

The notice board will display the Management structure of the preschool and whom parents may communicate concern or non-compliance with licence conditions.

## Position Statement

We offer a high-quality early learning experience and environment for the children enrolled at our centre. Our staff ensure children and families receive a high level of service. We invite and welcome receiving complaints and concerns from anyone. We take complaints seriously and will investigate in a thorough and transparent manner, reporting back to the complainant our findings and the outcome. We also encourage complainants to take up their complaint directly with the Ministry of Education if they are unhappy with the results of this procedure.

## Issue Outline

Complaints are an important part of ongoing service improvement. We are not perfect and operate under the belief that we are a perpetual work-in-progress.

## Alignment with Policies

This procedure aligns with the following Centre Policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- ...and other policies and procedures of our centre as may be relevant to the nature of the complaint.

## Procedure Detail

Step	Procedure
1.	<b>Receive a complaint</b> All complaints may be made verbally. All complaints will be referred to the Centre Manager as soon as possible. Verbal complaints will be written down by the Manager and reflected back to the complainant in writing to ensure accuracy and completeness. Written complaints will be acknowledged in writing
2.	<b>Investigation</b> All complaints will be investigated by the Centre Manager. Some complaints, because of their nature, may involve external agencies. Where this is necessary, the complainant will be informed as soon as possible that one or more external agencies have been involved. Where external agencies are involved (an accepted referral), the Ministry of Education will also be notified.
3.	<b>Decisions Based on Fact</b>

Step	Procedure
	Our investigation process will endeavour to gather all relevant facts before reaching a decision on the cause. We do not subscribe to investigations that focus solely on finding fault with others. We believe that some issues reflect a weakness in our processes, and some reflect the judgement and actions of individuals.
4.	<p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p>We will communicate the conclusion of any complaint investigation to the complainant and any external agency involved.</p>
5.	<p><b>Principles of Natural Justice</b></p> <p>Where the complaint concerns the actions of an individual, we will communicate the nature of that complaint to that individual, but we will not disclose the identity of the complainant. We believe in the right of all individuals to be treated with respect and to be given all reasonable opportunities to defend themselves against allegations.</p> <p>That being said, allegations/complaints of a serious nature involving child safety will include the immediate suspension on full pay of any staff member who is the subject of that allegation/ complaint.</p>
6.	<p><b>Outcome</b></p> <p>We will act on the findings of any complaint, in particular where this involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An improvement or change to our policies and procedures</li> <li>• The training and education of staff</li> <li>• Disciplinary action taken against a staff member, noting the obligations we have under relevant employment contracts and employment law.</li> <li>• Note that where disciplinary action has been taken or is in process with a teaching staff member, we will follow the mandatory reporting requirements of the Teaching Council</li> </ul> <p>We will ensure the findings of the complaint investigation feed back into our quality improvement and service review processes.</p> <p>All documentation relating to the complaint will be retained by us for seven years. Any outcome involving disciplinary action against a staff member will be retained on their personnel file as per our Disciplinary Policies.</p>

## Relevant Background (including Legislation/Regulation/Licensing references)

Regulation 47 of the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008

<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2008/0204/latest/DLM1412501.html>

and GMA1 of the Licensing Criteria for Centre-Based ECE Services

<https://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/licensing-and-regulations/the-regulatory-framework-for-ece/licensing-criteria/centre-based-ece-services/>

The following are prominently displayed at the service for parents and visitors:

- ...a procedure people should follow if they wish to complain about non-compliance with the Regulations or criteria.

## Implementation

This procedure is part of the centre's induction for new staff and forms part of the introductory information pack for parents. In addition, information on how to make a complaint is made available at our reception for parents and visitors. Staff are regularly reminded of the complaint's procedure at staff meetings and we discuss any complaint trends on these occasions.

## Review

We review this procedure annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the procedure topic.

<b>Authorised:</b>	Keri Granger
<b>Date:</b>	Nov 2023
<b>Review Date:</b>	Nov 2025
<b>Consultation Undertaken:</b>	Staff