



GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

POLICY RATIONALE

Gordon OHSC encourages children, parents, guardians and community members to provide feedback on our policies, procedures and services and welcomes each feedback as a means of improving its service delivery and upholding positive relationships between Gordon OHSC and its stakeholders.

Gordon OHSC provides guidelines on managing disputes and incidents in a fair and equitable manner, as well as within a reasonable timeframe. Gordon OHSC recognises the rights of all children, families and community members to have a clear, concise and transparent Grievance and Complaints procedure. Where possible, complaints will be addressed by the Person in day-to-day charge at the venue. If the complaint is about an issue that our team considers to be outside their control, or the person does not feel they wish to share it with the educator, the person may be directed to call the Gordon Primary School principal for their complaint to be resolved.

Gordon OHSC has an obligation to inform the relevant regulatory authority of complaints alleging that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child or children was or is being compromised while that child or children is or are being educated and cared for by the service.

PROCEDURES

- All families will be informed of complaints and grievances procedures, through the availability of this policy on the service website page, or a hard copy can be provided by the service coordinator on request.
- Feedback will be sought regularly from families and children to provide them with an opportunity to provide feedback and ways in which the Service might be improved.
- If a parent would like to raise a concern about the service, they are encouraged to discuss the matter with the service Coordinator. Families are encouraged to make a time with the service Coordinator, so that educator to child ratios are not impacted.
- If the parent and/or Service Coordinator would like to discuss the matter further, they can contact Gordon PS, between 8:00 am – 5:00pm Monday-Friday.
- If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the parent and/or Service Coordinator matter will be escalated to the Gordon Primary School Principal
 - Family can also contact the relevant Regulatory Authority on:
 - 1300 307 415 (Victoria)
 - if they still feel their grievance has not been resolved. Further information for families can be found on the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website:
www.acecqa.gov.au

- Any complaints / grievances about the health and wellbeing of children, or an allegation that a section of the Education and Care Services Law Act (2010) or a regulation of the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) may have been breached, will be notified to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours in writing, as required in the Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010) Section 174 and supported by the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011), Regulation 176.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Any complaints or reports of discrimination, harassment or bullying will be addressed quickly, seriously and empathetically.

- The complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly, with resolutions made effective within 48 hours of the time the complaint is received, where possible.
- All complaints will be investigated fairly and impartially.
- The complaint and investigation procedure will be kept entirely confidential, however, Gordon OHSC are unable to guarantee confidentiality depending on the nature of the complaint.
- A complaint may be withdrawn at any stage.
- It is unlawful to disadvantage or victimise a person for making a complaint of discrimination. Under no circumstances will any person victimise or retaliate against another person who makes a complaint.
- Where the complaint is about a Team Member, the individual will be notified of the complaint, and its nature, as soon as possible. The Team Member will be given an opportunity to have a right of reply and will be required not to communicate with the complainant about the complaint during this period.
- If the complaint is assessed to be substantiated, the resolutions will be discussed and agreed between all parties.
- If, following investigation, a complaint is assessed to have no foundation, both parties will be informed and the reasons will be explained.
- All steps within the process, including findings, will be documented to further inform policy and procedures review, staff professional development opportunities and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) development.

COMPLAINTS MADE BY A CHILD

- If a child wishes to raise a complaint against another child at the Service, they will be encouraged to talk to their preferred Educators about the issue. Educators will support children to manage their relationships and behaviours at the service in accordance with policies on 'Interactions With Children'
- If a child wishes to raise a complaint against an Educator at the service, the child will be encouraged to talk to another Educator, or the Service Coordinator. Children are supported to discuss their experiences at the service with their families.
- If a child wishes to raise a complaint against a Parent/Guardian or other adult, the Service Coordinator will assess the complaint and discuss any serious issue with the Gordon Primary School principal who will advise on the resolution of this. For any serious allegations, refer to the 'Child Safe Policy'.

- If a child has a concern about anything or anyone at the service, they are encouraged to discuss the issue with the Educator they know best.
- Educators support children to talk about things they like and things they don't like with their families.
- Families may need to assist their children to communicate with Educators about issues at the service and time to talk about these may be arranged at pick up or collection times.
- Although it is not a formal requirement, children are welcome to submit their complaint verbally or in writing. To help in the resolution of the complaint, if the complaint is in writing Gordon OHSC asks that the following information is provided by the child, with the assistance of a family member:
 - *Date(s) and time(s) of the occurrence(s) causing the complaint;*
 - *Where the problem happened;*
 - *Who was involved;*
 - *Whats caused the problem; and*
 - *Steps taken to date to try and resolve the problem.*

COMPLAINTS MADE BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN

- If a Parent/Guardian wishes to raise a complaint against a child or other Parent/Guardian at the service, the Service Coordinator will discuss with the Parent/Guardian raising the complaint about the issue. The child or Parent/Guardian who the complaint is about will not be included in any conversation or confrontation by the Parent/Guardian that is the complainant, and in allegations of a serious nature the Service Coordinator and the Principal will use professional discretion when assessing the other child and their family's involvement.
- If a Parent/Guardian wishes to raise a complaint against an Educator at the service, this is to be communicated with the Coordinator or by contacting the Gordon OHSC Sub committee, between 8:00 am – 6:00pm Monday-Friday,
- If a Parent/Guardian wishes to raise a complaint against the Service Coordinator, the complaint must be communicated by contacting the Gordon PS Principal or OHSC subcommittee, between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
- If families have any queries, concerns or issues regarding the care of the children or the management of the Service they are asked to address these concerns to the Gordon OHSC Sub Committee (through the school office). If this is deemed inappropriate, given the nature of the concern, or the Parent/Guardian feels their issue was not adequately addressed, the matter will be escalated.
- It is preferable that all complaints are submitted in writing. If a written complaint is not possible, a verbal complaint is acceptable. To help in the resolution of the complaint, Gordon OHSC asks that the following information is provided:
 - *Date(s) and time(s) of the occurrence(s) causing the complaint;*
 - *Where the problem happened;*
 - *What caused the problem; and*
 - *Steps taken to date to try to resolve the problem.*

References:

ACECQA National Quality Framework Resource Kit (2012)

Quality Area 1 – Educational Program and Practice.

Quality Area 2 – Children’s Health and Safety

Quality Area 7 – Leadership and Service Management

Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010), S 168, S 174

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011), R 173, R 176

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