



Management of Complaints Policy

Policy Statement:

Grievances can arise in any workplace, and it is essential to handle them appropriately to maintain a safe, healthy, harmonious, and productive environment. Pennant Hills Before and After School Care is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders – including educators, families, and community members – are aware of our complaints and grievances management system.

This policy provides clear procedures that:

- Value the opportunity for all parties to be heard
- Promote effective conflict resolution
- Encourage the development of positive and collaborative partnerships
- Ensure that conflicts and grievances are mediated fairly
- Maintain transparency, equity, and accountability

All concerns raised will be treated seriously, investigated thoroughly, documented, and addressed promptly. We view each complaint or grievance as an opportunity to reflect, learn, and continually improve the quality of our service.

Considerations:

- Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations:
 - Section 174: Offence relating to failure to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
 - Regulation 168: Required policies and procedures
 - Regulation 173: Display of prescribed information
 - Regulation 175: Prescribed enrolment and attendance records to be kept
 - Regulation 176: Timeframes for notification of information to Regulatory Authority
- National Quality Standard – Standards:
 - Standard 2.1: Each child's health is promoted
 - Standard 2.2: Each child is protected
 - Standard 6.1: Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained
 - Standard 6.2: Collaborative relationships enhance children's inclusion, learning, and wellbeing
 - Standard 7.1: Governance supports the operation of a quality service
 - Standard 7.2: Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community
- Community Services Complaints, Appeals and Monitoring Act, 1994
- Pennant Hills BASC Enrolment Form
- Pennant Hills BASC Terms and Conditions

Policy:

General Complaints or Feedback:

The service supports any individuals right to raise grievances with the service and will assist individuals in clearly outlining their grievances and attempt to resolve them as promptly as possible.

A complaint may be made either informally or formally and can relate to any matter that an individual believes requires attention or any situation they feel has not been adequately addressed. All complaints that do not pose a risk to health and safety must first go through informal resolution processes, except in cases of alleged unlawful conduct.

If an individual has a complaint or feedback about the service, the following options are available:

- Speak directly to the Responsible Person in Charge for the session (they will either assist in resolving the complaint or escalate the concern to a member of centre management/the Director)
- Phone or email the service directly to outline their concerns.
- Email the Parent Management Committee (PMC) directly to outline their concerns.

Centre management or the PMC will respond promptly to organise a time to address grievances, either in person or over the phone. All confidential conversations with individuals who have a complaint or grievance will take place in a private place away from the children, other parents or staff not involved.

The PMC's contact details are always displayed at the centre on the noticeboard above the sign-in/out area.

Escalation of Grievances:

Any individual (educator, family, community member, volunteer, or visitor) who feels that their concerns have not been sufficiently addressed by centre management may raise a complaint directly with the PMC, either verbally or in writing.

Complaints should be raised as soon as possible after the incident or concern arises. The following procedure will be followed:

1. *Acknowledgment*
 - a. The PMC will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 24-48 hours and provide the complainant with an outline of the next steps.
2. *Initial Review and Planning*
 - a. The PMC will review the complaint and discuss the circumstances and facts with the Director.
 - b. A strategy for resolving the grievance will be developed, which may include gathering information from all parties involved.
3. *Consultation with Involved Parties*
 - a. All individuals involved in the complaint will be invited to provide information relevant to the grievance.
 - b. Each party will be given the opportunity to respond to the concerns raised.

- c. Parties may have a support person present during discussions (e.g., family member, union representative), noting that legal representatives are not included in this support role.

4. Investigation

- a. The complaint will be investigated thoroughly, ensuring fairness, transparency, and confidentiality.
- b. All findings and evidence will be documented, including how the complaint was addressed and any recommended amendments to practices, policies, or procedures.

5. Resolution and Communication

- a. The Director or President of the PMC will communicate the outcome and actions taken to the complainant within 5-10 working days, depending on the complexity of the problem. Updates will be sent to the complainant during this process.
- b. Relevant staff or stakeholders will be informed of any issues or changes they need to be aware of or address.
- c. Outcomes may be communicated verbally or in writing, depending on the situation.

6. Escalation/External Options

- a. If a complaint cannot be resolved internally to the satisfaction of the complainant, external options will be explored, which may include an unbiased third-party mediator.

Any complaints that come about because of a serious incident or alleged serious incident, will be reported to the Department of Education (the NSW Regulatory Authority) within 24 hours as per regulatory requirements (see below: Notifications).

Either party may withdraw their grievance at any time. Centre management may still investigate if other issues of concern are identified.

All feedback is viewed as opportunities to reflect, learn, and improve the quality of service. Records of complaints and resolutions will be maintained confidentially and reviewed to inform policy, procedure, and practice improvements.

Internal Grievance Management for Staff:

If a member of staff or volunteer at the service wishes to make a complaint or raise a grievance about the Director or any other staff member, they should address this with either the Director or a member of the senior team. The senior staff member will then attempt to resolve the grievance or escalate the concern, to either the Director or the Parent Management Committee (PMC), at their discretion.

Staff members raising concerns will be treated with respect, and confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Retaliation of any kind against staff who raise grievances will not be tolerated. All staff directly involved in a grievance process must continue to conduct themselves professionally and maintain obligations under the service's confidentiality agreement.

If a staff member feels uncomfortable approaching another colleague, they may contact the PMC directly. The PMC's contact details are always displayed at the centre on the noticeboard above the sign-in/out area.

Notifications:

Complaints that must be notified to the regulatory authority (ACECQA):

The Parent Management Committee or the Director will notify the regulatory authority:

- Within 24 hours of any complaints alleging that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised at the service.
- Within 24 hours of any complaints that the national law has been breached.

Complaints that must be notified to the NSW Police and/or Department of Communities & Justice:

The Parent Management Committee or the Director will notify the NSW Police and/or Department of Communities and Justice immediately after discovering a reportable allegation, such as of an educator putting a child at risk of significant harm.

Complaints that must be notified to the Office of the Children's Guardian:

The Parent Management Committee or the Director will notify the Office of the Children's Guardian within 7 days of a reportable allegation or conviction.

Version	Action	Date
V.1	Last revision	5 th November 2020
V.1.2	Minor edits in language and grammar, minor structural changes to improve readability, added new information about staff grievances and notifications	31 st October 2025
V.1.2	PMC Approved	30 th March 2026