

Complaints and Grievances Policy



Beyond the Burrow
EARLY LEARNING & CARE

Service Name:	Beyond the Burrow Early Learning & Care
Policy Relevant to:	Approved Provider, PMC, Nominated Supervisor, all Educators, Staff, Children and Families
Policy Related to:	Complaints and Grievances Procedure
Last Review:	January 2026
Next Review:	January 2028
NQS:	6.1, 6.1.2, 6.2, 7.1.2, 7.2.1
ECS National Law:	S172, S174 (2) (b)
ECS National Regulations:	r12, r84, r149, r168 (2)(o), r170, r171, r173, r173(2)(b), r176, r183
Related Legislation:	<p>Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017</p> <p>Family Law Act 1975</p> <p>A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999</p> <p>Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017</p> <p>Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (TAS)</p> <p>Child and Youth Safe Standards (TAS)</p> <p>Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related legislation as identified within the Child Care Provider Handbook.</p> <p>https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook</p>

Policy Statement / Rationale

Beyond the Burrow Early Learning & Care is committed to providing an environment where concerns, grievances, and complaints are welcomed, heard, and resolved fairly, respectfully, and in a timely manner.

We value ongoing communication and feedback from children, families, staff, and the broader community as part of our continuous improvement practices. Feedback and complaints help us strengthen relationships, support child safety and wellbeing, and enhance service quality.



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Complaints and Grievances Policy

This policy sets out our framework for handling complaints and grievances in a way that is equitable, transparent, objective, and child focused. It supports compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, including the requirement to maintain a complaint handling system at the service.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Make clear how complaints and grievances can be made, received, recorded, investigated, resolved, and reviewed
- Ensure complaints are handled in a fair, impartial, and timely way
- Honour the rights of all persons involved to procedural fairness and natural justice
- Support a child-safe culture and inclusive environment
- Use complaints as a key input into continuous improvement and risk mitigation

Guiding Principles

Complaints and grievance handling at Beyond the Burrow is guided by the following principles:

- Accessibility - All people can raise a concern or complaint in ways that are understandable and culturally safe
- Fairness & transparency - All parties are treated with respect, without bias, and with a clear process
- Confidentiality & privacy - Information is managed respectfully and securely
- Timeliness - Complaints are acknowledged and addressed without undue delay
- Child safety - The best interests and wellbeing of children are always prioritised
- Continuous improvement - Trends and outcomes inform quality improvement actions



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Definitions

Complaint: A concern or expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the service where a response or resolution is expected. Complaints may be made verbally or in writing by any individual or organisation.

Grievance: A formal complaint that may require a more structured response due to complexity, seriousness, or unresolved issues.

Notifiable Complaint: A complaint that involves allegations where the health, safety or wellbeing of a child is or may be compromised. Under the National Law/Regulations, these must be notified to the regulatory authority within required timeframes.

Making a Complaint

Complaints may be made:

- Informally: through conversation with educators or service leadership
- Formally: in writing (email, letter, online form) addressed to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider
- Anonymously: while noting this can limit the level of follow-up or resolution possible

The name and contact details of the person to whom complaints can be made must be clearly visible at the service.

The service will support access to translation or cultural support where needed.

How Complaints are Managed

Acknowledgment

- Informal concerns are acknowledged promptly at the time they arise.



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- Formal complaints will be acknowledged in writing within two working days of receipt.

Investigation and Resolution

The service will ensure:

- The complaint is recorded in the Complaints & Grievances Register
- Investigations are conducted fairly, objectively, and without bias
- Relevant parties are invited to contribute information
- Outcomes and decisions are documented and communicated clearly

Where a conflict of interest arises, an alternative delegated manager or an independent mediator will be engaged.

Timeframes

The service aims to resolve most complaints within 7 working days of acknowledgement. If more time is needed (complex matters), the complainant will be kept informed of progress and expected resolution time.

Special Considerations

Child-Focused Complaints

When a complaint involves a child's safety, behaviour concerns, or allegations of harm, responses must be:

- Child-focused
- Developmentally appropriate
- In line with child protection and mandatory reporting obligations

The regulatory authority must be notified within the required timeframes where a complaint alleges that a serious incident has occurred or that the National Law/Regulations have been contravened.



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Confidentiality and Privacy

All complaints will be handled confidentially. Records are stored securely and accessed only by authorised staff. Details will not be disclosed outside the process unless required by law or with consent.

Recording and Reporting

A Complaints & Grievances Register will be maintained, documenting:

- Date received
- Complainant's details (if provided)
- Nature of complaint
- Investigation actions
- Outcome and resolution
- Follow-up actions (if required)

Records from complaint investigations must be retained in accordance with service and regulatory record-keeping requirements.

External Review

Where the complainant is not satisfied with the service's response:

- They may escalate the matter to the relevant regulatory authority
- They may seek external support

Contact details for external review bodies will be displayed at the service.



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Continuous Improvement

Beyond the Burrow will:

- Analyse complaint trends to identify systemic issues
- Incorporate learnings into the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Update this policy and procedures based on feedback, legislative changes, or patterns identified

Leadership Responsibilities

Service leadership (Approved Provider / Management) is responsible for:

- Ensuring complaints procedures are understood and available
- Modelling respectful and professional responses
- Monitoring compliance
- Acting on improvement opportunities

Related Policies and Documents

- Complaints & Grievances Procedure
- Governance and Management Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy
- Interaction with Children Policy
- Record Keeping and Retention Policy
- Quality Improvement Plan

Sources

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025).



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<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-03/Guide-to-the-NQF-March-2023.pdf> Guide to the National Quality Framework

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). Using Complaints to support continuous improvement.

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). NQF Child Safe Culture Guide.

Australian Government Department of Education. Child Care Provider Handbook (Amended 2025)

Australian Human Rights Commission: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au>

Commissioner for Children and Young People- Western Australia. Monitoring of Child-Focused

Complaints Systems Report.

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).

Fair Work Australia: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/>

Queensland Government- Guide for effective complaints management

Review History

<i>Policy Approved By:</i>	Charné Chandler	Approved Provider/Director	January 2026
<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	-	<i>Next Review Date</i>	January 2028
<i>Modifications</i>			