

### 3.3 Complaints and Feedback

**Policy:** Lady Game Community Kindergarten will provide parents with a fair and equitable procedure that allows them to share their concerns and feedback with staff, the Director or Licensee and address any concerns and feedback immediately to ensure a positive process.

**Relevant Legislation:** Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 168, 173, 176

**Practices:**

Parents will be encouraged to share their concerns and feedback and in such circumstance will be dealt with positively and in an accepting and empathetic manner. Staff will respect a parent's right to provide such feedback, listen respectfully and actively look towards a satisfactory resolution to the matter.

**The Nominated Supervisor will:**

Follow the process described below for managing and documenting complaints.

To achieve this outcome, LGCK will adhere to the following principles or actions:

- Parents will be notified at orientation of a variety of ways in which they may provide feedback including: a letter placed in the suggestion box; parent surveys and questionnaires; as well as conversations in person or by phone.
- Any discussion in relation to a concern or complaint will take place in a quiet area away from children, other parents and staff who are not involved.
- All information regarding a complaint made to the Director or other teaching staff (either verbally or in writing) will be treated as strictly confidential. If a complaint is referred to the Management Committee, the name of the complainant will not be disclosed to committee members. However the President may be informed of the complainant's name if necessary.
- The Director will notify the president of the Management Committee when a formal complaint is received, or an informal complaint that is more than of a trivial nature.
- Parents can discuss specific issues of concern with their child's teacher, either informally or formally depending on the nature of the issue; if a formal discussion is necessary, an appointment can be scheduled so the staff member can give their full attention to the matter being raised.
- Parents can put their concerns in writing to the Director and/or President who then may telephone or schedule a meeting with the parent to discuss the issue and any intervention required.

## Lady Game Kindergarten Policies

- Parents making a formal complaint will be given the 'Notification of Complaints and Incidents Form NL01'.
- Parents can make an appointment with the Director and/or President to share their feedback.
- At any meeting, the teacher or Director and/or President may take notes, a copy of which will be made available to the parent if they so choose;
- Once the issue has been discussed, if necessary, a plan of action will be devised by the parties involved to deal with the issue.
- If the Director is not involved in the discussion, the plan of action will also be discussed with the Director, unless she/he is the subject of the complaint, in which case the complaint will be forwarded directly to the President of the Management Committee.
- The plan of action will contain what the parent would like to see happen together with any additional suggestions by the teacher or Director and should address all aspects of the concern.
- The action plan will be implemented and subsequently evaluated after an agreed upon time frame and all parties will be asked to contribute to the follow-up process; the evaluation will outline the outcomes and results of the action plan.
- If the concern from a parent is related to child protection issues, they can contact ***The Child Protection Helpline 132 111***;
- If the parent wishes to refer a complaint to the Management Committee, the Director or, if he/she is the subject of the complaint, the parent or a teacher will provide a copy of the complaint and a written report to the Committee within 5 working days. The Director's report will include - details of the complaint, the solution sought, actions already taken to resolve the complaint and any solutions offered or any recommendations made for action or resolution;
- The President acts on behalf of the Management Committee in resolving Complaints but will consult with at least one other member of the Executive before responding to the complaint;
- When a formal complaint is made, unless it is considered trivial in nature, ***NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate Locked Bag 4028 Ashfield NSW 2131 (Form NL01)*** will be notified in writing within one week; this will be followed-up with written notice of any action taken in response to the complaint;
- All personnel involved in handling a complaint will be familiar with this Policy and have access to *Handling Complaints* (Appendix A).

**Process for families making a complaint:**

1. Families make a formal complaint about aspects of our service and no person will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of that complaint.
2. Complaints should be forwarded to:
  - Lady Game Community Kindergarten
  - Name of Approved Provider
  - Name of Nominated Supervisor
  - PO Box 3015, Lindfield West NSW 2070
3. Your complaint will be dealt with in the strictest confidentiality. Any educator or staff member involved in handling complaints will ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to be notified in order to deal with the complaint. If information specific to the complaint needs to be disclosed to others during its resolution, the complainant will be informed.
4. Your complaint will be documented by an educator or staff member, and placed on the complaints register. The complaint will then be forwarded on to the most appropriate person to investigate the complaint. This will include the Nominated Supervisor and the approved provider.
5. Actions to address the complaint will be determined. Once the outcomes or resolutions are agreed on, all persons involved in the original complaint will be notified and informed of any actions for improvement that will take place as a result of the complaint.
6. The Department of Education and Communities will be notified of any complaint made to the service alleging a breach of regulation within 24 hours of the complaint being made.  
*Please note - this is not a grievance procedure. Matters of staff grievance should be dealt with under a grievance policy relating to staff.*

**Process for staff making a complaint:**

1. Educators and staff may make a formal complaint about aspects of our service and no person will be disadvantaged in any way as a result of that complaint.
2. Complaints should be forwarded to:
  - Lady Game Community Kindergarten
  - Name of Approved Provider
  - Name of Nominated Supervisor
  - PO Box 3015, Lindfield West NSW 2070
3. Your complaint will be dealt with in the strictest confidentiality. Any educator or staff member involved in handling complaints will ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to be notified in order to deal with the complaint. If information specific to the complaint needs to be disclosed to others during its resolution, the complainant will be informed.
4. Your complaint will be documented, and placed on the complaints register. The complaint will then be forwarded on to the most appropriate person to investigate

the complaint. This will include the Nominated Supervisor and the approved provider.

5. Actions to address the complaint will be determined. Once the outcomes or resolutions are agreed on, all persons involved in the original complaint will be notified and informed of any actions for improvement that will take place as a result of the complaint.
6. The Department of Education and Communities will be notified of any complaint made to the service alleging a breach of regulation which alleges that the safety health or wellbeing of a child was or is affected, or that the service has broken the Education and Care Services National Law within 24 hours of the complaint being made.

**Feedback:**

Communications will aim at all times to be open, honest and confidential.

Lady Game Community Kindergarten will offer a variety of ways to communicate and provide feedback including:

- Children's portfolios
- Daily Program - will have a section dedicated to parent feedback on the program and activities
- Interactions
- Formal feedback and comments
- Surveys
- Family meetings

With permission, educators may write comments on behalf of families to help with evaluations of the program and encourage further family input.

Families are provided the service's email address and phone details at orientation.

Families will be encouraged to converse with educators at pick up and drop off times, and may email or call throughout the day.

Feedback from families is encouraged and educators and staff will take this feedback into account in ongoing planning and quality improvement.

Families will be informed as to how their feedback has contributed to improvements in the service through emails and/or newsletters.

**Sources:**

NSW Ombudsman (2004) 'Effective Complaint Handling'. NSW Ombudsman

NSW Ombudsman (2009) "Complaint Handling Kit". NSW Ombudsman

Link to National Quality Standard: 7.3