



GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Purpose:

Little Petal is committed to providing a transparent, fair, and timely process for addressing grievances and complaints. This policy ensures all employees, families, and community members have access to mechanisms to provide feedback, raise concerns, or lodge complaints. It upholds procedural fairness in achieving resolutions for all parties involved.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees of Little Petal, including Family Engagement and Support Educators and other staff, as well as families and community members engaging with the service. It includes grievances and complaints related to services, staff, policies, and practices, except those requiring automatic dismissal, as stated in the Employee Agreement.

Policy Objectives:

- To provide a clear and accessible process for lodging grievances or complaints.
- To ensure all complaints are addressed promptly, fairly, and confidentially.
- To maintain compliance with relevant regulatory and legal frameworks.

Guidelines:

1. General Procedures for Grievances or Complaints:

- Grievances or concerns should first be discussed directly with the person involved to seek a resolution at this level.
- Complainants are encouraged to identify themselves and the parties involved for effective follow-up.
- If requested, the identity of the complainant will be kept confidential, except where disclosure is required by law or necessary for resolving the complaint.
- Complaints can be lodged via:
 - o Face-to-face discussion.
 - o Telephone conversations.
 - o Written communication (email or formal letter).

- All complaints will be documented and stored securely until resolved.
- Complaints involving risks to health, safety, or well-being will be reported to the relevant authority, such as the Education Standards Board of South Australia or the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, as per the Notification and Reporting Procedures Policy.

Contact Details for Complaints:

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission:

- Phone: 1800 035 544 (free call) or TTY: 133 677
- Online: ndis.gov.au/contact/feedback

Education Standards Board of South Australia:

- Phone: (08) 8226 0077 or Toll-Free: 1800 882 413
- Online: esb.sa.gov.au

2. Grievances Between Employees and Families:

- If a grievance between a Family Engagement and Support Educator or another employee and a family member is unresolved after discussion, either party may escalate the matter to the Approved Provider for mediation.
- If still unresolved, the grievance may be referred to independent agencies such as the Education Standards Board SA or the NDIS Commission for further advice or mediation.

3. Grievances Between Employees:

- Employees are encouraged to address grievances directly with the colleague involved in a respectful and sensitive manner.
- If unresolved, the grievance can be reported to the Approved Provider or Manager, either verbally or in writing.
- For grievances involving the Approved Provider or Manager, employees may escalate the matter to independent agencies, including the Education Standards Board of South Australia.

4. Complaints Against Employees:

When a Complaint is Raised:

- If a complaint is made against an employee, the complainant may request the Approved Provider to act on the complaint.
- Complaints related to breaches of regulations or conditions will be investigated by the Approved Provider, who will notify the employee of the allegations and initiate the grievance procedure.
- Verbal advice of non-compliance will be followed up with written notification.

Automatic Termination Cases:

- Complaints involving breaches that warrant immediate dismissal will be investigated. If substantiated, the Approved Provider will terminate employment and notify the appropriate authorities.

Non-Automatic Termination Cases:

- For less severe complaints, the Approved Provider will assess the complaint's seriousness, the risk involved, and the employee's compliance history. The Approved Provider will communicate the reasons for termination if deregistration is deemed necessary.

5. Child Protection Concerns:

Complaints related to child protection will be directed to the relevant child protection authority.

Investigation Procedures:

When receiving a complaint, Little Petal will:

1. Document the complaint accurately, including the date, time, and details provided.
2. Confirm the intent of the complaint and the desired resolution.
3. Provide information on available courses of action.
4. Commit to seeking resolution in a positive and timely manner.
5. Follow up with the complainant to confirm satisfaction with the outcome and provide additional feedback if required.
6. Request that major verbal complaints be submitted in writing to ensure clarity and accuracy.

Monitoring and Compliance:

- **Resolution Follow-Up:** Ensure all complaints are tracked, monitored, and resolved appropriately.
- **Confidentiality:** Maintain strict confidentiality in all complaints and grievances unless disclosure is necessary for resolution or required by law.
- **Record Keeping:** Securely store all grievance and complaint records for future reference and compliance purposes.

Review and Revision:

- **Policy Review:** This policy will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure compliance with regulatory changes and organisational needs.
- **Amendments:** Any updates will be communicated to all staff and families promptly.

Conclusion:

The Grievances and Complaints Policy reflects Little Petal's commitment to fostering an inclusive, fair, and supportive environment. By providing clear procedures for raising concerns, Little Petal ensures the well-being of all employees, children, and families involved in its services.

For further clarification, employees and families are encouraged to contact the Approved Provider.

REVISION DATE: 01/11/2022; 01/03/2023; 06/01/2025

REVIEW DUE: 06/01/2027

AMENDMENTS: Terminology updated to reflect the title "Family Engagement and Support Educator."