

49. Staff Grievance



Introduction

At Tillys we aim to foster positive relations between all staff and management. Every staff member has the right to a harmonious and responsive working environment. Solutions are sought to resolve all disputes, issues or concerns that impact or affect the day to day wellbeing of the centre in a fair, prompt and positive manner.

Purpose

Creating a workplace with vision and meaningful direction, consistent values and ethics will foster a positive and productive work environment. Further, when professional standards guide educator's practices, interactions and relationships, children's learning and development, safety and wellbeing will be effectively supported.

Goals – What are we going to do?

Management encourages all staff to work effectively as a team and to communicate with each other as to their needs and the needs of the children.

Our centre will foster an environment of mutual respect, equity and recognition of educator skills and strengths. This will be facilitated through the service philosophy and by adhering to the Early Childhood Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct Policy.

Our centre endeavours to define clear expectations and guidelines for educators through clear job descriptions, policies and procedures.

Our centre will encourage feedback and open communication to create understanding between educators and management.

Strategies – How will it be done?

- Critical reflection forums
- Development and direction meetings
- Regular verbal communication between educators, staff and management
- Educators and staff provided with clear expectations of their position, a position description & staff handbook.
- An induction checklist and procedure for all new staff and educators
- Clear written guidelines detailing the centres grievance procedure given in staff/educator handbook.
- Performance Improvement Plans issued, and Staff Matrix conducted when there is a work performance issues identified.

If you have a grievance the following procedure is to be follow:

Grievances are a natural part of a dynamic working environment filled with people from completely different back grounds, education, training, experiences and personal and professional values. Addressing grievances is best done through mediation between both parties so that everyone is able to consider and reflect on the grievance from multiple perspectives. The purpose of raising grievances is to work toward a resolution that is in the best interests of all parties. This may not always involve individual educators getting exactly what they want (e.g. No Friday night late shifts) but coming to a compromise between all parties wherever possible. There is no purpose to raising a grievance that is not worked through to resolution so all parties must do so with the aim of resolution in mind.

Step One: As a professional raise your concern with your fellow professional colleague. If a colleague raises a concern with you consider what they are saying, reflect on your work performance and the issue they have identified and consider how your actions may be impacting on those around you. Consider how you may change your practice in light of this concern or feedback. Use your critical reflection journal to document your thoughts, feelings and intentions. Remind yourself that a true professional realises there is always room for personal growth and change and considering the thoughts and perspectives of others is crucial to this.

Step Two: Document your grievance or any item you wish to see actioned by your Nominated Supervisor using a “Request for Resolution” form. Nominated Supervisors will only action items that have been documented in writing using these forms and that identify that Step One has occurred, but with an unsatisfactory resolution or was unable to occur due to an unsurmountable barrier.

E.gs of “Requests for Resolution” may include:

- Jessica is constantly leaving the room
- Jessica is spreading gossip throughout the centre
- I have raised a request for resolution in regard to Jessica’s spreading of gossip previously and have seen no improvement.
- I’m not happy with having so many late shifts on my roster
- We need more staff to cover ratios of a Friday morning
- I would like new outdoor sand resources
- Jessica hasn’t been helping with the program
- Jessica has been speaking in harsh tones to the children
- The Rainbow Room are not helping pack away the yard on a Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon.
- The same people always seem to have leave approved in the School Holidays

These “Request for Resolution” forms will be kept in a secure place only accessible to the Nominated Supervisor. The Nominated Supervisor is required to document their action on these forms and all forms will then be checked monthly by your service Area manager and the N.S.’s resulting actions discussed accordingly. Please note that you will not always be personally addressed in regard to the action take on you “Request for Resolution” if it is not deemed appropriate to do so. For e.g. it is not necessary or appropriate for a Nominated Supervisor to inform you that they have addressed an educator speaking in harsh tones to children. However, if you notice no change or resolution to your concern complete another form. This will then be identified as an ongoing concern to your service’s Area Manager who will discuss with N.S as to why no improvement has occurred and if workplace performance improvement procedures need to be implemented.

Step Three: Mediation: Where appropriate the service Nominated Supervisor will implement mediation between involved parties. The purpose of raising a grievance is to come to a resolution. Mediation will be done in a quiet, private space and opportunities for all parties to discuss concerns and identify possible solutions will be available. All parties are expected to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the mediation contents. Mediation and resolution review will occur again to

identify any barriers to the resolution or any changes that need to be made to best work toward it in the future.

Step Four: Management: If you have completed Step One, Step Two and Step Three and do not feel your Nominated Supervisor has been able to or has chosen not to assist you in working toward a resolution you can request mediation with a management representative. Complete a Request for "Management Assistance in Resolution" form. These can be emailed directly to your service Area Manager. Mediation will occur with involved parties, the service Nominated Supervisor and the Area Manager or Management Representative. Please note that as a management team we will all be mandating that this procedure is followed. Therefore, if you come to us without having completed Steps 1, 2 or 3 we will direct you to do so before becoming involved in the resolution process.

What do I do if I have an issue or concern with the actions of my Nominated Supervisor or a representative of the Management Team?

Follow the steps through as outlined above. It is our expectation that everyone involved in the management of our service considers that there is always room for personal growth and improvement and are therefore expected to professionally consider the feedback of others. We each make many decisions every day, affecting many employees and can very easily not understand that we may be negatively impacting you as an individual. We also may have reasoning behind the actions we have taken or decisions we have made that you are not aware of or hadn't considered. Raise your concerns with us as a professional and we will follow through the Four steps above as professionals and as an organisation seeking personal and professional improvement.

For feedback, suggestions or concerns about this procedure please speak to your service Nominated Supervisor or fill in a feedback or suggestion form that will be passed on to management.

Any concerns relating to inappropriate behaviour or child protection needs to be documented and Management advised immediately.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.
- Carry out an induction process for new employees at the commencement of employment. At this time, appropriate behaviours will be reinforced and discussed.
- Familiarise new employees with this policy, the Code of Conduct Policy, the Complaints Handling Policy and the ECA Code of Ethics.
- Inform educators that inappropriate behaviours including bullying will not be tolerated.
- Encourage educators to report any inappropriate behaviour using the Complaints Handling Policy and this policy.
- Address all inappropriate behaviours.
- Encourage open discussions through team meetings, informal conversations and at development and direction meetings to clarify each educator's role within our centre.

- Regularly review communication practices within the centre to ensure all educators are supported, empowered and acknowledged for their contributions to the team and centre.
- Treat all educators equitably

Educators will:

- Be valued for their contributions to the centre program and routines.
- Be encouraged to embrace the uniqueness and diversity of their colleagues. Skills, strengths and opinions of team members will be respected and supported by all educators to create team cohesion based on respect and professionalism.

Related Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Schedule 1
- Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics
- Fair Work Act 2009
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Guide to the national Quality Standard
- Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Being, Belong, Becoming

Links to other policies and documents

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- ECA Code of Ethics
- Centre Philosophy

Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations: Schedule 1

Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: 4.2, 7.1, 7.2

Sources

- Early Childhood Australia – www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au
- Donna MacIntyre – Approved provider
- Community Early Learning Australia - CELA

Grievance Procedure – Request for resolution Form



Name of Person Requesting Resolution: _____	Date: _____
Person Receiving Request for Resolution Form: _____	
Date Received: _____	Signature: _____

Please detail the ongoing concern or issue you need a resolution for:

What resolution would you like to reach?

Please detail what steps you have taken so far to work toward this resolution:

Please detail future suggested strategies to work toward this resolution:

Grievance Procedure – Action for resolution Form



Name of Person Requesting Resolution: _____	Date: _____
Person Receiving Request for Resolution Form: _____	
Date Received: _____	Signature: _____

Please detail investigations/ findings:

Please detail strategies taken to achieve resolution:

Please reflect on progress made toward resolution:

Please document follow up with person requesting resolution as to their view of resolution progress:
