



Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

Parent Complaint / Raising Concerns Policy

Rationale

Rose Park Preschool is a Department of Education and Child Development preschool. As part of our commitment to deliver high quality education and care we work with our families and community to resolve any concerns or complaints. This policy is in line with ACECQA regulations (NQS) and DECD Policy.

The Preschool

Recognises that sometimes things go wrong and expectations for your child may not be met. If you have an unresolved issue or complaint it is important to us that we can talk, listen and find solutions so that we can improve your child's experience and learning.

We believe that the wellbeing, safety and education of all children enrolled at our preschool are our first priority. We believe our community needs to be treated with respect over their concerns, and families have the right to raise concerns and complaints about their preschool life and be supported to do so.

- Complaints and concerns should be resolved at the preschool level where possible.
- Complaints and concerns are considered in a confidential and timely manner.
- Complaints and concerns follow the resolution stages as outlined in the *Guide to the Parent Complaint Policy* and outlined below:

Stage 1 – tell the preschool first

Contact the preschool to arrange a time to meet with the teacher or have a discussion with them on the phone. They will look into your concerns and get back to you as soon as possible.

If the matter is not resolved, or if your complaint is about a teacher, you may want to meet with, or write to, the director. They will work with you and the staff member to resolve the issue.

If the complaint is about the principal, contact your local regional office of the Department for Education and Child Development.

The preschool will aim to resolve your concern or complaint as soon as possible – ideally within 15 working days.

Stage 2 – contact your regional office

You may choose to contact your regional office for help if:

- You are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the preschool
- The director is the subject of your complaint

The regional office will review your complaint and work with you and the school to resolve the matter as soon as possible – within 20 working days.

Stage 3 – refer your matter to the Parent Complaint Unit

If you are still not satisfied you can refer your feedback or complaint to the Parent Complaint Unit by contacting us via email at DECD.ParentComplaint@sa.gov.au or by calling us on 1800 677 435.

The complaint unit will:

- Assess your complaint
- Decide what action is needed
- Let you know what has been done and when you can expect to hear about the outcome.

The Department's Head of Schools or the Head of Early Childhood Development and the Chief Executive's office will be advised by the Parent Complaint Unit of the outcome of the review. One of these senior leaders will make a decision about your complaint.

In most cases you can expect to hear of a decision within 35 days.

Advice and support

You can contact the unit on 1800 677 435 to discuss your concern or complaint, or to seek advice about resolving school problems. Staff will follow up with you to check about progress.

Will I be treated fairly?

You will not be discriminated against if you make a complaint. All staff are bound by the Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector which requires staff to act impartially, fairly and equitably.

You can ask for your identity to be confidential when making a complaint. However, keep in mind:

- This may limit options for investigating and negotiating a resolution
- While every effort will be made to comply with your request, freedom of information requirements may result in your identity becoming known.

You can make an anonymous complaint. However:

- The extent to which it can be investigated is limited as staff cannot discuss with the parent about the complaint.
- Anonymous complaints raise issues in relation to natural justice – those who have allegations made about them have a right to know the particulars of the allegation.

Other options

In cases where a complaint required an independent review by an external agency the Department's senior managers will refer the matter to them.

You also have the right to refer the matter to them.

You also have the right to refer any education or care concern to an external body such as the South Australian Ombudsman.

(DECD Parental Policy 05/12)

At Rose Park Preschool:

We provide families with access to the Department of Education and Child Development Brochure and Guide to raising a concern or complaint to assist with resolution.

www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint

This policy will be shared with all new staff and families, and available to view in the Preschool Policies Booklet and on the Preschool website.

Endorsed and ratified by staff and Governing Council August, 2014. To be review August, 2016.