

Dealing with Complaints Policy

To report a concern about an education and care service:

<p>Education and Care Regulatory Unit Boorloo Campus, Level 7 130 Stirling Street, Perth WA 6000 Phone: (08) 6277 3889 Free call: 1800 199 383 Email: ECRU@communities.wa.gov.au</p>	<p>REED CEO – Kylie Helgesen PO Box 390 Narrogin WA 6312 Phone: (08) 6832 3825 Email: Kylie.Helgesen@reedwa.org.au</p>
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Feedback from families, educators, employees and the wider community is fundamental in creating an evolving early childhood education and care service working towards the highest standard of care and education.

It is foreseeable that feedback will include divergent views, which may result in complaints. This Policy details REED’s procedures for receiving and managing informal and formal complaints. Our policy and complaints processes are designed to be easily understood and to support and encourage parents, educators, children, visitors, students and members of the community to lodge a grievance or complaint, with the understanding that it will be managed conscientiously and confidentially.

PURPOSE

The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170).

We will ensure that all people making a complaint are guided by the following policy values:

- Procedural fairness and natural justice
- ECA Code of Ethics
- REED Employee Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Culture free from discrimination and harassment
- Transparent policies and procedures
- Opportunities for further investigation
- Adhering to our Service philosophy
- Complaints are welcomed as part of continuous improvement
- All complaints will be taken seriously and responded to promptly
- Children’s safety is the paramount consideration

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors, Educators, Employees, students, volunteers, children and Families.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS (WA)

S2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children	S166A	Offences relating to inappropriate conduct
S172	Offence to fail to display prescribed information	R171	Policies and procedures

S174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority	R172	Notification of change to policies and procedures
R168(2)(o)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures for dealing with complaints	R173(2)(b)	Requires an approved provider to make the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints may be addressed clearly visible at the service
R170	Policies and procedures to be followed	R176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL:

Provide effective, child-focused complaint management. Ensure complaints systems are implemented, reviewed for effectiveness and understood by all employees. Fulfil all legislative and regulatory reporting obligations (including Reportable Conduct and Mandatory Reporting for harmful sexualised behaviours). Accept anonymous complaints where sufficient information is provided. Communicate with complainants throughout the process and provide clear outcomes where appropriate. Ensure that complaints or grievances are documented by the relevant department and that appropriate records are stored in accordance with REED's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* and *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*.

NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

Ensure complaints processes are implemented at the service level in line with organisational policy. Promote awareness of REED's online feedback form and complaint pathways and ensure information is easily accessible to families and the community. Treat all grievances and complaints seriously and manage them in a timely, confidential and fair manner. Escalate and report complaints in accordance with legislative and organisational requirements. Discuss the issue with the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the complaint. Record meetings and confirm details with the family at the end of the meeting. Investigate and document the grievance or complaint. Monitor complaints to identify trends and inform the Quality Improvement Plan and service practices.

EDUCATORS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES WILL:

Teach children about the complaints process so they know who to talk to if they want to make a complaint. Listen to the family's view of what has occurred. Clarify and confirm the grievance or complaint and document all relevant facts prior to investigation. Encourage and support the family to seek a balanced understanding of the issue. Discuss possible resolution options, including external supports where appropriate. Where appropriate, encourage and assist the family to determine a preferred resolution. Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times. Refer families to relevant policies where appropriate. Report all complaints to the Nominated Supervisor.

COMPLAINANTS WILL:

Be informed of REED's duty of care to ensure all persons are treated with equity and fairness in managing complaints. The complaints procedure provides a fair opportunity for all stakeholders to be heard and promotes effective conflict resolution. Complainants should first attempt to discuss concerns with the relevant educator, nominated supervisor or department. Children will be supported by educators to express concerns or allegations. Unresolved concerns can be communicated in writing to the approved provider via the REED online feedback form on the REED website, or by email at feedback@reedwa.org.au. Confidentiality is maintained throughout the process, and complainants are provided with information about external agencies should the matter remain unresolved.

COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with REED Administration in the first instance.

Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via phone or email:

Phone: 1800 664 231

Email: tipoffline@education.gov.au

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It is important for the complainant to feel confident in:

- being heard fairly
- an unbiased decision-making process

Should a conflict of interest arise during a grievance or complaint that involves the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor, other REED Management will be nominated as an alternative mediator.

REED may also engage the resources of an Independent Conflict Resolution Service to assist with the mediation of a dispute. We will ensure that throughout the conflict resolution process REED's Employee *Code of Conduct* is adhered to.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All employees will adhere to REED's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* when dealing with complaints and grievances. In the event of a complaint regarding child abuse or child sexual abuse, please refer to the Mandatory Reporting and Child Protection Policies.

EVALUATION

To ensure complaints and grievances are handled appropriately, REED Management will evaluate individual complaints and grievances to ensure satisfactory resolution. Review complaints and grievances to identify patterns and recurring issues. Review the effectiveness of REED policies and procedures to ensure complaints are handled fairly and professionally. Consider feedback from employees, educators, families and children regarding the policy and procedure.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Complaints provide us with opportunities for learning and improvement. We encourage regular and ongoing feedback from employees, children and families and the community. REED is committed to resolving complaints through prompt investigation, open communication, and transparent processes.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

RESOURCES	POLICIES	PROCEDURES
Online feedback form – Reedwa.org.au REED Complaints / Grievance Form	Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Staffing Arrangements Policy Interactions With Children Policy Enrolment and Orientation Policy Governance Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Child Protection Policy Child Safeguarding Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy Mandatory Reporting Policy Recruitment Policy Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Procedure Dealing with Complaints Procedure Mandatory Reporting Procedure Child Protection Procedure Incident Recording and Reporting Procedure Grievance Procedure (Staff) Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Procedure

SOURCE

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
 ACECQA – Dealing with Complaint – Policy Guidelines
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-06/DealingWithComplaintsGuidelines.pdf>
 Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). *Using Complaints to support continuous improvement*.
 Australian Government Department of Education. *Child Care Provider Handbook* (Amended 2025)
 Commissioner for Children and Young People- Western Australia. *Monitoring of Child-Focused Complaints Systems Report*.
 Australian Human Rights Commission: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au>
 Commonwealth Ombudsman. (2009). Better practice guide to complaint handling
https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/288241/Better-Practice-Complaint-Handling-Guide.pdf
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2025)
 Fair Work Australia: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/>
 Queensland Government - [Guide for effective complaints management](#)
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	MODIFICATIONS	NEXT PLANNED REVIEW DATE
May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated introduction and Purpose section Added additional related laws Updated responsibilities of employees at each level for conciseness and removed duplication Updated CCS tip-off email address. Fixed broken links to sources / Added new sources Added related resources, policies and procedures 	May 2028
January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of management of complaints relating to harmful sexualised behaviour 	January 2026
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of relevant regulations from the National Regulations. Deletion of information relating to Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting – referenced policies. Deletion of procedural information. Formatting. 	October 2025
October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of Notifiable Conduct Scheme requirements 	October 2024
September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update ECRU contact details 	September 2023
September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy name changed to meet ACECQA guidelines- <i>Dealing with Complaints Policy (Families)</i>, additional related legislation added, definition of ‘complaint’ amended to align with ACECQA’s definition guidelines, notification requirement for physical or sexual abuse added, sources updated 	September 2022
February 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy developed by REED management 	February 2021