

Policy created: 2010 **Reviewed:** 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017; 2020; 2021.

Monitoring, evaluation and reviews: occurs annually, overseen by the Principal.

Dealing with Complaints and Grievances Policy

Quality Areas 6 and 7

NESA requirements 3.6.1, 3.6.1

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations and Section 54A of the Education Act, our educational settings ensure that policies and procedures are in place for dealing with complaints (Reg 168) and we take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (Reg 170). We will notify the regulatory authority in writing within 24 hours of any complaints alleging that a serious incident has occurred at the setting or that the Education and Care Services National Law has been breached. We provide the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints can be made and this is clearly displayed on the community board.

Under NESA requirements we renew registration through our setting demonstrating that we continue to satisfy requirements for registration under section 47 of Education Act 1990 No 8 (NSW).

Policy Statement:

Montessori East bases its pedagogical approach on the principles initially developed by Dr Maria Montessori. We believe the principles and standards are responsive to the varied and changing needs of the child. Here they develop an appreciation and commitment to serve the needs of a rapidly changing world where real environmental threats and opportunities are present. The high regard for the individual child is reflected in our practices and policies, with special focus on the inclusion of children with additional needs. As an authentic Montessori setting, we recognise that families, staff and the community need to feel confident that any concerns or issues they may raise will be handled promptly and professionally. We will provide effective complaints management which meets our families'/carers' needs.

Grievances or complaints may arise from time to time, and it is important that they are not ignored. An unexpressed or unresolved grievance can often escalate unnecessarily. We have in place procedures designed to support parents, teachers and students in having issues dealt with in a professional manner to the best advantage of the child and school. Grievance will be handled in an unbiased manner, taking into account the principles of procedural fairness.

General background:

The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires the approved provider to ensure our settings have policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints.



Section 54A of the Education Act requires us to renew registration. Our setting demonstrates that we continue to satisfy requirements for registration under section 47, and if, since the setting's registration was granted or last renewed, the setting has complied with the terms of registration. Section 92 requires that NESAs have regard to records (if any) of achievement of the students at the setting in courses, standard of teaching of courses at the setting, and the facilities provided. The requirements and evidence of compliance relate to the proprietor and Principal, staff, curriculum, premises/buildings, facilities, safe/supportive environment, discipline, attendance, management/operation of school, educational and financial reporting.

NESA state (Accreditation non-government schools (NSW) manual):

- set clear guidelines and expectations for stakeholders regarding complaints or allegations of staff misconduct or reportable conduct (p. 35)
- publish the school's complaint handling procedures regarding allegations of staff misconduct or reportable conduct (p. 30)
- complaints or grievances, with specific reference to processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by students and/or parents (p.37)
- communication mechanisms and processes for handling complaints (p. 38)
- a process for handling complaints that describes how matters of concern can be raised and a process for responding to those concerns (p. 59)
- Complaints can be made by various stakeholders about a range of matters, such as: services provided by the school, staff misconduct, an allegation of reportable conduct a grievance between staff members about work matters, and discrimination, harassment or bullying between staff.

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the school about an educational and/or operational matter relating to services provided by the school or the behaviour or decisions of a staff member, contractor or volunteer, including misconduct. If a parent/carer or student has a concern about the conduct of a staff member, they should raise their concern with the school in accordance with this policy. If a complaint that concerns the behaviour of a staff member may constitute reportable conduct, the matter will be addressed in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy. Please refer to the school's Child Protection Policy for information about reportable conduct. Complainants are not required to assess whether their concern meets the threshold of reportable conduct before making a complaint. Any concern about a child's wellbeing may be reported under this policy. Complaints may be made by a student or parent/carer. The school will seek to resolve complaints informally where possible but acknowledges that in some cases a person may wish to make a formal complaint. NESAs state that the definition of a grievance is 'expression of dissatisfaction or formal allegation'.

Legislative requirements

Our policy is consistent with, and refers to, legislative requirements for dealing with complaints under both Education and Care Services National Law and Education Act (1990) (NSW).

Regulation

Description

Regulation 168

Our education settings have policies and procedures as detailed in 'Policies and Procedures Policy' (Policy Folder – office/Google Drive).

Regulation 170

Our settings do take reasonable steps to ensure that all staff and volunteers follow the policies and procedures of our settings. We manage this by annual training, staff handbook.



Regulation 171	Our settings policies and procedures are kept available and accessible for the educational setting community and for inspection in the office, on Transparent Classroom and Google Drive.
Regulation 172	Our settings notify parents within 14 days of change to policies or procedures relating to settings provisions, family ability to utilise setting, fees charged, fees collected. Additionally, our approved provider, if we consider that the notice period would pose a risk to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child enrolled at our settings, will ensure that parents of children enrolled at the service are notified as soon as practicable after making a change. We manage this by having a notification board visible in the office and train staff annually regarding this requirement.
Regulation 173	Prescribed information to be displayed. For the purpose of section (2) (f) 172 (f) of the Law, the following matter and information are prescribed in the case of a centre-based service, a notice stating that a child who has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis is enrolled.
Regulation 176	We display times to notify certain information to the Regulatory Authority in the office. They include a notice must be provided within 7 days of the relevant event or within 7 days of the approved provider becoming aware of the relevant information. In the case of the death of a child, as soon as practicable but within 24 hours of the death, in case of any other serious incident or complaint, within 24 hours; in any other case, within 7 days of the event.
Section 54A Education Act	Publish the school's complaint handling procedures regarding allegations of staff misconduct or reportable conduct.

The principles that inform our policy include:

All decision-making should be carried out in accordance with the principles of your service's Dealing with complaints policy.

- Children's safety, health and wellbeing is our key priority. In line with regulatory requirements, we notify the regulatory authority of any complaints alleging the occurrence of a serious incident or contravention of the Education and Care Services National Law.
- Our families are integral to our settings. We welcome their input into all aspects of our operation, including any complaints they may have.
- We welcome complaints as an opportunity to enhance the quality of our education and care practices. We reflect on each complaint received, identifying any issues or areas of improvement for our setting.



Key terms

We provide definitions of our key terms that may not be used every day to help with ease of access:

Term	Meaning
ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support sector to improve outcomes for children.
Approved Provider	Board – The Eastern Suburbs Montessori Association
Responsible Person (must have written consent)	Approved provider/person with management/control, nominated supervisor, a person in day-to-day charge and is present at a centre-based setting at all times. An approved provider does not have to appoint a person in day-to-day charge if a nominated supervisor/s is to be a responsible person.
Nominated Supervisor	Person nominated by the Approved Provider. (must have written consent)
Educational Leader	Person/persons appointed by the Approved Provider (must have written offer/consent)
NESA	NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales. NESA is responsible for accrediting registered non-government schools in school years for a period of time corresponding to period of registration of school
Registration renewal	Registration is a non-government school’s licence to operate. The main purpose of registration is to ensure that the requirements of the Education Act are being, or will be, met.
Complaint	Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, settings, staff or handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
Complaints handling	Effective resolution of a problem before it becomes worse and providing a remedy.
Investigation	A formal/systematic inquiry to establish facts about complaints by collecting, documenting, examining and evaluating evidence. An investigation is not an end in itself. Throughout



an investigation, the investigator should keep an open mind about possible outcomes of the investigation, such as education, compliance action, or decision not to pursue a matter.

Personal information

Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

Links to other policies

Related policies and procedures include:

- Injury, incident, trauma and illness
- Providing a child safe environment
- Staffing
- Interactions with children
- Enrolment and orientation
- Governance and management of the service
- Child Protection Policy (regarding reportable conduct)
- Unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying

Induction and ongoing training

Induction training at our setting consists of school operations overview, human resources, salary, time keeping and sick leave procedures, record keeping, safety and accident prevention, leave entitlements/provisions, personal conduct and safety, professional development and training and introduction to the workplace.

Induction training is carried out as needed. To ensure and assist managers, coordinators, educators and other staff to fulfil their roles effectively our settings provide a checklist of all areas to be covered and who is in charge of that area (Staff Induction Checklist)

Policy created: 2010

Reviewed: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2020, 2021.

Monitoring, evaluation and reviews: occurs annually, overseen by the Principal.

Dealing with Complaints Procedure

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations and Education Act 1990, we ensure policies and procedures are in place for dealing with complaints. Our procedures are written in clear and concise language, making them easy to read and understand and are practical and achievable. Our procedures reflect our setting's overall Montessori philosophy and supervision and action plans for specific children.

We have specifically outlined our induction training and procedure so that the educators who are casually employed, new to a setting or moving between rooms, can refer to this document when they are unsure about their role and responsibilities at the setting. These documented steps and guidelines guide our practice and inform regulatory authorities of roles and responsibilities. Procedures directly refer to our 'dealing with complaints policy' located in our policy documents.

Procedures

Implementing the 'dealing with complaints policy' includes specific step-by-step procedures including:

- Procedures are kept in the office and accessible to all staff.
- When they were last reviewed.
- We use digital platforms as the main tool for communicating complaints.
- Procedures are an integral part of our educator and staff inductions.
- Clearly defining roles and expectations and as documented in this procedure.
- Our settings will learn from the administration of these procedures to improve.
- Under Section 54A of the Education Act to comply with NESAs we publish the school's complaint handling procedures regarding allegations of staff misconduct or reportable conduct on our website.

Roles and responsibilities

Legal responsibility of approved providers to ensure systems are in place to minimise risk and ensure health and safety procedures are implemented by the responsible people in services. Ultimate responsibility lies with the approved provider to ensure their service/s are meeting the requirements under the Education and Care Services National Law.



Approved provider:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure the name and contact number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly displayed at our setting.
- Ensure that the regulatory authority is notified in writing within 24 hours of any complaints alleging that a serious incident has occurred at our setting or that the Education and Care Services National Law has been breached.
- Discuss complaint with complainant, make notes from meeting or discussion.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors and staff follow the dealing with complaints policy and procedures and its readily available to them.
- Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, and staff, and available for inspection.
- Ensure that complaints result in reviews of relevant policies, procedures, practices.
- Regularly review the policies and procedures to ensure that serious incidents and complaints are investigated promptly, fairly and thoroughly.
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:
 - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or
 - significantly impact the setting's education and care of children or
 - significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the setting.

Nominated supervisor:

- Ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to dealing with complaints
- Implement procedures for dealing with complaints
- Inform families and the broader service community of the dealing with complaints policy and procedures
- Discuss the complaint with the complainant and ensure the complaint is documented
- Ensure the approved provider is aware of the complaint, if it is a notifiable complaint, or if a complaint cannot be resolved
- Work cooperatively with the approved provider, educators, staff and/or the complainant during the investigation or resolution of a complaint.
- Regularly review the policy and procedures to ensure serious incidents and complaints are investigated promptly, fairly and thoroughly.
- Ensure that complaints result in reviews of relevant policies, procedures, practices.

Educators/coordinators:

- Understand and implement the dealing with complaints policy and procedures
- Report all complaints received to the nominated supervisor and/or approved provider promptly so timeframes can be adhered to
- Support the nominated supervisor and approved provider in the investigation and/or resolution of complaints.

Families:

- Be familiar with and follow the Dealing with complaints policy and procedures
- Raise any issues or complaints in line with the policy and procedures
- Cooperate with the setting representatives dealing with complaints.



Preparing for and dealing with complaints

Act: 172, 174, 174A **Regs:** 143B, 168–173, 176 **QAs** 6.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.1

Related Policies: Providing a child safe environment / Enrolment and orientation/ Incident, injury, trauma and illness / Governance and management / Staffing / Child Protection Policy (regarding reportable conduct) / Unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying

- We make sure our policy and procedures are available for all to access.
- We provide induction training for staff and regular updates and reviews at team meetings on complaints management and the procedures.
- We ensure staff understand their responsibilities in relation to complaints.
- We ensure the complaints policy and procedures are discussed with families as part of enrolment and orientation.
- We provide training in investigation best practice to the individuals who will be asked to lead as part of their role/responsibilities.
- We consider what complaints may require an external investigation (if a conflict of interest exists or if no one at the service holds the requisite skills).
- We consider the system to be used to record the complaints and outcomes.
- We ensure that the name and contact number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly displayed at our setting
- We created a **checklist of things the person responsible** for communicating with the complainant should discuss at each stage of the process including:
 - ensuring regulatory authority is notified in 24 hours of any complaints alleging that a serious incident has occurred at the setting or that the Education and Care Services National Law has been breached.
 - Communicating with families about complaints procedures through our policy and procedures.
 - Communicating with the complainant at all stages of the process – timeframes, methods, etc.
 - our response to, monitor, follow up on and investigate complaints, and associated steps to follow and timeframes.
 - matters the staff should have the authority to resolve, with more serious or complex matters escalated to service leadership.
 - persons responsible for investigating complaints.
 - Specific processes for investigating a complaint that concerns a staff member, noting sensitivities and reporting requirements.
 - Specific processes if a complaint is about another child/their family.
 - We review the procedures at least annually to ensure complaints are investigated promptly, fairly, and thoroughly.
 - We keep relevant records in relation to complaints.
 - We take steps to support people to feel safe or comfortable when making a complaint (e.g., anonymously, or through a 3rd party).
 - We maintain the privacy and confidentiality of those involved.
 - We can deal with difficult, aggressive, or repeat complainers through our processes and procedures.
 - Staff are supported through the complaint process by the leadership team and colleagues.



Resolving complaints

Act: 174, 174A **Regs:** 143B, 168- 172, 176 **QAs** 6.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.1

Related Policies: Providing a child safe environment / Incident, injury, trauma and illness / Governance and management / Child Protection Policy (regarding reportable conduct) / Staffing / Unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying

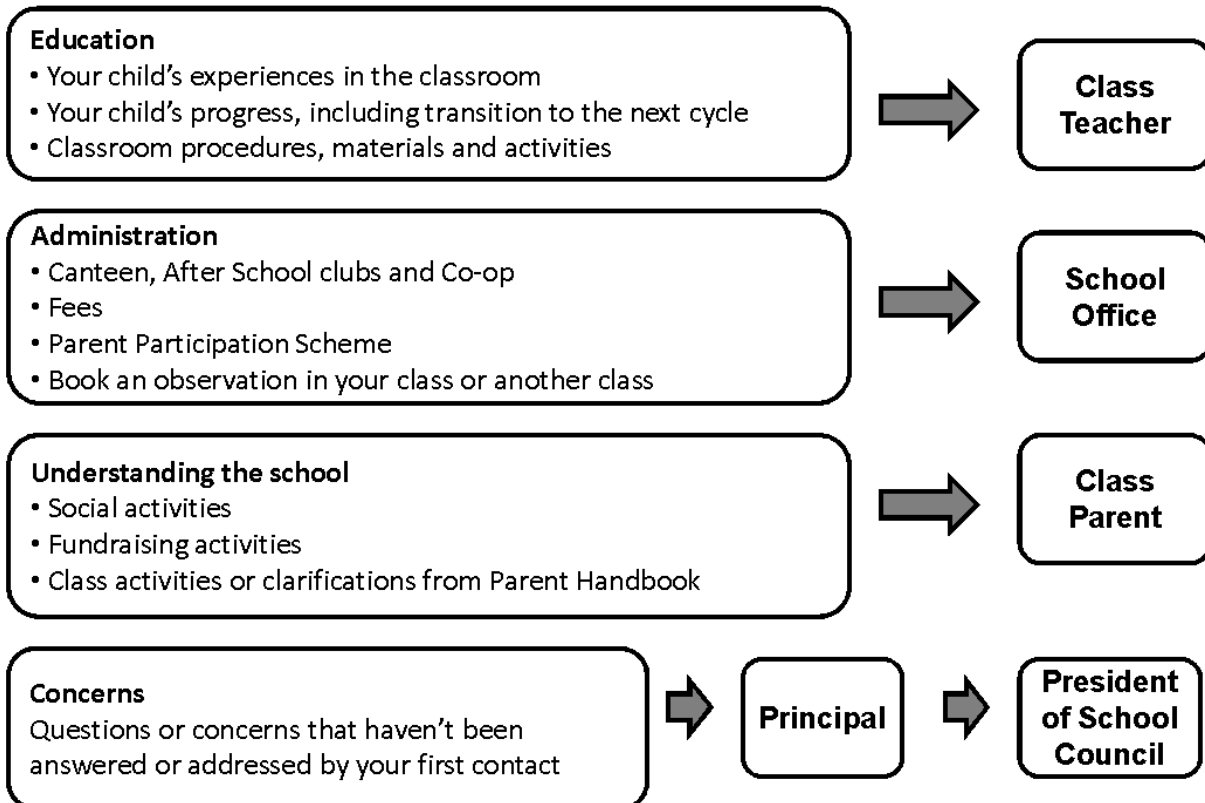
- We let the complainant know what actions we will take as a result of their complaint by writing to them.
- We inform other parties of the outcome of the complaint, if relevant (e.g. our community) by writing to them stating the outcomes.
- The process we implement if the complainant is unhappy with our proposed resolution of the complaint (e.g. a right to appeal, etc.) is outlined below.
- We will use the complaint to identify any issues or areas of improvement for our settings and then see if our policies, procedures or practices need amending as a result of the experience with the complaint.
- We have created a process to inform complainants of the outcome of a complaint or investigation.
- We created a system to reflect on the outcomes of complaints and any changes that may have resulted.
- We consider processes for identifying goals and strategies for inclusion in the Quality Improvement Plan.



Communication Structure for parents to follow

(prior to following the Complaints and Grievances Procedure that follows)

Where to go if you have questions about your child and ME



Other resources: The parent handbook and our school website are also full of useful information so please have a look there to see if your questions can be answered

Recording Complaints and Grievances

(Section 47 of the Education Act 1990 No 8 (NSW))

NSW Non-government schools comply with the Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government School (NSW) Manual which states - "complaints or grievances, with specific reference to processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by students and/or parents"; "set clear guidelines and expectations for stakeholders regarding complaints or allegations of staff misconduct or reportable conduct"; "publish the school's complaint handling procedures regarding allegations of staff misconduct or reportable conduct"; "a process for handling complaints that describes how matters of concern can be raised and a process for responding to these concerns". Therefore, the staff member or Principal will keep a record of all relevant complaints and grievances. NESAs recommends that all grievances are initially dealt with in a meeting where the goal is to resolve any issues presented (ME Complaints and Grievances Form). All grievances are handled in an unbiased manner and taking into account the principles of procedural fairness.

The following outlines areas of possible disagreements arising and our processes to alleviate, document and resolve.

Disagreement between a Parent and a Teacher/Assistant in Pre Primary (3-6)

1. The parent discusses the disagreement with the teacher in a meeting held specifically for that purpose. If the disagreement involves a class assistant, then he/she should attend this meeting as well. The teacher makes a summary of the meeting which all attendees sign as a true summary.
2. If either the parent or teacher is not satisfied with the outcome of the first meeting, the teacher or parent requests that the Principal attends a second meeting. The role of the Principal will be to try to resolve the disagreement in the child's and the school's best interest. The Principal will make a summary of the meeting which all attendees sign as a true summary.
3. In the event that the parent is not satisfied with the outcomes of the meeting, they should raise the matter in writing addressed to the Principal. The Principal will request the School Board Chair along with the parents to help resolve the matter. Copies of the correspondence and any comments from the Principal will be filed in the child's record and with the Principal.
4. If the matter is resolved the Chair will report that a grievance was addressed and resolved. If the matter is not resolved, then the Chair will bring the matter to the Board's attention and the Board will need to decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The minutes of this Board meeting will be filed in the child's record and the files of the Principal. The President will notify the parent(s) of the decision of the Board.
5. If the decision from the Board is not satisfactory to the parent(s) at the final meeting, the parent can raise the issue with their Children's Services Advisor at the Department of Community Services (CS). Correspondence with CS should be filed in duplicate, as well in the file of the child as in the file of the Principal. Any meetings that the Principal or members of the Board have with CS should be summarised and filed in duplicate.
6. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level the Children's Services Advisor will proceed to the Community Services Commission.



Disagreement between a Parent and a Teacher/Assistant in Primary (6-12)

1. The parent discusses the disagreement with the teacher in a meeting held specifically for that purpose. If the disagreement involves a class assistant, then he/she should attend this meeting as well. The teacher makes a summary of the meeting which all attendees sign as a true summary.
2. If either the parent or the teacher is not satisfied with the outcome of the first meeting, the teacher or parent asks the Principal to sit in on a second meeting. The role of the Principal will be to try to resolve the disagreement in the child's and the school's best interest. The Principal will make a summary of the meeting which all attendees sign as a true summary.
3. In the event that the parent is not satisfied with the state of affairs, they can raise the matter in writing addressed to the Principal. The Principal will request the School Board Chairperson and/or an executive member of staff along with the parents to help her resolve the matter. Copies of the letter and any comments from the Principal will be filed in the child's record and with the Principal.
4. If the matter is resolved the Board's Chairperson will report that a grievance was addressed and resolved. If the matter is not resolved, then the Chair will bring the matter to the Board's attention and the Board will need to decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The minutes of this Board meeting will be filed in the child's record and file with the Principal. The Board will notify the parent(s) of the decision of the Board.
5. The decision of the Board is final and the contractual agreements between the parent(s) and the school are honoured.

Disagreement between a Parent and a Member of the Administration Staff

1. The parent discusses the disagreement with the staff member in a meeting held specifically for that purpose. The staff member makes a summary of the meeting which all attendees sign as a true summary.
2. If either the parent or the staff member is not satisfied with the outcome of the first meeting, the staff member or the parent requests that the Principal attends a second meeting. The role of the Principal will be to try to resolve the disagreement in the best interest of both parties. The Principal will make a summary of the meeting which all attendees sign as a true summary.
3. In the event that the parent is not satisfied with the outcome, they can raise the matter in writing addressed to the Principal. The Principal will request for a school Board member or mediator to attend the next meeting to assist in resolving the matter. Copies of the letter and any comments from the Principal will be filed in the child's record and with the Principal.
4. If the matter is resolved the Board Chairperson will report that a grievance was addressed and resolved. If the matter is not resolved, then the Board Chairperson will bring the matter to the Board's attention and the Board will need to decide how to resolve the matter and record this at the next meeting. The minutes of this Board meeting will be filed in the child's record and file with the Principal. The Board Chairperson will notify the parent(s) of the decision of the Board.

5. The decision of the Board is final and the contractual agreements between the Parent(s) and the school are honoured.

Disagreement between staff members (including grievances related to teacher accreditation decisions)

1. The staff members should discuss the issue in a meeting held specifically for that purpose. A staff member makes a summary of the meeting.
2. If either staff member is unhappy with the outcome of the first meeting, they will ask the Principal to sit in on a second meeting. The role of the Principal will be to try to resolve the disagreement in the parties' best interest. The Principal will make a summary of the meeting.
3. In the event that either staff member is still unhappy with the state of affairs, they should raise the matter in writing addressed to the Principal. The Principal will request that a school board member or mediator attend along with the staff members to assist in resolving the matter. Copies of the letter and any comments from the Principal will be filed in staff files and with the Principal.
4. If the matter is resolved the Principal will report that a grievance was addressed and resolved. If the matter is not resolved, then the Principal will bring the matter to the Board's attention and the Board will assist in finding a solution. The minutes of this Board meeting will be filed in the file of the staff members and the file of the Principal. The Board Chairperson and Principal will notify the staff members of the decision of the Board.
5. The decision of the Board is final and the contractual agreements between the staff and the school are honoured.

Considerations include:

All the documentation that is produced while resolving a disagreement is kept in the file of the child/staff member as well as in the file of the Principal with the Complaints Register. Because these documents can contain confidential material these files should not be accessible to everyone.

The child's file may only be accessed by:

- The Principal
- The class teacher of the class the child currently attends can get access after asking the Principal.
- The parents of the child can get access after asking the Principal.
- The Principal and the parents together can give someone else permission to look in the file.

The file of the Principal may only be accessed by:

- The Principal
- The staff member who the file concerns after asking the Principal.



- The Principal and the staff member together can give someone else permission to look in the file concerning the staff member.

It is important to keep good documentation for the following reasons:

- People often have different recollections of discussions and meetings.
- If there is a change of staff, the new staff member must be able to see the history of an unresolved dispute.

Managing a Complaint

Complaints may arise from time to time, and it is important that they are not ignored. An unexpressed or unresolved complaint can often escalate unnecessarily. The following procedures are designed to make sure that:

- Parents and teaching staff are supported and informed by the appropriate people when a complaint arises.
- Issues are dealt with in a professional manner to the best advantage of the child and school.
- Confidentiality is maintained and the integrity of all parties is honoured

Policy deals with whistleblowing complaints, confidentiality, raising and handling a complaint and highlights who to contact.

Assessing a complaint

The Principal generally will assess the complaint and determine:

- whether the complaint is one to be addressed under this policy or is a staff grievance or reportable conduct matter which are dealt with by the relevant policies
- the priority of the complaint in accordance with urgency and/or seriousness of the matter raised
- whether the school may be required to report the matter to the Ombudsman, Police, Family and Community Services or other relevant authorities should the complaint relate to possible unlawful conduct or other reportable matters.

Whistleblowing complaints

This procedure does not extend to complaints which are whistleblowing disclosures. The procedure for processing whistleblowing complaints are dealt with in the school's whistleblowing policy.

In summary a whistleblowing disclosure is a disclosure which:

- is made by a board member, staff member, a person who supplies goods or services to the school, including a volunteer, an employer of a supplier or a relative of any of these people
- involves alleged misconduct, an improper state of affairs or circumstances, or illegal activity



- is made to a senior staff member, or officer of the school, the school's auditor or a person who the school has authorised to collect such disclosures

The complainant

Informal complaints may be raised by a complainant directly with the person involved. However, if the complainant does not feel comfortable doing so or the matter is one where it may not be appropriate to do so a complaint can be made to the Principal. Any complaint about conduct of a staff member should be raised directly with the Principal in first instance.

Should the matter not be resolved through informal processes, the complainant may raise the matter formally with the school. A formal complaint can be made in writing to the Principal, via email.

Where a person wishes to make a formal complaint concerning the Principal the complaint should be made in writing to the Board Chairperson/delegate, via email. In this situation, the references in this policy relating to the role of the Principal should be read as references to the Board Chairperson.

The Principal will generally acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint in writing as soon as practicable.

Confidentiality

All parties involved in complaints handling are required to maintain appropriate confidentiality, including in relation to handling and storing records.

There may be circumstances where some steps outlined above are not appropriate, school will determine, on a case-by-case basis, most appropriate method to handle a complaint.

A complainant and the relevant parties that the complaint is about may choose to have an appropriate support person present at any meeting with representatives of the school about the complaint. However, the school maintains the right to determine whether the person's preferred support person is appropriate and may not approve the attendance of a support person where they are determined by the school to be inappropriate.

Contacts

If you have any queries about this procedure, please contact the Principal.

Principal: Principal@montessori.nsw.edu.au Phone: (02) 9130 8313

Board Chairperson: chair@montessori.nsw.edu.au Phone: (02) 9130 8313



Managing a Complaint Form

Definitions of Complaints and Grievances

The term *grievance* is used only in a human resources context (e.g. staff grievances).

The term 'complaints' can be used for the broad range of matters from the Australian Standard. Any issue raised that is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the school, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required should be considered a complaint and managed in accordance with the school's complaints handling procedures.

All complaints and grievances are treated with objectivity and in confidence.

The Complaint

Basics of Complaint (including relevant dates, persons involved):

Who has brought the complaint:.....

Date complaint has been brought:

Acknowledging a Complaint

Verbal acknowledgement of complaint - Date verbally acknowledged

Date resolved

Contact person for the complainant

Written acknowledgement of complaint - Date acknowledged in writing

Date resolved

Contact person for the complainant



Tracking the complaint

All complaints are recorded on a school's complaints register, whether they are serious or not and are responded to within certain timeframes. This is because many informal complaints received over time may indicate a systemic issue which, if not resolved, can lead to escalating dissatisfaction among key stakeholders such as parents or students. Timeline for most complaints is 21 days. Reportable conduct complaint is dealt with in

Complaint first received on date:

1st response to acknowledge complaint made on date:

Complaint under investigation to identify key risks and suggest appropriate decisions from date: To

2nd response to call meeting to report on investigation sent:

to write to detail investigation sent:

Action School will take:

Reasons why School will not take action in this case:

Complaint resolved on:

Improvements for School:

- Identifying problems
- Addressing problems
- Implementing solutions
- Reviewing these changes

Supporting documents include:

- Witness statements



Montessori East
Primary & Pre School

Complaints Register

All complaints should be recorded in complaints register and classified and analysed to identify systemic, recurring and single incident problems and trends so that key risk areas are clearly understood, and the underlying causes of complaints can be addressed through corrective actions.

It may not be appropriate for the details of child protection related complaints to be included in the same complaints register as other complaints, for reasons of privacy and confidentiality.



Dealing with Complaints and Grievances Form

Date:

Person/s submitting form:

Contact Details:

Full name:

Contract Email:

Phone #:

Complainants' Category

- Parent/carer/family member
- Teacher
- Principal
- Staff member
- Other

Brief description of complaint:

[Describe the situation and/or your concerns; include key dates and times, such as when the incident occurred; if known, names of adults or children involved; any other information that you think is relevant to your complaint. Add pages as required].

What action would you like to see as a result of your complaint?

What actions have already been taken?

[Have you verbally raised your complaint with the Teacher or Principal? If yes, what was the outcome? If no, was there a particular reason?]

Signature of complainant:

Date:

Dealing with Complaints and Grievances Meeting Record

Date:

Attendees/positions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Brief description of complaint:

[Describe the situation and/or your concerns; include key dates and times, such as when the incident occurred; if known, names of adults or children involved; any other information that you think is relevant to your complaint. Add pages as required].

Decisions made at this meeting:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



What actions are expected to be taken?

True Summary of Meeting:

a) This complaint was satisfactorily resolved through/by

b) This complaint was not satisfactorily resolved but the timeframe for follow up is:

Signature 1:

Date:

Signature 2:

Date:

Signature 3:

Date:

Signature 4:

Date:

Signature 5:

Date:

This record will be kept in the child/staff file and with the Principal.