

# Complaints Handling Policy Guidelines

## The Hills Learning Centre Pty Ltd

All minor complaint and disputes should be resolved promptly and without using formal procedures. Whenever possible, informal resolution should be attempted first in all matters assessed as less serious. There are certain types of complaints, we term 'special cases'. A special case is deemed one involving neglect, and or abuse in any form. These cases are referred to the Director.

### Making a Complaint

Anyone can make a complaint. Ideally, most complaints should be resolved informally with the relevant employee.

### Key considerations

- What can a complaint be about?
- How can I make a complaint?
- Can I get assistance in making my complaint?
- How will my complaint be handled?
- What about confidentiality?
- Could my complaint be a protected disclosure?
- What if I need support during the process?
- What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?

### What can a complaint be about? A complaint can be about:

- any aspect of the service provided, or not provided
- the behaviour or decisions of staff, or
- practices, policies or procedures.

### How can I make a complaint?

#### A guide for parents and carers

- Discuss your concerns with your child's intervention specialist first. Make an appropriate time to meet with them, phone or email them.
- If you are not happy with the result, or if you do not feel it is appropriate to talk to them, phone and make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the director. However, you may choose any staff member from The Hills Learning Centre as your key person of contact.
- You may bring a friend or relative to be your support and we can provide interpretative services if required.
- If your complaint cannot be resolved in an informal way, we **may** ask you to put it in writing.
- It is important that you include specific details of the situation and tell us what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint. We can help you to put your complaint in writing, if you require it. And we can provide you with an interpreter if required.
- Alternatively a complaint form may also be used. Complete the form and send it to the director.

## Can I get assistance in making my complaint?

You have the right to have a family member, friend, carer or an advocate of your choice, to assist you with your verbal or written complaint and come with you when you meet with your service provider. We can provide interpretative services if required.

## Complaints of a child protection nature

As mandatory reporters, all complaints of a child protection nature will be referred to the Department of Communities and Justice and to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

## Discrimination

Complaints about discrimination will be made to the director. This type of concern will also be referred to the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW.

## How will my complaint be handled?

- The person who receives your complaint must consider the nature and seriousness of the issues you raise.
- The person managing the complaint should always try to resolve those complaints assessed as 'less serious' by informal means first.
- Sometimes complaints termed 'special cases' will be referred to the director. If this is the case, you will be advised of this.
- If your complaint is considered to be serious or not appropriate to be managed informally, there are three types of formal procedures used, depending on the nature of the complaint – remedy and systems improvement, negotiation, and investigation.
- All complaints will be dealt with in a confidential, efficient and timely manner.
- You are free to make any complaint and will be safe from any form of discrimination or retribution of any kind.
- You will be kept informed at each stage of the complaints process of decisions and the reasons for those decisions being made.

## What about confidentiality?

All parties to a complaint are expected to treat the matter confidentially.

This requires everyone, including the complainant, to ensure that information is restricted to those who genuinely need to know. Furthermore, those people should only be told as much as they need to know and no more. For example, some people may need to know of the issue so that they can provide advice, but not of the identities of the persons involved.

## What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?

It is possible that, at the end of the process, you will not receive the outcome that you wanted. If you feel that you have not been treated fairly or that the result is unreasonable, you can request that the matter be reviewed by the director or an external body.

External bodies that may be able to assist include:

- **NSW Ombudsman**
- **Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW (ADB)**
- **Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC)**
- **NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission**

