

BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL



1.09 Feedback, Grievances and Complaints

This policy was approved by the Nominated Supervisor in consultation with staff and families.

Date Approved: July 2026

Review Date: July 2029

Aim

To describe the steps taken by staff and families to provide feedback or resolve complaints in a safe, confidential, and constructive manner.

Introduction

Bermagui Preschool values the feedback of children, educators, staff, families, and the wider community in helping to create a service that meets regulatory requirements and the needs of enrolled children and their families. We encourage open communication and provide opportunities to respond and provide feedback on the program.

A component of this feedback is the ability to put forward a complaint, which will be managed appropriately with consideration for accountability and continuous quality improvement.

We will:

- Provide opportunities for consultation, evaluation, and review of the service's operation and education program.
- Develop a process for making and managing complaints.
- Communicate the options and process for making a complaint.
- Handle complaints diligently and confidentially.
- Ensure children's rights and NSW Child Safe Standards are upheld regarding feedback, grievances, and complaints.

Feedback

Communications will be open, honest, and confidential.

Our service provides multiple ways to communicate and provide feedback:

- Day Books
- Online communication platforms and social media
- Daily program notes with a dedicated section for feedback
- Educator interactions
- Formal feedback or comment forms
- Surveys
- Family meetings
- Children's evaluation and feedback on programs and their own learning

With permission, educators may write comments on behalf of families to assist with program evaluation and encourage further input.

Families are provided with the service's email address and phone number at orientation and are encouraged to converse with educators at pick-up and drop-off times. Families may also email or call throughout the day.

Feedback from families is encouraged and will be considered in ongoing planning and quality improvement. Families will be informed how their feedback has contributed to service improvements through notice boards, emails, and/or newsletters.

Complaints Management

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Develop and oversee the process for managing complaints, including receiving, investigating, and documenting complaints.
- Communicate the process to families through enrolment and orientation.
- Provide contact details for lodging complaints.
- Ensure each complaint is treated as an opportunity for quality improvement.
- Discuss complaints management procedures with staff and provide or arrange training as required.
- Ensure all grievances and complaints are treated confidentially.

Level 1 – Informal Process (Grievance)

- Families are encouraged to discuss concerns with staff. Most differences can be resolved through open discussion, with solutions developed collaboratively.
- If unresolved, an informal meeting with relevant staff and family will occur.
- A brief written record of the situation and outcome will be kept by the service.

Level 2 – Formal Process (Complaint)

Level 2 occurs when no satisfactory outcome is achieved at Level 1 or the family requests a formal process:

- Family submits a written complaint to the Nominated Supervisor, who forwards it to the Chairperson of the Bermagui Preschool Board.
- The Chairperson contacts all parties, arranges a formal meeting, and attempts to resolve the complaint.
- If unresolved, a full staff and family meeting is held.
- If still unresolved, the Chairperson convenes an extraordinary Board meeting within three weeks.
- All parties present their case, and the Board attempts resolution.
- A written record of the complaint and outcomes is maintained.

Information for Families

Families may make formal complaints without fear of disadvantage. Complaints should be sent to:

Bermagui Preschool
Nominated Supervisor
27 Young Street
Bermagui NSW 2546

Complaints are handled confidentially. Only staff directly involved in resolution will have access to information, and the complainant will be informed if further disclosure is required. Complaints are documented in the complaints register and forwarded to the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider.

Actions to resolve complaints will be determined, and all parties will be informed of outcomes and any service improvements.

The Department of Early Childhood Education and Care will be notified within 24 hours of any complaint alleging a breach of regulation.

Information for Educators and Staff

- Staff may make formal complaints without fear of disadvantage (this is not a staff grievance procedure).
- Complaints are submitted to the Nominated Supervisor at Bermagui Preschool.
- Confidentiality will be maintained. Complaints are documented, recorded in the register, and forwarded to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider for investigation.
- Outcomes and improvement actions will be communicated to all involved.
- Complaints alleging breaches affecting child safety or wellbeing are reported to the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care within 24 hours.

Information for Children

At Bermagui Preschool, children are given opportunities to provide feedback, express grievances, and make complaints in a safe, supportive environment.

Educators ensure children feel confident to voice their opinions through discussions, play, or structured activities such as:

- '3 Safe People'
- 'Good/Bad Secrets'
- 'My Body'

Educators will listen calmly, respectfully, and carefully. Feedback or complaints are:

- Acknowledged and documented
- Followed up in an age-appropriate way
- Communicated back to children through verbal discussion, drawings, gestures, or play

Mandatory reporting procedures are followed if a child may be at risk. Children's rights and Child Safe Standards guide all interactions and responses.

Mediation

If complaints are unresolved, the Board may appoint an independent mediator. All records will be made available, a meeting convened, and the cost covered by Bermagui Preschool.

Complaints relating to child safety or wellbeing are immediately referred to the Child Protection Policy.

Child-Focused Complaint Handling

The Preschool is committed to maintaining a complaint handling system that is accessible, child-focused, and responsive to the needs, views, and wellbeing of children. Children will be supported to raise concerns or complaints in ways that are age-appropriate, culturally safe, and inclusive. Where a complaint involves a child, the Preschool will ensure the child is listened to, treated with respect, kept informed (where appropriate), and provided with support throughout the complaint process, having regard to their age, maturity, and individual circumstances.

Complaints Alleging Harmful Sexual Behaviours by a Child

Complaints or concerns alleging that a child is exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours will be managed promptly, sensitively, and in accordance with the Preschool's child safety, child protection, and incident management procedures. The Preschool will prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all children involved, respond in a trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate manner, and ensure appropriate support is provided to affected children and families. Where required, the Preschool will seek advice from relevant authorities or specialist services and will comply with all mandatory reporting and regulatory obligations.

Evaluation

Continuous improvement occurs through reflection and constructive feedback from the service community. Complaints are managed securely, safely, and in a way that leads to service quality improvements.

Relevant Legislation

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- NSW Child Safe Standards 2022
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) 1993

Resources & References

- Community Childcare Co-operative Policy Template
- 4.18 Child Protection Policy

Relevant Documentation

- Complaints Register
- Child-friendly complaints poster

Version History

V1.0 – First Published: Pre-2026

V2.0 – Reviewed: 05/03/2026

- Strengthened complaints management procedures
- Included child-focused feedback and complaints processes
- Aligned with NSW Child Safe Standards
- Improved clarity and structure of roles and responsibilities

V3.0 – Reviewed: 25/06/2026

- Added statements in line with National Child Safe Standards