



THORNDON PARK GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

RATIONALE

At Thorndon Park, we are committed to fostering positive, respectful, and collaborative relationships within our kindergarten community. We recognise that from time to time concerns, misunderstandings, or grievances may arise, and we believe that having clear and supportive processes for raising and resolving concerns is essential to maintaining trust, promoting open communication, and ensuring all voices are heard, valued, and respected.

We encourage feedback, concerns, and grievances to be shared in a constructive and respectful manner so that issues can be addressed fairly, confidentially, and in a timely way. Through listening, reflecting, and working together to seek positive resolutions, we strengthen partnerships and support continuous improvement across our service.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

This approach aligns with the National Quality Standard, particularly Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities, and Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership, which emphasise respectful relationships, effective communication, ethical practice, and a commitment to ongoing reflection and improvement.

- Element 6.1.2: Parent views are respected
- Element 7.2.1: There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.
- Element 7.1.2: Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
- Regulation 168(2)(o): policies and procedures for dealing with complaints.

TITLE

Grievance procedure

PURPOSE

Thorndon Park Kindergarten encourages open, respectful and constructive communication between families, volunteers, contractors, educators and the wider kindergarten community. Parents, caregivers, volunteers and contractors attending the service are encouraged to raise concerns or provide feedback informally and appropriately to support the timely resolution of issues and continuous improvement of the kindergarten environment and practices.

Any person connected with the kindergarten may raise a complaint or grievance in a fair and respectful manner without fear of disadvantage or victimisation. The kindergarten is committed to ensuring that

concerns are acknowledged, managed confidentially where appropriate, and resolved in accordance with Department for Education complaint management processes.

Grievances relating to employees and staff conduct will be managed in line with the relevant Department for Education South Australia staff grievance and workplace procedures.

OBJECTIVES and SCOPE:

To maintain positive and collaborative relationships between families, staff and the kindergarten community, and to ensure that concerns or issues are addressed fairly, respectfully, transparently and in a timely manner, with the aim of achieving outcomes that are satisfactory to all parties involved.

POLICY and DETAILS

Raising a complaint with the department

We recognise that sometimes things go wrong and you may feel that your expectations are not being met. If you have an unresolved complaint or want to provide feedback, we would like to hear from you. It's important to work together, talk, listen and find solutions in a courteous and respectful manner, so we can improve our services.

Before making a complaint

Before making a complaint you should:

- clearly identify issues and the resolution you are after
- provide complete and factual information
- cooperate with any requests for more information
- not include deliberately false or misleading information
- treat staff handling the complaint with courtesy and respect.

Types of concerns and complaints

You may choose to make a complaint if you believe that the school, preschool or corporate office has:

- done something incorrect
- failed to do something they should have done
- acted unfairly or impolitely.

Your complaint or feedback may be about:

- the type, level or quality of service
- the behaviour and decisions of staff
- a policy, procedure or practice.

Complaints and feedback may be about something we have to do because of state or federal law. We will talk to you and help you understand the requirements and why they exist.

Where to get help to make a complaint

[Help to make a complaint](#) – if you have special needs or require additional assistance in making a complaint

[Tips to make a complaint or give feedback to the department.](#)

Making a complaint

Step 1 – frontline complaint handling and early resolution

Talk to the school, preschool, area or the person that made the original decision. We encourage a process where the original decision maker is given the opportunity to resolve the concern or complaint wherever possible. In a school setting this might be a Teacher or a Year Level Coordinator. In a corporate office it might be an officer or Team Leader.

If you're still not satisfied that your complaint has been addressed, you can contact that person's Line Manager. This might be a Principal or Director in a school setting or a Manager or Director in a corporate office. Ask to make a time to contact them to discuss your concerns. You may want to put your concerns in an email. [Find the school or preschool contact details](#).

Most complaints are resolved quickly, but some complex matters may take more time. We will advise you if this is the case.

Step 2 – central complaint resolution

If you're not satisfied that your complaint has been addressed at the local level, you can get help from our Customer Feedback Unit (CFU).

Contact the CFU:

- [online feedback and complaints form](#)
- [feedback and complaints about a school or preschool](#)
- phone 1800 677 435 (free call).

We can help you in relation to preschool and school complaints by:

- giving advice about the issues behind the complaint
- liaising with schools and preschools to ensure all options for resolution have been explored
- objectively reviewing complaints that have not been resolved at the local level, including through a review. Refer to 'internal and external reviews for complaints' in the [complaint management policy](#) for more information.

We can support you in relation to corporate office complaints by:

- connecting you to the correct person or area to address your complaint
- referring your matter if unable to be resolved, to the relevant Manager or Executive

Step 3 – external complaint resolution

If we haven't been able to resolve your complaint through steps 1 and 2, you may choose to seek independent advice from the [Ombudsman SA](#). The circumstances of your complaint will determine if they can help.

External agency contact:

Ombudsman SA (OSA)

Free call: 1800 182 150

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au

Depending on the nature of the matter, the OSA will usually ask if you have taken your complaint to the school, preschool or the CFU before approaching the Ombudsman.

Overview – steps for raising your complaint



MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Roles and responsibilities

The kindergarten director and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of Grievance Procedure, along with the Governing Council and families, as required (minimum every three years).

Version:	1
Approved by site leader:	Samantha Chirgwin
Approved by	Governing Council
Date of approval:	12 th September 2020
Date of next review:	12 th September 2023
Amendments(s):	Nil

Version:	2
Approved by site leader:	Kate McMahon
Date of approval:	14 th May 2026
Approved by	Governing Council
Date of next review:	12 th September 2029
Amendments(s):	Adopted the Department for Education template. Added more speciosity to grievance procedure and raising a complaint process. Added updated Thorndon Park Logo. Added Element 6.1.2: Parent views are respected.