C-7 Grievance Procedures

NQS

QA. 4.2	Professionalism.
QA. 4.2.1	Professional collaboration.
QA. 4.2.2	Professional standards.
QA. 7.1.2	Management systems.
QA. 7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities.
QA. 7.2.1	Continuous improvement.

National Regulations

Reg. 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Reg. 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Reg. 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Reg. 173	Prescribed information to be displayed

Policy Statement

We will maintain a positive working environment for staff and for the Committee. We will do this through addressing all work-related problems, complaints or concerns as quickly and effectively as possible. The procedure encourages ownership of issues and participation in the resolution process. The highest standards of confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Related Policies

- Sylvania Heights BASC Policy A-11: Maintenance of Records
- Sylvania Heights BASC Policy A-12: Policy Development and Review
- Sylvania Heights BASC Policy A-15: Role of the Management Committee
- Sylvania Heights BASC Policy A-17: Privacy and Confidentiality
- Sylvania Heights BASC Policy C-3: Staff Orientation and Induction
- Sylvania Heights BASC Policy C-4: Staff Professionalism
- Sylvania Heights BASC Policy C-8: Disciplinary Action

Procedure

General Grievance Procedure

On commencement, all staff and members of the Management Committee will be given the guidelines for grievance procedure through the Staff Handbook.

To facilitate communication between staff and Management, the Management Committee will annually appoint one of its members as the Liaison.

All persons involved in the grievance should attempt to resolve the issue through informal discussion and use of problem-solving techniques.

Persons directly involved in a legitimate grievance process will be expected to continue to conduct themselves at and around the Centre in a professional manner.

Malicious or vexatious claims will not be tolerated and will be the subject of disciplinary action where appropriate (see C-8 Disciplinary Action Policy).

Any problem, complaint or concern arising between staff or between committee members should be dealt with by the persons concerned as close to the event as possible in order to avoid an escalation of the issue.

Staff and/or Committee Meetings will provide regular opportunities to raise and discuss general issues or concerns about the Centre. All discussions will be conducted in a confidential manner and will involve only relevant persons. Only when all parties agree there is a benefit, should the discussion broaden to involve children and/or parents as appropriate.

Either party may withdraw their grievance at any time. However, where the grievance identifies other issues of concern, management may decide to investigate those other issues.

Formal Grievance Procedure

Where the resolution of a grievance has not been satisfactorily achieved through the general procedure, then a more formal approach will be taken.

Grievance between staff members:

- as appropriate, the Director or the Staff Liaison member of the Committee will be briefed about the grievance and its current status
- the below procedure will be followed

Grievance between committee members:

- the whole committee will be briefed
- the below procedure will be followed

The grievance(s) will firstly be investigated by the Director or Management Committee as appropriate. The investigation will involve:

- interviews with both parties and/or witnesses
- assessment of relevant documentation e.g. job descriptions, policies etc.
- preparation of a clear description of the issue
- arranging a formal meeting between parties

A meeting will be conducted by a neutral third person. This person will manage the conduct of the meeting, remain impartial and have no input to the content of the meeting, and will prepare a written record of the outcome(s) of the meeting.

Where the Centre cannot identify a suitably impartial person, the Management Committee will agree to invite a qualified mediator to assist.

The meeting will:

- identify the issue(s) of concern and persons who are involved
- arrange all parties to be involved and to put forward their views
- identify alternative solutions
- attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of the issue(s)

At formal grievance resolution meetings all parties are entitled to invite a support person to attend. This person does not provide input to the meeting but may offer support and advice to their party during the meeting.

A confidential written record of the outcome of the meeting will be given to all participants who are to acknowledge their agreement by signing the record. A signed copy will be kept with staff files.

The neutral party will inform the Management Committee of the meeting's outcome(s). Management will ensure that outcomes are included in job descriptions or Centre policies as appropriate.

If one party remains dissatisfied with the meeting's outcome(s) then this should be put in writing to the Management Committee asking that the process be reviewed or stating that they intend to pursue the grievance further through other suitable avenues.

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard
- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Privacy Act 1988

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