



Feedback and Complaints Policy

Aim

As a service striving to be family-centred in all our practices we desire to encourage families, other agencies and the community to feel free to make comments, express their concerns and to voice suggestions on all aspects of our service without negative consequences and retribution.

Policy Statement

Plumtree will respond to feedback and complaints in a timely manner, working towards a resolution within an agreed timetable. Families will be assured that their feedback is welcome as it assists us to improve the quality of our service.

We identify three levels when dealing with concerns and complaints:

1. Feedback and suggestions

We welcome feedback of all kinds including compliments and suggestions. We aim to have small concerns addressed before they become formal complaints. We expect staff to acknowledge and document feedback of all kinds, and pass this information on following our process.

2. Complaints

We believe families, other agencies and community have the right to have complaints and disputes regarding our service resolved quickly and to their satisfaction. We acknowledge that Plumtree will be more responsive to the community where people feel free to express their dissatisfactions. We are also aware of the vulnerability many of our parents/carers may feel and that they may need reassurance that a complaint will not lead to diminished service.

3. Unresolved complaints

Some complaints may not be resolved through Plumtree's procedures. If the person making the complaint is still not satisfied they can take their complaint externally, for example, to the Community Services Commission or Ombudsman, for assistance. Contact details are included on the Rights and Responsibilities flyer.

Procedures

Supporting a positive feedback and complaints culture

- Information about voicing concerns or making a complaint is included in the information brochure handed out to parents/carers on enrolment, in the Rights and Responsibilities brochure.
- A form for making suggestions or comments, or raising concerns, is available at the centre. There is also a separate complaints form. Families can fill this out and give it to a staff member. Feedback can also be provided by phone, directly to the staff member, to feedback@Plumtree.org.au or through our website.
- A plain language poster is displayed encouraging users of the service to feel free to express complaints, suggestions and compliments.

At Plumtree, we believe that every child with a disability or developmental delay has a right to participate in family and community life.

Our purpose is to empower families to make this happen.

Phone: 02 9572 8840
Fax: 02 9011 7077
Email: info@plumtree.org.au
Website: plumtree.org.au
Address: Jarvie Park,
Yabsley Ave,
Marrickville NSW 2204
Facebook: Plumtree
Children's Services Inc.

ABN: 62664994050
CFN: 11220



At Plumtree, we believe that every child with a disability or developmental delay has a right to participate in family and community life.

Our purpose is to empower families to make this happen.

Phone: 02 9572 8840
Fax: 02 9011 7077
Email:
info@plumtree.org.au
Website: plumtree.org.au
Address: Jarvie Park,
Yabsley Ave,
Marrickville NSW 2204
Facebook: Plumtree
Children's Services Inc.

ABN: 62664994050
CFN: 11220

How a complaint may be made

- A complaint can be made face to face, by phone, in writing or by email to feedback@plumtree.org.au.
- A complaint can be made directly to the CEO or any staff member.
- Complaints could also be made to the Chair of the Plumtree Board. The name and contact details of the Chair will appear in the Newsletter.
- Complaints can also be made to an external body such as the Community Services Commission or the Ombudsman..
- A formal complaint form is available at our centre or can be sent via email or post if requested. Responses are placed in a secure post box which is kept in the foyer or sent to feedback@plumtree.org.au. The Complaint Form and Feedback Form can be found at the end of Section 4.
- Families who make complaints or raise concerns using mechanisms other than the complaint form will be asked if they would like to make a formal complaint. If so, they will be asked to document their complaint in an email or letter.
- Refer the family to our complaints policy if needed.

Procedures to follow when a parent makes a complaint

- Privacy and confidentiality will be respected.
- An interpreter is offered if needed.
- For any complaint, notes will be taken and opportunities given to the family to decide how they would like the issue resolved.
- A meeting is organised as soon as possible to help resolve the complaint.
- A plan of action will result from the meeting which will include the desired goal, actions, agreed timely reporting timeframes and an appropriate contact person nominated by the family as a key contact.
- The person making the complaint will be informed at all stages of the decision making process and the reasons for any decisions.
- A mediator can be used if requested.
- Either party can request the presence of an advocate.
- Plumtree will be culturally sensitive at all stages of the process.
- Staff will provide information on culturally appropriate support services available in the community if needed.
- It may be appropriate to put the family in touch with other options or services.
- Complaints and disputes are to be resolved if possible within a mutually agreed time frame. If necessary a date will be set to evaluate the progress being made to reach a resolution.

Administrative responsibility of the CEO

- A digital file is to be kept of complaints where an action has been developed. This should include action to be taken and a review date.
- The CEO will report the register of complaints to the Board at each meeting.



At Plumtree, we believe that every child with a disability or developmental delay has a right to participate in family and community life.

Our purpose is to empower families to make this happen.

Principles for staff to keep in mind when a parent/carer makes a complaint:

- Offer a private place to talk if needed.
- Reassure families that we welcome feedback as it helps us to identify where we might need to change, adapt and improve.
- Actively listen to the complaint. Use empathy and understanding, and try to remain as objective as possible.
- Acknowledge the person will have strong feelings. Validate those feelings.
- Don't try to solve the problem. The person may just want to talk. You could ask them what they would like to do/have happen.
- Staff may need to recognise that they may not be the cause of the anger; anger can be a natural response to grief and to complex life circumstances.

References

Recommended Practices in Family-Centred Early Intervention, The Australian Early Intervention Association
Standards in Action, The NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
Good Complaints Handling, The Community Services Commission

Phone: 02 9572 8840
Fax: 02 9011 7077
Email:
info@plumtree.org.au
Website: plumtree.org.au
Address: Jarvie Park,
Yabsley Ave,
Marrickville NSW 2204
Facebook: Plumtree
Children's Services Inc.

ABN: 62664994050
CFN: 11220