At Salisbury Park Kindergarten we believe parents are partners in the education of children. Regular two-way communication between parents/carers and the preschool is essential in helping children achieve their potential.

Our preschool is committed to ensuring that anyone with parental responsibilities for a young person can raise a concern or complaint, with confidence that it will be heard and responded to in an appropriate and timely fashion.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Safety of children is always the first priority. Our procedures are underpinned by the following principles:

1. All persons in the Salisbury Park Kindergarten community including children, parents, staff and volunteers have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy in accordance with the preschool's values.
2. Parents have the right to raise concerns and make enquiries or complaints about any aspect of preschool life.
3. Information about how, where and to whom complaints can be made should be visible and accessible through preschool procedures.
4. Complaints will be acknowledged and addressed promptly within specified timelines.
5. Individual complaints will be assessed objectively and without bias using principles of natural justice.
6. The rights and responsibilities of all parties will be considered and balanced in attempting to find a mutually acceptable outcome to complaints.
7. The confidentiality of all parties will be maintained wherever possible.

Step 1: Talk to us

If your concern or complaint relates to an issue concerning your child’s education or experiences you should talk to the teacher as soon as possible.

You may prefer to organise a mutually convenient time to meet the teacher rather than discuss the issue via a telephone conversation. You are welcome to bring a support person with you, if you wish. The role of the support person is to provide advice and support during the process and not to answer questions on behalf of any of the parties or interfere with the discussion.

Our staff will, following a direct complaint:
- Listen to the complaint
- Record what you say
- Identify actions to resolve the concern
- Let you know what will or has been done
- Get back to you to see how things are going
- If appropriate, refer the matter to the preschool director

If your concern has not been resolved following discussions with the staff member, you should contact the preschool director.

The preschool director will:
- acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as reasonably possible (within 5 school days)
- listen to the you
- provide support to you if necessary while the complaint is being considered
- investigate, consider and determine the most appropriate way to resolve the issue fairly and promptly
- consider relevant legislation, DECD policy and guidelines, preschool procedures
- inform you if there is a delay in the process
- ensure your complaint and the outcome is documented
- ensure that the outcome of the process is communicated to you verbally and, if appropriate, in writing including the right to refer the matter to the DECD Para Hills Office

Please note:
Interpreters and Aboriginal Education Coordinators are available to assist parents in communicating with us. Please contact the DECD Para Hills Office on 8314 4000
Step 2: Contact the Education Complaint Unit

If you are unsatisfied contact the Education Complaint Unit

Email: DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au
Phone: 1800 677 435 (standard call rates apply for calls from mobile phones).

The complaint unit will:

- assess your complaint
- decide what action is needed
- let you know what has been done and when you can expect to hear about the outcome.

The department’s chief education officer or the executive director of the Office for Children and Young People, and the Chief Executive’s office will be advised by the Education Complaint Unit of the outcome of the review. One of these senior leaders will make a decision about your complaint.

In most cases you can expect to hear of a decision within 35 working days.

Where to get help

You can contact the unit on 1800 677 435 to discuss your concern or complaint, or to seek advice about resolving school problems. Staff will follow up with you to check about progress.

Will I be treated fairly?

You will not be discriminated against if you make a complaint. All staff are bound by the Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector which requires staff to act impartially, fairly and equitably.

You can ask for your identity to be confidential when making a complaint. However, keep in mind:

- this may limit options for investigating and negotiating a resolution
- while every effort will be made to comply with your request, freedom of information requirements may result in your identity becoming known.

You can make an anonymous complaint. However:

- the extent to which it can be investigated is limited as staff cannot liaise with you about the complaint
- anonymous complaints raise issues in relation to natural justice - those who have allegations made about them have a right to know the particulars of the allegation.

Other options

In cases where a complaint requires an independent review by an external agency the department’s senior managers will refer the matter to them.

You also have the right to refer any education or care concern to an external body such as the South Australian Ombudsman.