

(Revised September 2025)

Policy Statement:

The Mueller College Outside School Hours Care Service (OSHC) fosters positive relations between all educators and management. Every educator has the right to a harmonious and responsive working environment. Solutions are sought to resolve all disputes, issues and concerns that impact or affect the overall running, management, or socio-emotional environment of the Service in a fair, prompt and positive manner.

If the behaviour of another staff member is interfering with your work, advise that person of the problem and try to work out a mutual resolution. It is inappropriate to involve other staff members or parents in the dispute.

- If the problem remains unresolved, approach the Nominated supervisor for advice.
- If the conflict is still unresolved, the dispute should be referred to the Management Committee.

Staff who have concerns involving routines or practices within the Service must approach the matter professionally and be prepared to offer solutions in a positive format.

Background:

This policy aims to ensure that all grievances and disputes are handled fairly, promptly, and professionally within the Service. Clear communication, mutual respect, and constructive resolution are vital to maintaining a positive workplace and learning environment. All educators are encouraged to express their concerns through appropriate channels to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

The Service is committed to:

- Encouraging open communication and early resolution of concerns.
- Ensuring confidentiality and fairness in all discussions.
- Complying with the Fair Work Act 2009, Workplace Relations Act 1996, and relevant industrial relations legislation.

Important terms:

Children and young people	Refers to the children and young people present in the care environment.
Educator	Refers to the staff employed by the Service to provide care for children and young people attending.
Parent/guardian	Refers to the primary carer/s of the child or young person attending the Service.
Family	Refers to the group of people, including the primary carer, who engage daily with the child or young person in the home environment.
Management committee	A panel of advisors who oversee the operations of the Service. The Approved provider and Nominated Supervisor are also on the committee.
Approved Provider	The organisation that holds Service approval and ensures all safety and emergency management requirements are met.
Nominated Supervisor	The person responsible for daily Service operations and ensuring that this policy is implemented.
Grievance	A concern, complaint, or feeling of dissatisfaction raised by a staff member, family, or Child and young person regarding workplace conditions, relationships, or practices.
Dispute	A disagreement between parties that cannot be resolved informally and requires formal resolution procedures.
Confidentiality	Ensuring that private information shared during grievance discussions is not disclosed to others unless required by law or necessary for resolution.

Legislation:

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements

7: Governance and Leadership

4.2	Professionalism	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.
4.2.1	Professional collaboration	Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision making and operation of the service.
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
7.2.1	Continuous improvement	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.2.3	Development of professionals	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

168 (2,o)	Requires policies and procedures for dealing with complaints
173 (2,b)	Requires an approved provider to make the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints may be addressed clearly visible at the service.
176 (2,b)	Requires an approved provider to notify the relevant regulatory authority in writing, within 24 hours of the complaint alleging that a serious incident has occurred or is occurring while a child is being educated and cared for by a service, or that the National Law and/or National Regulations have been contravened.

Education and Care Services National Law

174 (2,b)	An approved provider must notify the regulatory authority of a complaint that alleges a serious incident has occurred or is occurring while a child is being educated and cared for by a service, or that the National Law and/or National Regulations have been contravened.
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Principles:

Remember that small issues that are left unresolved can grow into larger issues that are more difficult to resolve. The objective is to resolve grievances through discussion and negotiation between parties. The Nominated supervisor and Management Committee will always try to listen objectively to concerns raised and may consult with others if necessary and appropriate.

Procedure:

Educators will:

- Be familiar with all Service policies and procedures, including grievance and dispute processes.
- Address concerns professionally and respectfully, avoiding gossip or involving unrelated parties.
- Seek to resolve interpersonal issues directly with the person involved where possible.
- Maintain confidentiality during all discussions relating to grievances or disputes.
- Approach the Nominated Supervisor for support if a resolution cannot be reached informally.
- Present workplace concerns constructively, offering solutions where appropriate.
- Continue to uphold professional conduct and service standards while grievances are being resolved.

The Nominated Supervisor and Approved provider will:

- Provide all employees with clear written guidelines outlining grievance and dispute resolution procedures.
- Ensure all confidential discussions are conducted privately, away from children, families, and other staff.
- Objectively listen to and document all concerns raised.
- Support early and fair resolution through mediation and open communication.
- Escalate unresolved matters to the Management Committee or relevant governing body if required.
- Where necessary, refer disputes to external bodies such as the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in line with the Fair Work Act 2009.
- Ensure that until a grievance or dispute is resolved, the status quo remains—unless there are safety concerns or termination actions involved.
- Encourage all parties to engage constructively and avoid unreasonable delays in the process.
- Share the 'Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure' with all employees, volunteers and practicum students upon their induction and ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, co-ordinators, educators and staff, and available for inspection.
- All Service policy will be reviewed annually through consultation with all stakeholders or sooner should there be identified changes or updates to legislative requirement.
- Additional professional development will be provided as needed and during review processes.

Formal Dispute Resolution Steps

If internal resolution attempts are unsuccessful, the following steps apply:

1. **Step 1:**
The employee discusses the grievance with the Nominated Supervisor (with a support person or representative if desired) within seven (7) days of the issue arising.
2. **Step 2:**
If unresolved, the matter is discussed between the employee (and/or representative) and the Executive Director or their nominee within seven (7) days.
3. **Step 3:**
If no agreement is reached, the matter is referred to the Elders or Board of Directors of Redcliffe Christian Assembly within fourteen (14) days.
4. **Step 4:**
If still unresolved, the matter will be notified to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission under the provisions of the Fair Work Act 2009.

All parties are expected to participate in good faith and respect the outcome determined by the Industrial Commission.

Maintaining Workplace Conditions During Dispute

- Normal working conditions (status quo) will continue while grievances are under review, unless a safety issue or termination action is involved.
- The Nominated Supervisor and Management Committee will provide fair consideration of all viewpoints and aim for a timely resolution.
- No party shall unreasonably delay or hinder discussions.

See Also:

- Mueller OSHC Workplace Harassment and Bullying Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Code of Conduct Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Child Safe Code of Conduct Policy & Procedure

REFERENCES:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, Current as at October 2024
- Education and Care Services National Regulations, Current as at September 2025
- Education and Care Services National Law Act (QLD) 2011, Current as at September 2025
- Guide to the National Quality Framework, Revised September 2025
- My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia – Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments. Ver2.0, Revised 2022
- National Quality Standard, Revised 1 February 2018
- Guide to the National Quality Standard, Revised May 2022
- The Code of Ethics - Early Childhood Australia Inc. (2025 update)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	Rachel Rose	OSHC Director	12/09/25
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPT 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JAN 2026
VERSION NUMBER	V2.2		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New legislation 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	PAST REVIEW DATE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated references • Addition of review table 	JAN 2025	