

12. GRIEVANCE POLICY

Reviewed March 2023

This policy aims to assist staff and management at the Centre to resolve staff grievances effectively and agreeably to all concerned. This policy provides the basis for the grievance procedures and the two should be used together.

(Grievance processes should not apply to a report of misconduct or poor work performance about a staff member - this should be dealt with under disciplinary or staff appraisal processes.)

1. **Definition** - a staff grievance occurs where a staff member believes she/he has been unfairly or badly treated by another person (not a child) at the Centre or by a Governing Council Decision, and wishes some action to be taken to remedy the situation.
2. In the interests of everyone concerned staff grievances should receive a high priority and should be resolved as quickly and effectively as possible.
3. All parties should try to resolve the matter informally through discussion, moving to formal processes only if this does not succeed.
4. Confidentiality is vital; no-one may discuss information about a grievance outside the grievance procedures.
5. A staff member raising a grievance has the right to have a union representative assist her/him at any stage in the process. S/he may have another person of his/her choice present at any meetings or interviews for moral support if not a union member.
6. A staff member who has commenced a grievance process may withdraw and stop the process at any time without penalty.
7. No staff member should suffer any personal or professional disadvantage because he/she decides to pursue a grievance.
8. Every attempt should be made to resolve grievances in ways, which are agreeable to all parties concerned.
9. Where formal procedures are used in resolving a grievance, these should be clearly documented. The documentation should be kept secure and confidential until the grievance is resolved, then it should be destroyed (unless the outcome of the grievance requires that it be kept for a period of time).
10. The Governing Council may appoint one of its members, not a staff member or the Director, as a grievance officer to assist where the grievance procedures provide for her/him to do so.
11. All grievances should be handled according to the grievance procedures adopted by the Centre.

Grievance Procedures

Reviewed March 2023

These procedures should be used together with the Grievance Policy. They apply when a staff member believes she/he has been unfairly or badly treated by another person (not a child) at the Centre or by a Governing Council decision and wishes some action to be taken to remedy the situation.

Staff grievances are generally one of four types: when a staff member believes she/he has been treated unfairly or badly by:

- Another staff member
- The director
- A management decision of the Director
- A decision of the Governing Council/Management Committee

These procedures offer a slightly different process for each of these situations.

1. Another Staff Member (volunteer or student)

Where a staff member believes she/he has been treated unfairly or badly by another person at the Centre (usually another staff member, although it may also be a volunteer or student), the following processes should be followed:

- 1.1 The staff member should initiate a discussion with the other person and try to resolve the matter informally.
- 1.2 If this does not succeed, the staff member should seek the help of the Team Leader, who will try to resolve the complaint through discussion.
- 1.3 If this does not succeed, the staff member should speak with Director, who may meet with the parties to try to resolve the situation by discussion.
- 1.4 If the discussions with the Director do not succeed, the staff member should write to the Chairperson of the Governing Council, with a copy to the Director, describing the problem and asking for the help of the Governing Council.
- 1.5 On receiving the letter, the Chairperson will call a meeting of the Executive of the Governing Council (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary)
- 1.6 The meeting will interview the parties involved in the grievance and recommend a course of action, in writing, within 7 days.
- 1.7 If this is not accepted by the parties, the staff member may ask for the matter to be considered at a Governing Council meeting
- 1.8 The Chairperson will place the request on the agenda for the next meeting, and invite the staff member to attend to present his/her request personally.
- 1.9 If the request is urgent, the Chairperson may call a special Governing Council Meeting.
- 1.10 The Governing Council will decide the request and advise the staff member of the decision within 24 hours, including reasons. This should be confirmed in writing, signed by the Chairperson, within 7 days.

2 The Director

Where a staff member believes they have been treated unfairly or badly by the Director, the following process should be followed:

- 2.1 The staff member should make an appointment with the Director to discuss the issue and try to resolve the matter informally.
- 2.2 If this does not succeed, the staff member should approach the Chairperson of the Governing Council.
- 2.3 The Chairperson should meet with the staff member first, then with the Director and seek to resolve the matter through discussion.
- 2.4 If this does not succeed, the staff member may write to the Chairperson of the Governing Council seeking the assistance of the Governing Council as per 1.5 to 1.10 above.

3 A management decision of the Director

Where the grievance is against a management decision of the Director, the following process should be followed:

- 3.1 The staff member should first tell the Director that she/he is unhappy about it and try to resolve it through discussion.
- 3.2 If agreement is not reached, the staff member should write a letter to the Chairperson of the governing Council, with a copy to the Director and staff representative, asking for the decision to be reviewed and giving reasons for the request.
- 3.3 The Governing Council should consider the matter as per 1.8 to 1.10

4 A decision of the Governing Council

Where the grievance is against a decision by the Governing Council, the following process should be followed:

- 4.1 The staff member should first tell the Director and the staff representative that he/she is unhappy about it and intends to follow the grievance process.
- 4.2 The staff member should write a letter to the Chairperson of the Governing Council, with a copy to the Director and staff representative, asking for the decision to be reviewed and giving reasons for the request.
- 4.3 The Governing Council should consider the matter as per 1.8 to 1.10.

(only the Governing Council can change a decision made originally by the Governing Council. That is why this process is formal from the start.)

- 5 As outlined in the grievance policy, the staff member may have a union representative or other person present at any meeting or interviews and may withdraw from the process at any time.

Yankalilla Community Children's Centre

Staff Grievance Process Summary

If staff have an issue they are unhappy about, the following procedure should be followed:

- In the first instance, speak to the person with whom you have the issue
- If this is inappropriate or hasn't worked, speak to your team leader.
- If this is inappropriate or hasn't worked, speak to the Director
- If discussions with the Director do not resolve the issue or if the issue is with the Director, the staff member should approach the Governing Council.

See staff handbook for more detailed information on the above Grievance Procedures.