



Complaints

Handling Policy

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent and employee complaints and disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective, and fair way.	
Scope:	Students, parents, and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements.	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes: Previous Policy Dec 2022
Authorised by:	Montessori Noosa Board- Education for Generations LTD	Date of Authorisation: March 2023
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017 • Australian Education Regulations 2013 • Fair Work Act 2009 • Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) • Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) • Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) • Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) • Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) • Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth) • Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) • Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) • Montessori Noosa Complaints Handling Procedure • Montessori Noosa Work Health and Safety Policy • Montessori Noosa Workplace Bullying Policy • Montessori Noosa Privacy Policy 	
Review Date:	Annually	Next Review Date: February 2024
Policy Owner:	School Governing Body	

Policy Statement

Montessori Noosa is committed to ensuring that student, parent, and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, and effective and fair way.

Montessori Noosa views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

Montessori Noosa acknowledges the right of students, parents, and employees to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of the school and the school encourages constructive criticism and complaints.

Montessori Noosa recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students, parents, and employees.

Complaints that may be Resolved under this Policy

Montessori Noosa encourages students, parents, and employees to lodge promptly any concerns regarding sexual harassment, child protection, discrimination, workplace bullying and privacy breaches as well as more general complaints that include areas such as:

- the school, its employees or students having done something wrong
- the school, its employees or students having failed to do something they should have done
- the school, its employees or students having acted unfairly or impolitely
- issues of student or employee behaviour that are contrary to their relevant <<code of conduct>>
- issues related to learning programs, assessment, and reporting of student learning
- issues related to communication with students or parents or between employees
- issues related to school fees and payments
- general administrative issues.

Student complaints may be brought by students or by parents on behalf of their children, as appropriate in the circumstances.

Issues Outside this Policy

The following matters are outside the scope of this policy and should be managed as follows:

- Child protection concerns or risks of harm to children should be dealt with in accordance with the law and the school's Child Protection Policy
- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the or Positive Behaviour Management Policy.
- Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Discipline Policy.
- Employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to the Principal.
- Student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the Principal who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- Formal legal proceedings.

Complaints Handling Principles

Montessori Noosa is committed to managing complaints according to the following principles:

- complaints will be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible
- complaints will be taken seriously
- anonymous complaints will be treated on their merits and complaints will be dealt fairly and objectively and in a timely manner
- Montessori Noosa will determine the appropriate person to deal with the complaint in the first instance. Complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disputation as possible
- mediation, negotiation, and informal resolution are optional alternatives
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, including the right of interested parties to the complaint to be heard
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained
- all parties to the complaints will be appropriately supported
- Montessori Noosa will give reasonable progress updates
- appropriate remedies will be offered and implemented
- provide a review pathway for parties to the complaint if warranted
- complainants, respondents, and people associated with them will not be victimised because of lodging the complaint and they will not suffer any other reprisals
- the school will keep records of complaints
- the school's insurer will be informed if a complaint could be connected to an insured risk.

Responsibilities

School

The school has the following role and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote, and act in accordance with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- appropriately communicate the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures to students, parents, and employees
- ensure that the Complaints Handling policy and procedures are readily accessible by staff, students, and parents
- upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the Complaints Handling policy and procedures
- ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties to a complaint
- take appropriate action to prevent victimisation or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them
- appropriately implement remedies
- appropriately train relevant employees
- keep records
- conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register from time to time
- monitor and report to the governing body on complaints
- report to the school's insurer when that is relevant

- refer to the school's governing body immediately any claim for legal redress.

All Parties to a Dispute

The complainant and respondent both have the following role and responsibilities:

- apply and comply with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- lodge the complaint as soon as possible after the issue arises
- expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness wherever practicable; that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- provide complete and information in a timely manner
- not provide deliberately false or misleading information
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- act in a non-threatening manner
- to be appropriately supported
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- not victimise or act in reprisal against any party to the dispute or any person associated with them.

Employees Receiving Complaints

Employees receiving complaints have the following role and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- inform the party lodging the complaint of how complaints can be lodged, when they should be lodged and what information is required
- provide the complainant with information about any support or assistance available to assist them in lodging their complaint
- provide the complainant with a copy of the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- maintain confidentiality
- keep appropriate records
- to forward complaints to more senior employees, including the principal, as appropriate
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

Implementation

Montessori Noosa is committed to raising awareness of the process for resolving complaints at the school, including by the development and implementation of this policy and related procedures, and via the clear support and promotion of the policy and procedures.

Montessori Noosa is also committed to appropriately training relevant employees (especially senior staff) on how to resolve complaints in line with this policy and the related procedures.

Montessori Noosa will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution, and will report on a high-level basis to the school Board on complaint handling at the school.

Montessori Noosa will act to encourage students, parents, and employees to contribute to a healthy school culture where complaints are resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible.

The following three sets of instructions on pages 6, 7 and 8 are to be displayed. They describe the steps that a parent or a staff member or a child can take to raise a concern that will be heard and actioned.

PARENTS/GUARDIAN RAISING A CONCERN

Immediate – Health and Safety

If it is about health and safety of your child or other children, advise the Staff and /or Principal Immediately who will contact 000, or the services required to support your child, or the children involved.

Non- Immediate Concern- Health, Safety, Administration, Policy, and Procedure

1-Raise the concern with your child's teacher.

2-The Teacher will work to resolve the issue- if you feel they have not resolved the issue, contact our Principal Dr Joel Rioux by email

principal@montessorinoosa.qld.edu.au

3-The Principal will work to resolve the issue with you and create restorative action plans. These will be revisited in 2 weeks to confirm the concern has been resolved.

4-If the issue is not resolved, please advise the Montessori Noosa governing body Education for Generations LTD.

board@montessorinoosa.qld.edu.au

5-The Board will work on conciliation action plan with you to reach a positive outcome and agreement.

If your concern has not been resolved and you feel further action must occur

For Child Safety concerns - 15 Beach Rd, Maroochydore QLD 4558

Phone: (07) 5376 9500

For Operations and / or Governance of Montessori Noosa contact-

Non State School Accreditation Board (NSSAB) - Education House, 30 Mary St, Brisbane City QLD 4000 Phone: (07) 3513 6773

For further guidance on how to write or make a complaint you may also wish to read the Whistle Blowing policy on our website.

STAFF RASING CONCERN

Immediate – Health and Safety

If it is about health and safety, complete first aid and emergency procedures as required.

Non-immediate- Concern

Health, Safety, Academic Policy, and Procedures.

1-Raise the concern with the principal, with workable solutions.

2-The Principal will work to resolve the issue- with action plans put into place.

4-If the issue is not resolved, please advise the Montessori Noosa Board Education for Generations LTD on- board@montessorinoosa.qld.edu.au

5- The Board will then work on conciliation action plan to reach a positive outcome and agreement.

If your concern has not been resolved and you feel further action must occur, please contact these bodies.

For Child Safety concerns as a Mandatory reporter, you must contact- Child Safety 15 Beach Rd, Maroochydore QLD 4558

Phone: (07) 5376 9500

For Operations and / or Governance of Montessori Noosa contact- Non State School Accreditation Board (NSSAB) Education House, 30 Mary St, Brisbane City QLD 4000 **Phone:** (07) 3513 6773

If the concern is about pay or work conditions, Employsure 1300 651 415 then further advice can be given by Fair Work Australia

For further guidance on how to write or make a complaint, you may also wish to read the Whistle Blowing Policy on our website.

STUDENT RASING A CONCERN

Immediate – Health and Safety

If it is about health and safety of you or other children advise the Staff and or Principal Immediately, who will contact 000, or the services required to support you, or the children involved.

Non-Immediate-Concern

Health, Safety, Academic, Policy and Procedure.

Raise concern with your teacher or teacher on duty

Was the Hurt Caused with intent?

If No- Teacher facilitates a restorative justice discussion with students. Teacher monitors if there becomes a common child or theme to intent. Further support and guidance may be needed with conflict and behavior management. Advise Parent of incident so support and guidance can occur from parents.

If Yes- Principal facilitates restorative process with Student, Teacher, and Parents/Guardian. Support and action plan to be put into place.

If Resolution is effective at this time, monitoring to occur and possible further support given, if needed with resolving conflict.

If Resolution not effective, meeting to occur with Principal, Parents and Child to consider best action plan.

Board is to be advised of the concern and parent concern procedure will then come into effect.