Rationale:
Settlers Farm Campus Kindergarten, along with the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD), is committed to the delivery of high quality education and care for all children. We believe that working in partnership with families to resolve any concerns or complaints they may have about their child’s schooling, is a key part of this commitment. Parents have the right to raise concerns and complaints and be treated with respect and courtesy, and we welcome comments and suggestions as they help us to provide a better service.

Aims:
The aim of the Settlers Farm Campus Kindergarten Parent Complaint Policy is to:
- Provide clear and transparent information to parents, caregivers, the community and staff about how concerns and complaints will be managed and resolved.
- Provide a simple 3 step approach to concern and complaint resolution.
- Create a process for concern and complaint resolution that is confidential, fair, impartial, accessible, respectful and which occurs in a timely manner.
- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of all parties will be considered to find a mutually acceptable outcome.
- Comply with the DECD Parent Concern and Complaints Procedure, 2012.

Scope:
- This policy applies to parents, guardians and persons with parental responsibility for the child.
- A ‘concern’ is an issue of interest which is raised in order to improve or change a situation. A ‘complaint’ is an expression of grievance or resentment where the parent is seeking redress or justice.
- Concerns and complaints may be about the type, level or quality of the service; the behaviour and decisions of the staff; or a policy, procedure or practice in place at the kindergarten.

Implementation:
This policy is to be observed when dealing with all concerns and complaints at Settlers Farm Campus Kindergarten. It is expected that all staff will aid parents to carry out the steps outlined below. The policy has been developed in accordance with DECD guidelines, staff consultation and community review (Settlers Farm Campus Kindergarten Governing Council). The policy will be displayed on the kindergarten website and made available to families and staff.

Steps to Making a Complaint:
Parents should complete the following steps when they have a concern or complaint:

Step 1: Raise the complaint with Settlers Farm Campus Kindergarten:
- The kindergarten should always be the first point of contact.
- The issue may be raised with a teacher or director. This may involve making an appointment with the teacher or director so that adequate time can be made to discuss the issue. Parents can make concerns and complaints known by approaching a staff in person, telephoning, emailing, writing or placing a note in the parent suggestion box.
- If the complaint is about the director, the parent may contact the Education Office.
- A staff member will record the complaint or concern using the set proforma.
A way of resolving the issue will be based on the information provided and the DECD Parent Concern and Complaints Policy and Procedure. Resolutions will ideally be made within 15 working days.

**Step 2: Contact the Education Office:**
- Contact the Education Office if the concern or complaint has not been resolved at the kindergarten or the director is the subject of the complaint. The office will review the decisions and offer mediation. Resolutions will ideally be made within 20 working days.

**Step 3: Contact the Parent Complaint Unit**
- The Parent Complaint Unit may be contacted by parents at any time for support or advice. Alternatively, the unit will review complaints that have not been resolved at a kindergarten or Education Office level. Resolutions will ideally be made within 35 working days.

**Information for Parents when making a complaint:**
- When making a complaint identify the issue and what you would like done about it. Note the facts and details and avoid personal insults, inflammatory statements or intimidating comments.
- Confidentiality should be observed and the issue should only be discussed with those directly involved. The parent may bring a support person to meetings and translators can be arranged.
- Treat other parties with respect and courtesy.
- Raise the concern or complaint as soon as possible after the issue has occurred.
- Ask for assistance or further information when necessary.
- Have realistic and reasonable expectations about what course of action to take and what resolution is possible.
- You may wish to make an anonymous complaint. However, keep in mind that it may limit the investigation and resolution. Also, freedom of information requirements may result in your identity becoming known.

**Contacts:**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Director of Settlers Farm Campus Kindergarten</td>
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<td>Website: <a href="http://www.settlerspre.sa.edu.au">http://www.settlerspre.sa.edu.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint">www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Australian Ombudsman</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au">www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(External Agency that reviews government agency processes and decisions where they are unreasonable or unlawful)</td>
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**References:**
- Parent Complaint Policy: a guide to raising a concern or complaint, Department for Education and Child development, 2012.
- These documents are available at www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint

Created: March 2012
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To be reviewed: 2016
Endorsed: 13th May 2015