**COMPLAINTS POLICY**

**The South Dublin County Childcare Committee offers information and support to childcare providers, parents, childminders and employers to increase the capacity and improve the quality of childcare places in the county.**

**3.5.1. Purpose**

This policy aims to ensure optimum complaint management that is consistent with South Dublin County Childcare Committee (SDCCC) mission and ethos. SDCCC aims to provide a service acceptable to all our clients, our partner organisations and our staff team.

**3.5.2. Scope**

The procedures set out in this document are meant to provide a means to resolve a dispute between the SDCCC and any of the complainants. It requires full commitment from all members of staff and management.

**Type of Complaint**

* Complaint against a staff member
* Complaint regarding general service provision
* Complaint against a Board member

**Complaints may be made by**

* Childcare services
* Parent/ Children
* Childminders
* A partner agency
* A member of the public

It does not address complaints made by staff (these are dealt with through grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures) or Board of Management (dealt with using the principles of the Grievance Policy). Any complaints regarding job applications will be dealt with through the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

**3.5.3. Policy and Procedure**

A complaint can be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, made by a service user or those acting on behalf of the user or a partner agency. Complaints should be made in writing using our complaints form.

1. **Principles**
* Complaint handling procedures will be known and understood by SDCCC staff, management, clientele and partner agencies
* SDCCC will provide a fair, full and impartial investigation without penalty in respect of quality of service to the complainant
* The steps for making a complaint will be simple and transparent and are outlined below
* Confidentiality will be maintained at all times
* We aim to resolve complaints within a 28 day time frame
* The complaints procedure is without prejudice to the complainant’s statutory right to make a complaint elsewhere
* Acknowledgment should be as soon as possible.
1. **Procedure**

Persons designated to handle complaints:

* The Manager
* the Chairperson of the Board of Directors
* All service users and any partner agencies will be informed that the above personnel who will be named will handle all complaints.
* Employees of SDCCC are obliged to participate in any investigation relating to complaints as appropriate.

**Complaint against a staff member**

* This complaint will be made to the SDCCC Manager
* If the complaint is made verbally it will be recorded and the complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing within a seven day timeframe
* The Manager will provide a standard complaint form to the complainant. This should be posted on the day of the complaint
* Confirmation of receipt of written complaint will be posted to complainant
* The complaint will be investigated on receipt of the written complaint
* The Manager will investigate the written complaint
* The Manager should brief the Board on any complaints arising at Operational and Board meetings (every 5/6 weeks).

**Complaint against the Manager**

* This complaint will be made to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors
* If the complaint is made verbally it will be recorded and the complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing within a seven day timeframe**.** The Chairperson will provide a

standard complaint form to the complainant. This should be posted on the day of the complaint.

* The complaint will be investigated on receipt of the written complaint
* Confirmation of receipt of written complaint will be posted to complainant
* The Chairperson will investigate the written complaint
* The Chairperson should brief the Board on any complaints arising at Operational and Board meetings (every 5/6 weeks).

**Complaint regarding general service provision**

* This complaint will be made to the Manager of SDCCC
* If the complaint is made verbally it will be recorded and the complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing within a seven day timeframe
* The Manager will provide a standard complaint form to the complainant. This should be posted on the day of the complaint
* The complaint will be investigated on receipt of the written complaint
* Confirmation of receipt of written complaint will be posted to complainant
* The Co-ordinator and the Chairperson will investigate the written complaint
* The Co-ordinator/Chairperson should brief the Board on any complaints arising at Operational and Board meetings (every 5/6 weeks).

**Complaint against a Board member**

* This complaint will be made to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. In the event that the complaint is against the Chairperson on the Board the complaint should be dealt with by another nominated Director of the Board.
* If the complaint is made verbally it will be recorded and the complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing within a seven day timeframe
* The Nominated Director/Chairperson will provide a standard complaint form to the complainant. This should be posted on the day of the complaint
* The complaint will be investigated on receipt of the written complaint
* Confirmation of receipt of written complaint will be posted to complainant
* The Chairperson and/or another Director will investigate the complaint
* The appropriate person should brief the Board on any complaints arising at Operational and Board meetings (every 5/6 weeks).
1. **Investigation of complaints**
* Only complaints received on the SDCCC Complaints Form will be investigated (this may be via email or post, see appendix 8).
* All investigations will take place within a 28 day period
* Any extension to the 28 day period will be mutually agreed by both parties
* All communication/meetings/interviews relating to a complaint will be recorded in writing
* The outcome of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant in writing within two weeks of completing the investigation

Note: In certain circumstances the outcome of the complaint may require the invoking of another company policy and procedures such as the discipline or grievance policy

1. **Record Keeping**

Complaint Forms, correspondence, minutes of meetings and any paperwork relating to complaints are retained by the appropriate designated person for a period of two years following resolution of the complaint

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| **Complaint Form** | **SDCCC LOGO white.jpg** |

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| This complaint form should be used in line with South Dublin CCC’s Complaints Policy. |
| **Name of Complainant:** |  |  |
| **Address:** |  |  |
| **Email:** |  |  |
| **Contact Number:** |  |  |
| **Details of complaint : Please be as descriptive as possible, include dates, locations, full names, names of any witnesses etc** |
|  |
| **What action should be taken to deal effectively with your complaint?** |
|  |
| **Who have you informed – name, title (if relevant) and date** |
| **Name** | **Title** | **Date** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| **Complaint Received By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |