
Document name:	Feedback and Complaints Policy
Document Type:	Policy
Document Number:	28.00
Domain:	Client Voice, Engagement, Experience and Participation
Regulation:	National Quality Framework
Regulatory Area:	Quality Area 7
Version:	1.00
Document Status:	Approved
Approval Date:	16/12/2024
Effective Date:	16/12/2024
Review Date:	16/12/2027
Approver:	CEO
Custodian:	Executive Director, Services

1.0 Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines for receiving and dealing with compliments and complaints at Meli Kindergarten Services (MKS).

2.0 Values

MKS is committed to:

- providing an environment of mutual respect and open communication
- recognising excellence and gratitude
- complying with all legislative and statutory requirements
- dealing with disputes and complaints with fairness and equity
- establishing mechanisms to respond to complaints in a timely way
- treating information in relation to complaints with sensitivity.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to MKS as the Approved Provider, persons with management or control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day-to-Day Charge, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Meli Kindergartens.

This policy is to be applied in line with Meli's Feedback and Complaints Procedure.

Matters not considered applicable to this policy are:

- feedback and complaints specific to Meli Community (refer to Meli Feedback and Complaints Policy)
- feedback and complaints specific to Meli Housing (refer to Meli Housing Feedback and Complaints Policy)
- internal staff disputes, issues, complaints and/or grievances (refer to Meli's Workplace

Resolution Procedure)

- reporting (and disclosure) of conduct related to the operations of Meli that may be illegal, unethical, cause harm to individuals, financial or non-financial loss to Meli, and/or damage to Meli's reputation (refer to Meli Code of Conduct, Discipline Procedure, Whistleblowers Policy)
- enquiries or complaints from Past Care Leavers about their time in care and/ or in relation to the National Redress Scheme (refer Meli's Past Care Leaver Policy and related procedures).
- reporting of disclosures/allegations of abuse of clients (refer to Meli Child Safe Policy and Incident Management & Reporting Policy and related procedures)

4.0 Background

Compliments are expressions of praise, encouragement or gratitude about service, staff, management, and program. Compliments provide valuable feedback about the level of satisfaction with service delivery and are a valuable indicator of the effectiveness of a service. Compliments impart useful insights about the aspects of service that are most meaningful to children, families, and stakeholders, and provide an opportunity to recognise the efforts of staff, foster a culture of excellence and boost morale.

Complaints may be received from anyone who has contact with MKS, including parents/guardians, volunteers, students, members of the local community and other agencies.

In most cases, complaints about MKS will be the responsibility of Meli. All complaints, when lodged, need to be initially assessed to determine whether they are a general or a notifiable complaint. When a complaint has been assessed as 'notifiable', Meli must notify Department of Education (DE) of the complaint. Meli will investigate the complaint and take any actions deemed necessary, in addition to responding to requests from and assisting with any investigation by DE.

There may be occasions when the complainant reports the complaint directly to DE. If DE then notifies MKS about a complaint they have received, MKS will still have responsibility for investigating and dealing with the complaint as outlined in this policy, in addition to cooperating with any investigation by DE.

DE will investigate all complaints it receives about a service, where it is alleged that the health, safety, or wellbeing of any child within the service may have been compromised, or that there may have been a contravention of the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.

5.0 Policy

MKS will actively encourage children, parents, carers, volunteers and external stakeholders to provide feedback or make a complaint about a Meli Kindergarten service or its workplace participants.

Meli Kindergarten Services will ensure that all stakeholders understand their rights and the process for providing feedback and/or making a complaint about their experience with Meli Kindergarten services and/or appealing a decision of Meli.

Meli Kindergarten Services will ensure all feedback and complaints are responded to in a fair, sensitive, respectful and timely manner and are managed through a standardised process based on the principles of access, equity, privacy, procedural fairness, accountability and transparency.

Meli Kindergarten Services will consider all complainant's lived experience, expressed wishes, gender, culture, language and accessibility throughout the process. Meli commits to feedback processes that are culturally safe, respectful to all including First Nations people, members of the LGBTIQ+ community and those who are culturally and linguistically diverse. We also commit to

processes that are accessible to everyone including people with disability. We recognise this as a cornerstone of safe complaint handling.

We strive to provide a child-focussed feedback process that encourages children and young people to share their feedback and concerns, acknowledging this as critical for child safety and wellbeing.

Meli is committed to providing equitable access to services and sets strong standards of behaviour to ensure that services are free from all forms of discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.

All complaints will be resolved as close to the source as possible and in the shortest possible timeframe.

6.0 Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Advocacy – is a process of supporting and enabling people to express their views and concerns; access information and services; defend and promote their rights and responsibilities; and explore choices and options.

Complaint: a complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about the service related to its operations or dealings with an individual; allegations about the conduct of its staff, volunteers, other individuals engaged by the service or another child at an organisation; or the handling of a prior concern.

Child-initiated complaint: a child or young person makes the complaint/brings the issue/concern/allegation to the attention of the service.

Adult-initiated complaint: a child or young person's parent, carer or guardian or other adult may make a complaint on behalf of, or that concerns, a child or young person.

Complaints Officer (CO) – the person that will assist the complainant. They are responsible for managing the Meli formal complaints process and for reviewing the informal complaint process. The CO's role is to ensure that parties to a complaint are appropriately informed and supported, and that complaints are managed in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

Complaints Register – records information about complaints received at the service, together with a record of the outcomes. This register must be kept in a secure file, accessible only to educators and responsible persons at the service. The register can provide valuable information to the approved provided on meeting the needs of children and families at the service.

Complaint Severity Rating - the guide used by Meli to determine the level of impact/ potential impact of the complaint and the appropriate response. Meli Complaint Severity Ratings are: Low, Medium, High and Extreme. Complaints categorised as Low and Medium are referred to as non-major impact complaints. Complaints categorised as High and Extreme are referred to as major-impact complaints. (Refer to Appendix 2- Meli Complaints Severity Rating).

Compliment: a compliment is an expression of praise, encouragement, or gratitude. It may relate to an individual staff member, a team, the program, or the service.

Discrimination (direct) - when a person treats, or proposes to treat, another person unfavorably because of that person's protected attribute.

Discrimination (indirect) - when a person imposes, or proposes to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that operates to unreasonably disadvantage a person or group of people with a protected attribute.

Dispute resolution procedure: the method used to resolve complaints, disputes, or matters of

concern through an agreed resolution process.

Feedback - information given by a client or external representative in relation to the organisation or service provided. Feedback may be in the form of a compliment, suggestion or complaint.

Formal Complaint - a major impact complaint requiring a formal investigation, or a complaint where the complainant elects to have the matter managed by the Complaints Officer, or a complaint where a complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of an informal complaint investigation.

Informal Complaint - a non-major impact complaint that can be managed at the program level. The complainant does not wish to make a formal complaint to CO.

Kindergarten Information Handbook - is the information that all families are provided in the early stages of service provision which outlines their rights and responsibilities. It includes information about privacy and the feedback and complaints process. The Kindergarten Information Handbook is also available online.

Major impact complaint (Major complaint) - a complaint that has been categorised as high or extreme according to the complaint severity rating. (Refer to Appendix 2- Meli Complaints Severity Rating).

Mediator: a neutral person/party who attempts to reconcile differences between disputants.

Mediation: an attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement or compromise between disputants through the objective intervention of a neutral person or party.

Non-major impact complaint (Non-major complaint) - a complaint that has been categorised as low or medium according to the complaint severity rating. (Refer to Appendix 2- Meli Complaints Severity Rating).

Notifiable Complaints: A complaint alleging that a serious incident has occurred while the child is educated and cared for or complaints alleging that the Law has been contravened (*National Law: Section 174(2)(b)*). Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the approved provider to DE within 24 hours of the complaint being made.

The approved provider to notify DE within the specified timeframes below (*National Law: Section 174(2) (b), National Regulation 176(2) (b)*)

- serious incidents in writing within 24 hours of the incident or the time the person becomes aware of the incident
- any circumstance arising at the service that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or children attending the service - Within 7 days of the relevant event or within 7 days of the approved provider becoming aware of the relevant information
- any incident where the approved provider reasonably believes that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the service - Within 7 days of the relevant event or within 7 days of the approved provider becoming aware of the relevant information.
- any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the service.

In addition, approved providers must take reasonable steps to ensure that these incidents and complaints are adequately addressed.

Notifications should be made to the regulatory authority (DE) through the NQA IT System. If this is not practicable, the notification can be made initially in whatever way is best in the circumstances.

Procedural Fairness - a dispute resolution concept which ensures “natural justice” for complaint investigations. It is concerned with the procedures used by the investigator/ review team and decision panel, rather than the actual outcome reached and is comprised of three main values:

1. All parties involved in an investigation have the right to be heard and their statements accurately recorded.
2. An independent decision maker will decide the outcome, Investigator(s) will not determine the outcome.
3. Decisions will be determined by the relevant evidence presented to the decision maker and the decision will be based on the balance of probability.

Resolved - a fair and reasonable response to a complaint, where the outcome sought by the complainant has been provided, or if that is not possible, an appropriate explanation, remedy or referral has been provided.

RiskMan- is Meli's online systems for reporting, tracking, and investigating incidents, feedback and complaints.

Sexual harassment - unwelcome sexual advance or request for sexual favours and/or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards or in relation to a person, that any reasonable person, having regard for all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated. It is irrelevant whether the behaviour was intentional or not.

Suggestion - a comment that indicates how Meli could improve its service delivery. It may be part of a compliment or complaint but may also be offered as standalone information.

Workplace Participants - all Meli Board Directors, non-Director Board Committee members, employees, contractors, volunteers, carers and students on placement

7.0 Delegations and Accountabilities

The Meli Community Board Policies provide the overarching framework for all Meli Group operational Policies and Procedures. The Meli Kindergarten Services Board has overall responsibility for Meli Kindergarten Services Policies.

The **CEO** has delegated overall responsibility for Meli and retains responsibility for:

- communicating and implementing policies
- making reasonable interpretations of policies while directing organisational matters
- approval of all operational Policies
- via Executive and Quality Governance Framework structure, monitoring the implementation of all Meli policies and procedures and reporting to the Board any issues or breaches or policy or procedures
- the strategic and cultural leadership of Meli

Apart from these responsibilities, the CEO delegates full authority to the **Executive Director Services** for the implementation of this Policy who is responsible for:

- the development, implementation and review of this policy
- informing the CEO of any external obligations related to this policy
- informing the CEO of any potential issues to successful implementation of this policy
- establishing a workplace culture that reflects this Policy
- ensuring feedback and complaints data is reported to relevant Committees and considered in organisational system reviews and planning service improvements
- where required, ensuring escalated and unresolved complaints are effectively managed

The **Client Voice, Experience, Engagement & Participation (CVEEP) Committee** has delegated responsibility for:

- reviewing and analysing feedback and complaint data, identifying opportunities and requirements for service, system and practice improvements
- identifying feedback and complaint trends to enable corrective action and preventable issues from reoccurring.

The **Manager Quality & Risk** is responsible for:

- operational oversight of Meli's Feedback & Complaint System, including policy, procedures and electronic system for reporting and data
- ensuring processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused
- ensuring equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice
- reporting Major complaints (deemed to be extreme/high severity) to the Executive Director Outcomes & Strategic Engagement (OSE)/CEO
- ensuring all formal complaints are responded to and managed in line with Meli's Feedback and Complaints Procedure
- reviewing investigation findings submitted by the CO and deciding on complaint outcomes for formal complaints
- reviewing and submitting Feedback Reporting Data to the relevant committees.

Executives, Directors and Managers are responsible for:

- ensuring staff within their Service are aware of and adhere to this Policy and related procedures
- ensuring staff within their Service receive relevant training and resources to implement this Policy and related procedures
- ensuring that relevant external mandatory reporting requirements are adhered to in the event that feedback concerns a notifiable incident or complaint. Note, if concerns relate to an incident, the Meli Incident Management & Reporting Policy and procedure should be followed.

The **Complaints Officer** (Client Participation Advisor) is responsible for:

- supporting Workplace Participants to actively seek and respond to feedback and complaints
- screening all feedback and complaints and determining severity rating and response
- promoting the feedback and complaints policy and procedure across Meli
- strengthening feedback and complaint mechanisms across Meli
- ensuring that complaints are managed in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness
- providing specialist advice and training to staff to support implementation of this procedure
- reviewing feedback and ensuring that informal complaints are sufficiently investigated, corrective actions are identified and recorded in RiskMan and completed
- investigating formal complaints and compiling an investigation report where required
- preparing and submitting reports on feedback for the Executive or relevant committee
- identifying and reporting on feedback themes for the purpose of quality improvement.

Workplace Participants are responsible for:

- actively seeking feedback from children and families
- ensuring all children and families are provided with information on and understand how to provide feedback or make a complaint, and seeking support and guidance from Meli's Complaints Officer as required
- responding to all feedback and complaints in line with Meli's Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- participating in complaint investigations as required.

8.0 Policy Application

This policy is to be applied in line with Meli's Feedback and Complaints Procedure and guided by the following principles:

- The diverse needs or potential barriers a person may experience including issues that affect the person's ability to understand information being communicated, including, but not limited to their understanding of English; whether they have a disability; and if they are a child, must be considered and appropriate support provided.
- All families must be provided with information on how to provide feedback or make a complaint during the early stages of service provision with Meli via the [Kindergarten Information Handbook](#). Information on how to provide feedback or make a complaint will be available on the Meli intranet and website and promoted across Meli and to all children, families and external stakeholders. Upon request, information will be provided to children, families and external stakeholders in the language of their choice, in a manner that is able to be understood and culturally sensitive. Information includes the right to refer a complaint to relevant external advocacy bodies.
- Individuals and families will not be treated differently or prevented from accessing a service or receiving support because of providing feedback or making a complaint. Every effort will be made to ensure that no child, young person, or individual is adversely affected because of making a complaint.
- Feedback and complaints must be promptly acknowledged and the person making a complaint advised of the process and timelines. All formal complaints are to be acknowledged in writing as soon as possible and **within five business days of receipt** and should aim to be resolved within **28 calendar days** or in line with any external contractual obligations (e.g. 21 business days for NDIS clients). Meli recognises in particular the importance of a timely complaint resolution process for children and young people. Meli commits to prioritising the resolution of their complaints as quickly as possible.
- Feedback and complaints must be reported on Meli's RiskMan system.
- Feedback and complaints will be managed in an objective and unbiased manner; conflicting interests should be avoided and not interfere with or be perceived to interfere with the management and resolution of complaints.
- Feedback and complaints will be addressed in an equitable manner, with each person being treated equitably/ fairly no matter who they are.
- Feedback and complaints will be managed in a trauma-informed way that works to support those directly involved from experiencing further harm, where possible.
- Privacy and confidentiality of parties involved will be maintained, restricting information to those

directly involved in the feedback or complaint and its resolution, unless consent is provided by those directly involved to disclose to identified third parties, who would also agree to be bound by privacy/ confidentiality obligations.

- Personal information obtained in the feedback and complaints process will only be disclosed or used in compliance with relevant privacy laws (refer to [Meli Privacy Policy](#)).
- Outcomes and decisions made relating to complaints will be communicated to all parties as appropriate, to ensure the facts and reasoning that formed the basis for the decision are fully understood.
- All parties subject to a complaint will be provided with sufficient information to enable them to understand and respond to the complaint made against them.
- Children and families are encouraged to access the support of an advocate (someone who can act on their behalf) or a support person (someone who provides assistance) during the complaint resolution process if they wish. An advocate or support person is nominated by the person wishing to raise their feedback and may be an external person or a Meli staff member. Refer to Client Advocacy Procedure.
- Where a complaint references allegations against a Meli employee that suggests misconduct, the matter will be referred to Meli’s People and Capability directorate and investigated as per Meli’s Workplace Investigations Procedure, Discipline Procedure, and the relevant Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.
- All Workplace Participants subject to allegations of a complaint will be informed of all relevant facts and given the opportunity to respond.
- All feedback and complaints will be investigated by the most appropriate person, depending on the nature of the complaint.
- Complaints relating to a Board Director and/or CEO will be referred to the Board Chair. The Chair, or an approved delegate, will respond to the complaint and, where required, may appoint an impartial external party to undertake an investigation. Where the Chair is the subject of a complaint, the complaint should be referred to another member of the Board.

9.0 Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators, and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Being familiar with the <i>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</i> and the <i>Education and Care</i>	R	√	√	√	√

<i>Services National Regulations 2011, service policies, constitution, and procedures</i>					
Acknowledge compliments and thank complemtor for their interest and feedback	√	√			
Save compliments and sharing with relevant parties	√	√			
Ensuring that compliments and complaints are monitored and used to continually improve the quality of the service	R	√			
Identifying, preventing, and addressing potential concerns before they become formal complaint	R	√	√		√
Ensuring that the name and telephone number of the responsible person to whom complaints may be addressed are displayed prominently at the main entrance of the service (<i>National Law: Section 172, Regulation173(2)b</i>)	R	√			
Ensuring that the address and telephone number of the Authorised Officer at the DE regional office are displayed prominently at the main entrance of the service (<i>Regulation 173(2)(e)</i>)	R	√			
Advising new parents/guardians of Meli Kindergartens of the <i>Compliments and Complaints policy</i> and procedures upon enrolment	R	√			
Ensuring complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly	R	√			
Ensuring the complaints processes is child focused, understood broadly (including by children, their families, staff and volunteers), culturally safe and compliant with privacy laws, reporting obligations and employment law (refer to Attachment 1 & 2)	R	√			
Ensuring educators, staff, volunteers and students are well informed about their child protection responsibilities and reporting and privacy obligations	R	R	√		√
Ensuring educators, staff, volunteers and students are well informed about the different ways children express concerns or distress and disclose harm, as well as processes for responding to disclosures from children	R	R	√		√
Ensure the management of a complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours is child focused, culturally safe, and compliant with privacy laws, reporting obligations and employment law	R	√			
Ensuring that children have access to age appropriate information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible, and easy to understand	R	√	√		√
Ensuring barriers for all children to complain are removed and reasonable adjustments are made to meet their needs.	√	√	√		
Ensuring that this policy is always available for inspection at the service (<i>Regulation 171</i>)	R	√			

Ensuring the complaint-handling system is easily understood by children, families, staff and volunteers and are culturally safe (refer to Attachment 1 and 4)	√	√	√		
Ensuring there are a various way for children to make complaints are made available based on their feedback about how they prefer to communicate (refer to Attachment 4)	√	√	√		
Being aware of, and committed to, the principles of communicating and sharing information with service employees, members, and volunteers	R	√			
Responding to all complaints in the most appropriate manner and at the earliest opportunity	R	√	√		√
Treating all complainants fairly and equitably	R	√	√		
Discussing minor complaints directly with the party involved as a first step towards resolution	R	√	√	√	
Communicating concerns or compliments relating to the management or operation of the service as soon as is practicable		√	√	√	√
Ensuring that staff record complaints in RiskMan along with outcomes	R	√			
Providing information as requested by the approved provider		√	√	√	√
Notifying the approved provider if the complaint is a notifiable complaint or is unable to be resolved appropriately in a timely manner		√	√	√	√
Always complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy (Regulations 181, 183)</i>	R	√	√	√	√
Establishing a Complaints Subcommittee or appointing an investigator to investigate and resolve complaints as required as determined through establish processes. (refer to Attachment 2 & 3)	√	√			
Referring notifiable complaints, or complaints that are unable to be resolved appropriately and in a timely manner to the Complaints Subcommittee/investigator	√	√			
Co-operating with requests to meet the Investigator and provide relevant information when requested in relation to complaints	√	√	√	√	√
Informing DE in writing within 24 hours of any complaints alleging that a serious incident has occurred at the service or that the Education and Care Services National Law has been breached (<i>National Law: Section 174, Regulation 176(2)(b)</i>)	R	R			
Collaborating co-operatively with the approved provider and DE in any investigations related to complaints about MKS, its programs, or staff.	√	√	√	√	√
Receiving recommendations from the Complaints Subcommittee/investigator and taking appropriate action	√	√			

Analysing complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement	√	√			
Maintaining professionalism and integrity at all times (refer to Code of Conduct policy)	√	√	√		√
Regularly reviewing the policy and procedures to ensure serious incidents and complaints are investigated promptly, fairly and thoroughly	√	√			
Seeking input from children on the design, implementation and ongoing improvement of the complaint-handling system.	√	√	√		

10.0 Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Meli will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor complaints recorded in the RiskMan to assess whether satisfactory resolutions have been achieved
- review policy effectiveness to ensure complaints have been dealt with in a fair and timely manner
- review the policy in line with current legislation, research, policy, and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).

11.0 Relevant Legislation and Standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership
- Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 (Cth)
- Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017 (Cth)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- Privacy Regulations 2013(Cth)
- Equal Opportunity Act (2010)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (2001)
- Racial Discrimination Act (1975)
- Freedom of Information Act (1982)
- Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
- Sex Discrimination Act (1984)
- Victims Charter Act (2006)

12.0 Related Documents

Sources

- ACECQA: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Commonwealth Ombudsman – Better practice complaint handling guide: www.ombudsman.gov.au/publications/better-practice-guides
- Better-practice-complaint-handling-guide
- Department of Education (DE) – Regional Office details are available under ‘The Department’: www.education.vic.gov.au
- ELAA Early Childhood Management Manual: www.elaa.org.au
- Kindergarten Funding Guide: www.education.vic.gov.au
- Victorian Ombudsman – Complaints: Good Practice Guide for Public Sector Agencies September 2016: <https://assets.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/assets/Best-Practice-Guides/Complaints-Good-Practice-Guide-for-Public-Sector-Agencies.pdf?mtime=20191217165914>

Policies

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Enrolment & Orientation Policy
- Kindergarten Fees Policy
- Governance & Management of the Service
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Inclusion, Equity and Anti-bias Approach Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Staffing Policy
- Workplace Resolution Procedure
- Workplace Investigations Procedure
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Kindergarten Information Handbook
- Feedback and Complaints Procedure
- Supporting Children and Young People to Voice their Feedback or Concern Practice Guide
- Incident Reporting & Management Policy
- Client Voice and Participation Policy
- Client Advocacy Procedure
- Client Rights and Responsibilities Procedure
- Whistleblower Policy

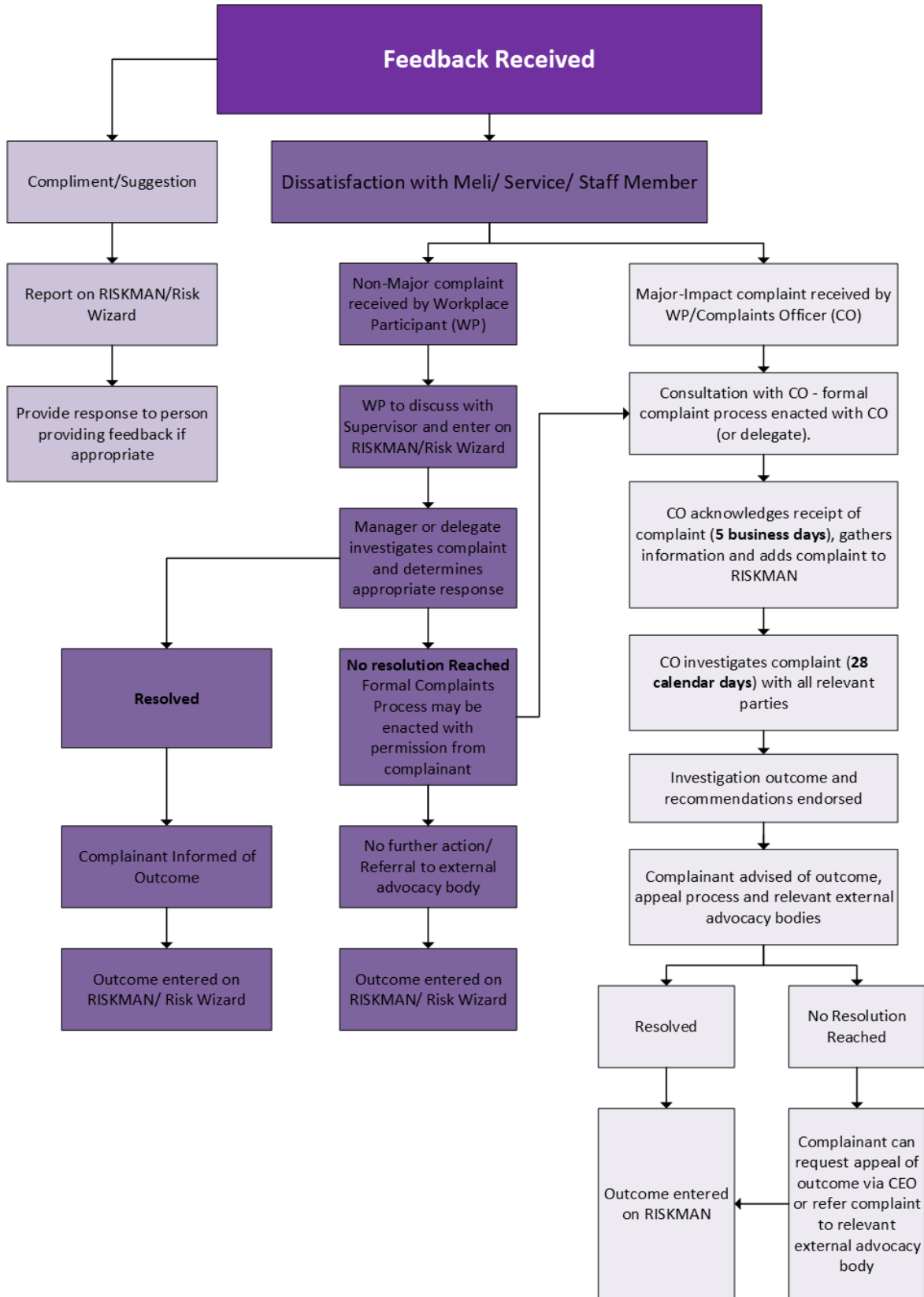
11.0 Attachments

- **Attachment 1:** Feedback Flowchart
- **Attachment 2:** Meli Complaints Severity Rating
- **Attachment 3:** For children how to make a complaint

12.0 Document History

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified	Updated By
1.0	CEO	16/12/2024	16/12/2024	New Policy	Naomi Furlong

ATTACHMENT 1: Feedback Flowchart



ATTACHMENT 2: Meli Complaints Severity Rating

	Non-Major Impact Complaint		Major Impact Complaint	
	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
Description of severity level	<p>The concern is a single issue of a minor nature.</p> <p>The problem is easily resolved. There are no ongoing adverse effects on the client, program or Meli.</p>	<p>The issue relates to a matter that is of moderate concern or where multiple minor issues are raised.</p> <p>The problem is usually able to be resolved at the program level and does not have serious consequences for the client, program or Meli.</p>	<p>The issue relates to a matter that is of significant concern to the complainant with an adverse impact on the client, program or Meli.</p> <p>There may be potential for the issue to be escalated to an external regulatory body as a complaint.</p>	<p>Substantial issues are involved generally with a serious adverse impact to client, program or Meli.</p> <p>The complaint may be received by the CEO or Board member, or from a funding/ advocacy body.</p>
Examples of severity level	<p>The concern raised is about a single issue such as a lack of communication from staff member, inadequate follow up by a staff member, or failure to meet a client's expectations.</p>	<p>The issue may relate to a moderate concern such as the inability to adequately access a service.</p> <p>There may be multiple minor concerns such as a miscommunication, an error, a time delay.</p>	<p>The concerns may relate to feeling mistreated or discriminated against.</p> <p>The impact may be that a client withdraws from the program, or family relationships have broken down as a result of service provided.</p>	<p>The concern may relate for example to personal injury to a client, professional conduct, negligence, unlawful or unethical acts or lack of informed consent.</p> <p>The impact may be that a complainant threatens to sue BCYF.</p>
Resolution	<p>The Manager or delegate reviews and responds to the complaint. They follow up with the complainant.</p> <p>Issues are resolved at the program level through line management processes.</p> <p>If the complaint is not adequately resolved at the program level, or if the complainant wishes to make a formal complaint, it is referred to the Complaints Officer.</p> <p>The Manager Quality & Risk is notified and is responsible for reviewing and communicating the outcome.</p>		<p>The Complaints Officer or delegate reviews and responds to the complaint and conducts a formal investigation.</p> <p>The Executive Director, Outcomes and Strategic Engagement is notified and is responsible for reviewing and communicating the outcome to the CEO and the Board.</p> <p>There may be significant quality assurance implications requiring policy/ practise to be reviewed and changed to prevent recurrence.</p>	

ATTACHMENT 3: For children how to make a complaint

It's
always OK
to speak up at Meli 

Every child and young person has the right to feel safe and be heard.

We want to know how you feel about Meli - whether it's happy, sad, relieved or worried. Whatever it is, we are here to listen.

1 Find support





Ask someone you trust for support. It may be a family member, carer, teacher, worker, or anyone you feel comfortable with.

2 Tell your support person

Let them know what you want to tell Meli and how you are feeling.

3 Let Meli know

You or your support person can tell Meli about what's going on by:

-  Contacting a Meli worker
-  Completing the feedback form at meli.org.au/feedback
-  Calling **5226 8900** (ask to speak with the Feedback and Complaints Team)
-  Emailing feedback@meli.org.au



Scan the QR code for more information

Source: Speak up and make a complaint
National Office for Child Safety

MELI