

Raising a complaint with the Department for Education

FACT SHEET

We recognise that sometimes things go wrong and you may feel that your expectations are not being met. If you have an unresolved complaint or want to provide feedback, we would like to hear from you. It's important to work together, talk, listen and find solutions in a courteous and respectful manner, so we can improve our services.

Before making a complaint

Before making a complaint you should:

- clearly identify issues and the resolution you are after
- provide complete and factual information
- cooperate with any requests for more information
- not include deliberately false or misleading information
- treat staff handling the complaint with courtesy and respect.

Types of concerns and complaints

You may choose to make a complaint if you believe that the school, preschool or corporate office has:

- done something incorrect
- failed to do something they should have done
- acted unfairly or impolitely.

Your complaint or feedback may be about:

- the type, level or quality of service
- the behaviour and decisions of staff
- a policy, procedure or practice.

Complaints and feedback may be about something we have to do because of state or federal law. We will talk to you and help you understand the requirements and why they exist.

Where to get help to make a complaint

Accessibility and support to making a complaint – if you have special needs or require additional assistance in making a complaint.

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/support-making-complaint>

Tips to make a complaint or give feedback to the department.

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/tips-make-complaint-or-give-feedback-department>



Making a complaint

Step 1 – frontline complaint handling and early resolution

Talk to the school, preschool, area or the person that made the original decision. We encourage a process where the original decision maker is given the opportunity to resolve the concern or complaint wherever possible. In a school setting this might be a Teacher or a Year Level Coordinator. In a corporate office it might be an officer or Team Leader.

If you're still not satisfied that your complaint has been addressed, you can contact that person's line manager. This might be a Principal or Preschool Director in a school setting or a Manager or Director in a corporate office. Ask to make a time to contact them to discuss your concerns. You may want to put your concerns in an email. [Find the school or preschool contact details.](#) Most complaints are resolved quickly, but some complex matters may take more time. We will advise you if this is the case.

Step 2 – central complaint resolution

If you're not satisfied that your complaint has been addressed at the local level, you can get help from our Customer Feedback Unit (CFU). Contact the CFU:

- [online submit a complaint form](#)
- [feedback and complaints about a school or preschool](#)
- phone 1800 677 435 (toll free).

We can help you in relation to preschool and school complaints by:

- giving advice about the issues behind the complaint
- liaising with schools and preschools to ensure all options for resolution have been explored
- objectively reviewing complaints that have not been resolved at the local level, including through a review. Refer to [internal and external reviews for complaints](#) for more information.

We can support you in relation to corporate office complaints by:

- connecting you to the correct person or area to address your complaint
- referring your matter if unable to be resolved, to the relevant Manager or Executive.

Step 3 – external complaint resolution

If we haven't been able to resolve your complaint through steps 1 and 2, you may choose to seek independent advice from the [Ombudsman SA](#). The circumstances of your complaint will determine if they can help.

External agency contact:

Ombudsman SA (OSA)

Freecall: 1800 182 150

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au

Depending on the nature of the matter, the OSA will usually ask if you have taken your complaint to the school, preschool or the CFU before approaching the Ombudsman.

Overview- steps for raising your complaint

