**Complaints Policy and Procedure**

**Rationale**

To ensure there is a procedure for whānau, visitors, and kaiako can make a complaint about any aspect of our service, our governance, or regarding the members of Country Kidz learning community.

**Objective**

To provide and operate a fair and robust complaints procedure that enables ongoing service and governance improvement.

**Policy**

Country Kidz offers a high-quality early education environment for tamariki attending our learning space. Our kaiako, management, and governance work hard to ensure tamariki and whānau receive an excellent standard of service. Country Kidz welcomes concerns from our community, which we will take seriously and investigate in a thorough and transparent manner. Concerns can be directed to Country Kidz Centre Manager, Country Kidz Chair, a Country Kidz Committee delegate, or directly to the Ministry of Education. The outcomes will be reported back to the complainant and if contact with the Ministry of Education has not been made, the complainant will be encouraged to make contact should the procedure carried out and/or findings not be resolved satisfactorily for all parties.

**Procedure**

This procedure is part of Country Kidz induction of all voluntary and non-voluntary personnel and forms part of the information and enrolment pack provided to whānau during initial visits. In addition, information on how to make a complaint is readily available in our entrance way and on our Parent Information Board, including contact information for the Ministry of Education.

| **Step** | **Procedure** |
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|  | *Country Kidz Receives a Complaint*Complaints can be made verbally or non-verbally and all will be referred to the Centre Manager and Chairperson or Committee Delegate (if appropriate) as soon as possible. Any verbal complaints will be written and provided to the complainant to ensure authenticity, accuracy, and completeness. Written complaints will be acknowledged with a written reply. Written complaints can be directed to:Country Kidz Centre Manager or Country Kidz Chairperson1452 Forest Road, RD 1, Atiamuri07 333 9111orMinistry of Education Rotorua Office Level 4PO Box 1749, Rotorua07 349 7399 |
|  | *Investigation*All complaints will be investigated by the Centre Manager and Chairperson. Depending on the nature of the complaint, third parties may need to be engaged for further independent and/or specialised advice, providing appropriate information, and/or completeness of the investigation. If external agencies do become involved, the complainant and Ministry of Education will be notified as soon as possible.  |
|  | *Principles of Natural Justice*The investigation will seek to provide all involved parties with the opportunity to have a say and be involved in the process. Where the complaint concerns the actions or judgements of an individual, the person in question will be communicated the nature of the complaint but the complainant will remain anonymous. Allegations or complaints that are of a serious nature involving tamariki safety will include the immediate suspension of the individual in question (on full pay if appropriate) until a decision has been finalised. |
|  | *Fact-based Decision*The investigation will use only fact-based information to inform a decision. Generally, investigations will reflect a weakness in processes and the opportunity not to direct fault or dwell on the actions or judgement of individuals but to review policies and procedures to mitigate against the grievance reoccurring. If the matter remains unresolved by any party, the complaint will be directed to the Ministry of Education for mediation.Ministry of Education Rotorua Office Level 4PO Box 1749, Rotorua07 349 7399 |
|  | *Closure*At the conclusion of the investigation, the complainant will be communicated with alongside any external agencies who were involved in the process.  |
|  | *Outcome*Country Kidz will appropriately act on the findings of any complaint. This will include, but is not limited to, improving policies and procedures; training and educating for voluntary and non-voluntary personnel; disciplinary action taken against personnel, noting the relevant code of conduct, employment law, privacy law, incorporated societies law, human rights law, licensing criteria and regulations. Country Kidz will ensure that the findings of the investigation lead directly back into our quality improvement and internal evaluation review processes.  |
|  | *Archive*All documentation relating to the complaint will be retained for seven years and, as appropriate, added to a personnel file for the duration of that members time at Country Kidz. |

*Aligns with:*

*Licensing criteria for centre-based ECE services 2008 (amended, September 2022)*

*Education (early Childhood Centres) Regulations 2008 – R47*

*County Kidz Child Protection Policy*

*Incorporated Societies Act 2022*

*Children’s Act 2014*

*Country Kidz Privacy Policy*

*Country Kidz Human Rights Policy*

*Country Kidz Strategic Plan 2022-25*

*Our Code, Our Standards – Code of professional responsibility and standards for the Teaching Profession*

*Country Kidz Individual Employment Contract*

*Country Kidz Professional Boundaries for Committee Members Policy*

**Review**

Review when there is a significant change to legislature or as part of the annual management plan.

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| **Authorised:** |  |
| **Date:** | April, 2025 |
| **Next Review:** | Add to Annual Management Plan for April, 2026 not withstanding a change in legislation or criteria |