



Internal complaint procedure

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Introduction

At Topkids, we are committed to providing the best childcare every day. We believe this can only be achieved through collaboration with parents, with a focus on open communication and sharing experiences. However, things can go wrong sometimes. Complaints or signs of dissatisfaction offer valuable insights that help us improve our services. Therefore, for Topkids, every complaint is an opportunity to learn.

If you, as a parent (or external stakeholder), are dissatisfied with something, we would greatly appreciate it if you would discuss this as soon as possible with the person who is or was involved. If it concerns a situation in the group, this is often the pedagogical professional or the location manager. If it concerns a contract or terms and conditions, this will be an employee of the service bureau. If you cannot resolve the issue together or are not satisfied with the solution, you can file an internal complaint with our complaints officer.

In this complaints procedure, we describe our approach to handling and recording complaints from parents. The procedure complies with the requirements of the Childcare Act, Articles 1.57b and 1.57c.

Submitting an internal complaint

You can submit a complaint to us regarding:

- The behavior of the organization, an employee, or someone acting on behalf of the organization toward a parent or child;
- A procedure or policy within the childcare organization;
- The agreement between the organization and the parent(s).

We ask that you do this in writing. This allows us to properly record the complaints we receive, seek solutions, and improve our quality.

Do not wait too long to file a complaint. We ask that you file your complaint within 6 weeks of the issue arising. We consider this a reasonable timeframe, unless you can explain why you are filing it later. The sooner you file the complaint with us, the better we can investigate and assess it.

The components of a complaint

The complaint must include the following information:

- The date you submit the complaint
- Your name, address, and phone number
- The name of the employee if the complaint concerns this employee's conduct
- The childcare location and, if applicable, the group to which the complaint relates
- A description of the complaint

You can submit the complaint to the complaints officer at Topkids. This can be done via email



(klachten@topkids.nl). The complaints officer is the Policy & Quality staff member of the organization.

Child Abuse Reporting Procedure for Childcare Facilities (meldcode)

If you have a complaint regarding suspected child abuse or inappropriate behavior, we are legally required to follow the Child Abuse Reporting Procedure for Childcare (meldcode). It is possible that the necessary steps outlined in the reporting procedure have been followed, yet you still have a complaint regarding behavior, practices, and/or the agreement. In that case, you may still file an internal complaint through this complaints procedure.

Handling an internal complaint

The complaints officer will confirm in writing that your complaint has been received, monitor the process, and ensure that the complaint is properly recorded. We do our utmost to handle the complaint as quickly and effectively as possible. Our goal is to resolve the complaint within six weeks. If circumstances prevent this, the complaints officer will notify the complainant as soon as possible.

Topkids will keep the complainant informed in writing of the progress of the complaint at least every 10 business days.

Topkids ensures that every complaint is thoroughly investigated and resolved. The process depends on the nature and substance of the complaint. Possible steps include hearing from all parties involved (hearing both sides of the story), identifying the applicable policies, and assessing how those policies are implemented in practice in relation to the complaint.

If the complaint concerns an employee's behavior, that employee will be given the opportunity to respond either verbally or in writing.

The complainant will receive a written and reasoned decision regarding the complaint from Topkids. This decision will include at least the following:

- Whether the complaint is valid, invalid, or partially valid;
- The reasons why Topkids reached this decision;
- If the complaint and the decision warrant it: what measures Topkids will take and within what timeframe they will be implemented.

From an internal complaint to an external complaint

If the complaint is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction through the internal complaint procedure, the complainant may contact the Childcare Complaints Desk. This desk offers free information, advice, and mediation. For this purpose, Topkids follows the external complaint procedure.

If mediation through the Childcare Complaints Desk does not lead to a resolution, the complainant may submit the case to the Childcare Disputes Committee. The Disputes Committee will review the complaint and issue a binding decision for both parties.



In certain situations, the complainant may file a complaint directly with the Childcare Disputes Committee without first going through Topkids internal complaint procedure:

- When they cannot reasonably be expected to file the complaint with Topkids. This applies in situations where the person responsible for assessing the complaint is themselves a party to the complaint, which hinders independent resolution.
- When no assessment of the complaint has been received within the specified time frame—as described in Topkids complaints procedure.

The Childcare Disputes Committee will only consider complaints within 12 months of your submission of the complaint to Topkids.

The Disputes Committee issues a binding ruling that you and Topkids must comply with. The Disputes Committee also monitors compliance.

Assistance

The complainant has the right to be assisted or represented by a person of their choice. This could be, for example, a family member, a trusted advisor, or a legal advisor. If there is a language barrier, the complainant may be assisted by an interpreter or a family member.

The costs of any assistance or representation are the responsibility of the complainant, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the organization.

Confidentiality

All persons involved in handling the complaint (such as complaints officers, employees, and other parties involved) are required to maintain confidentiality regarding all information and personal data that become known during the handling of the complaint. This applies to all information whose confidential nature is known or can reasonably be presumed. This obligation also continues after the complaints procedure has been completed.

Complaint report

Topkids prepares a complaints report for each calendar year. This report is sent to the GGD supervisory authority by June 1 of the following calendar year. Topkids also brings the complaints report to the attention of the parents at the same time and in an appropriate manner. In addition, the organization discusses the report with the parent committee.

This report must include at least the following information:

- A brief description of the complaints procedure;
- How the complaints procedure has been brought to the attention of parents;
- The number and nature of complaints handled per location;
- The substance of the decisions and the nature of the measures taken per location;
- The number and nature of disputes handled by the Childcare Disputes Committee.



In the report, assessments of complaints cannot be traced back to complainants, employees, or other individuals, except when the organization (a legal entity) itself is involved. The organization's address is not included in the report.

If no complaints are filed in a calendar year, Topkids does not prepare a report.



Definitions

Organization	Topkids
Complaint	A formal, written expression of dissatisfaction that has not been or cannot be resolved through informal consultation.
Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or external party	The blood relative or relative by marriage in the ascending line, or the foster parent of a child who uses or has used childcare services at Topkids. Wherever the term "parent" appears in this document, it may also be read as "guardian." An external party may also file a complaint.
Parent committee	The committee as referred to in Article 1.58 of the Childcare Act.
Organization	The person who owns the business, as defined in the 2007 Commercial Register Act, and who operates a childcare center or a childminding agency through that business.
Submitter	The parent, external parties, or parent committee filing a complaint.
Employee	The organization (a natural person), individuals employed by the organization, or individuals working through the organization (e.g., temporary workers, the physical education teacher, etc.).
Complaints officer	The employee who receives complaints and oversees the procedure.
Location manager	The person in charge of the facility where the child is placed and/or the person against whom the complaint is filed.
Child Care Complaints Desk	Part of the Child Care Disputes Committee, where parents, parent committees, and child care organizations can turn for information, advice, and mediation.
Dispute Resolution Committee	A committee recognized by the Ministry of Security and Justice for resolving disputes. Its decisions are binding.
In writing	A letter sent by mail or electronically, such as an email.
Agreement	The contract and the accompanying (supplementary) terms and conditions.