

Submission  
No 11

**INQUIRY INTO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITY IN NEW SOUTH WALES EDUCATIONAL  
SETTINGS**

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 19 January 2024

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Partially  
Confidential

Please note I have many files, doctors reports including injuries and videos of fear of my kids of staff members that were all ignored.

My deaf daughter was to be encouraged to wear noise cancelling head phones and my other daughter was told if she dislocated and hurts herself at school to be encouraged to stay there and we would not be contacted. Even though her allied health team strongly recommended that we be contacted and some things at the school be changed to be safer for her to be included for the activities.

My son was asked to not attend a pre paid for camp and was told it was an admin decision based off the principal that he could not attend due to the risk of him becoming "mute and having a shut down" all things that are stated in his documents provided from therapists on how to handle the situation as a symptom of his Autism diagnosis.

We were then waiting longer for a refund and had to break the news to him that he couldn't attend.

Each time I would call the local MP office I was told it was being handled and someone would help soon. And yet my 3 children fell through the cracks

My children suffered worse avoidable injuries due to staff negligence, I received a false FACS report that was proven wrong but is now attached to my file and my children's lives forever. All from the power of the principal stating that I was a drug abuser and my mental health was too bad to look after my kids. This was awful to hear and have to introduce more people into my kids lives all because the principal wouldn't sign off on an exemption.

Only for him a few weeks out of term 4 ending to say he would now grant it possible as a trial run.

I have voice recordings of conversations of me at the school as I feared I would be reported for false allegations again and make things harder for my family.

I feared to step into the school and wasn't allowed to contact anyone regarding safety of my kids.

My world has been turned upside down and I am yet to come to some understanding of how this happens to families of special needs kids. We need help not to be shoved to the side and our lives be made harder for doing our job.

I will never forgive myself for allowing the fear of the government to take me to court and fine me for my kids to not be at school, it has caused injuries and set backs we can never get over

November 2022 AT requested for girls, Quotes were done for pal seating for both and reports attached sent directly to with the reason and why they're required for the kids and how it would help and benefit them moving forward with the new school year. We were told these would be forwarded to Department of Ed and they would get back to the school with a response next year for this.

In term 1 of 2023 I visited the school (I Public School) to speak with the Principal, Miss we worked through application for the special education classes for High School. She was kind enough to show me each section of this process and how it all goes together for an overview of education levels and support requirements. She informed me that the panels meet in term 2 week 3 and again term 4 week 7, so this application will be sent off in term 2 week 1 so it's ready to go. She also checked that the AT request form had gone through, and she said it had but was no response yet.

During this time the school had a change of principals, and I'm not sure exactly what time the swap happened but it was toward the end of term 1 and early weeks of term 2. I had arrived at the school and asked if the principal Mr was free to have a quick chat regarding the high school application. He invited me to his office and opened the application to see if it was ready to go. Upon looking through, it was noticed that teacher Miss had not filled in her section. Also, the school counsellor had not filled in their part as well. I told Mr I was quiet concerned this wouldn't be done in time for the panel to meet in week 3. Firmly I was told that's not correct and they meet 2 weeks later so there was plenty of time to do this application. I did tell Mr that I had received the dates from Tanya Willis (department of education), and she was on the panel so I thought if anyone would know it would be her. I became quite concerned for future in high school if he managed to miss the panel. Mr informed me that s funding would need to be reviewed and applied for around July, and I asked had there been any funding request for and and was there news on the Quotes for the supportive seating. He said no and "to get funding quickly it is easiest if I go to a paediatrician and get a diagnosis of autism or anxiety disorder as this helps the department open their wallets" I was quite confused but was happy to try and get some funding I could try. Upon coming home, it didn't sit right with me, so I told my partner I was confused as to why this was said and why can't the diagnosis, we have been enough for supports. My partner immediately called Department of Ed to see why this was mentioned to me in the first place. He made a complaint and spoke to Tanya Willis. She did understand where Mr was coming from and that as he is in a new role, he may not of know the other pathways available to get supports. She would have a meeting with him and discuss these options.

I emailed the school in regards to the declining health of my grandmother, this was an email sent to all staff of my kids and the school, also including Aley Light to add in some strategies and things to put in place in the classroom and school environment to help the kids though this , to inform them that someone very close to the kids was declining in health and the possible outcomes due to the kids disabilities we could be facing. Degressive symptoms in

each of the children and how we can all assist to keep them on task and recover through this process as well.

During late April my Nan passed away, and there was a lot of conversations to be made and discussed with the kids to help them process the news, and what is to till come when someone passes away. I kept the kids home for a day to help them and deal with any over the top symptoms that could of arose as a result to the news. We worked on some strategies and when the returned to School for a few days before again I would need to take them to the funeral. After the funeral care for my pop was highly needed as well and due to myself being nan and pops main carer at time, I took the kids the day after the funeral to spend time with pop and reassure them that pop was still sad but fine in health wise and it was important, we spend time with him. Upon returning to school, I spoke to Miss [redacted] and told her that we were finding it tricky to help the kids understand what's happened and how to grieve but we do believe they would do well with some other kids at school. She gave her condolences, and I went home. I was quite happy with what I believed was understanding through this difficult time.

[redacted] had an injury at school resulting in her popping her hip, the school called and said they had given her an ice pack and she was ok to return to class. I asked if they would like us to go and check her hip, and they said no she is ok and walking fine, it was more a precaution. A few hours later I received another call to say [redacted] had been bitten by an ant and they had given her some cream and an ice pack. I again asked was she ok and they assured me she was fine. About half an hour after lunch I got a 3<sup>rd</sup> call from them asking could [redacted] participate in high jump at school, I expressed my concerns as she was already injured that day and that I think its best that she doesn't. I then called Aley and was told the school should have options there to modify it for [redacted] so she could safely participate with her class. I called the school back and told them I'm on my way to watch her and modify it so she can do it as well. When I arrived, [redacted] was sitting on a chair and did seem ok, I then explained that she would jump without the bar there to be safe and I don't want her jumping and landing on her hips. After [redacted] joined in they placed the bar back and continued to the rest of the kids in the class. I called [redacted] to let him know I was happy with checking it, he explained that this was all apart of the modifications they had requested the school for PE so [redacted] could participate still. It was part of her ILP and it should all be in there. I was fearful of high jump as the year before Miss [redacted] had told [redacted] to try and jump when she was in 2 knee braces for her dislocations, But [redacted] felt pressured from the teacher to try, and it resulted in further injury.

We wanted her included safely in all aspects of school and did not want a repeat of a previous year when Miss [redacted] had told [redacted] to sit down as you can't run properly for the Cross country and she wouldn't be receiving an ice block like the rest of the school as its not like she did anything anyway. When we reported that to the Principal [redacted] he said he would get [redacted] something for her missing out. We explained it wasn't just missing out it was singling her out and discriminating against her for her disability. The fear of her being singled out again and receiving an avoidable injury was very real and scary for us.

On Wednesday the 14th of June 2023 I went to the office to drop off the letter of interest for an upcoming excursion to Boorambola for years 5 & 6. The office staff informed me there was also a High testing day note due today and I need to fill it in. I asked if due to applying for the panel and special ed classes would he still have to sit this exam or is there a separate one for those kids with supports. I told the staff I would call High School and see what they suggest getting the best possible results for I walked to the class, and I told Miss that I was quiet concerned how he might cope in the hall all day with no support, and I will talk with the high school and see if the catch-up day might be more suitable for him with less people and distraction. Miss said a few in the class won't do well but she doesn't care if they just draw on some plain paper or read a book, she was going to speak with the students to let them know ideas when they're done or can't continue the test. She then radioed through to Mr and told him that I was calling the high school and he said he would really like to still attend the testing day, I agreed that I do want him tested but I wanted to know how they're testing students with additional needs.

I left the public school and went home to contact High School less than 2 hours I received a call from them to inform me that they had asked the public schools to send a list of students that may not handle the testing environment in the hall, and they would have the students tests sent to the Public schools so they were in their environment and the schools they're in would know how much assistance was required in order to get the best result. I thanked her and hung up the phone to then call and ask them if I could talk to Mr He took my call, and I informed him of the information I had just received. He thanked me and said he might have missed an email with this information, and He also said there was more students he could think of that would be beneficial to do this exam and he would be calling the High school after his next class and giving them a list of students that would benefit from this.

I received a follow up call that afternoon from Mr again thanking me and telling me how glad he was to have parents like us that advocate so much for their kids with disabilities and for bringing this to his attention. The test would now be split in 6 x 1hour sessions in which would receive help in the reading of questions and he would have brain / stimulating breaks in between. This was a great outcome, and I was so thankful for them to be able to support him through this. These results would determine if missed the panel, then these results would assist with gathering data for 2 classes that would be more assisted but not as 1 on 1 support that the special Ed class would be, this was just a more supported class then mainstream. So, this would be my back up if for some reason didn't make the panel.

I had informed the school that the children would not be attending the Thursday as we were going to a fundraising event for kids with Cancer. Baby Show Time in Albury as this was very important for our kids and was a huge impact on boosting confidence and being involved in the community.

As last year was intimidated and scared of a staff member Miss and she had quiet awful anxiety attacks when it came to school time. She felt unsafe and was fearful of

the yelling miss would do to her in class. had also been injured at school last year when Miss had told her to jump High jump at school whilst she was in 2 knee braces from dislocations, and she was under instruction to not overdo it and refer to her health plan to support her recovery at school. Baby show time was a wonderful opportunity and we started to see shine again and gain some confidence. She started to attend school again with the help of Miss and checking in and her being in other classrooms to build her confidence again. So, we really enjoy that still does Baby Show time, and it becomes very important to her. I called the school to let them know Monday morning that unfortunately we have picked up the gastro bug and we would return as soon as possible, but I would wait at least 24 hours of no sign of the bug. Miss said that was fine and she hopes we all rest up; I did ask for any work that may be sent home for the kids to be working on something and she said no rest was more important than anything. I thanked her and said I would keep them updated.

A few days later My partner received a call from Mr and it was mentioned that it was not my place to have made those calls to High about the testing day and I needed to have attend the day they had on the note, which had already passed. I was quite confused as another staff member being the assistant principal Mr had thanked me and was so positive about the outcome and was very understanding. Mr said the attendance of our children was poor and falling behind more and we needed to have medical certificates for any times that they're not at school. He said we need to have them at school every day and that it was a child welfare issue if God forbid something was to happen in these times, he would be liable for those children. I was scared and began to cry and shake, I couldn't understand why he was so angry and intimidating and I did not want DCJ to be involved due to previous PTSD from them. He also seemed quite angry that we had taken a day for a show, we explained that it was a charity event and how important it was for especially and that at the event both her and had received an invite to the state finals which was a huge achievement.

He booked a meeting to chat with us and Aley Light and Josh light, both huge supporters for our kid's disability needs. I was not confident enough to face Mr in a meeting due to the call he had previously made.

At the Meeting which was meant to be about medical conditions, which lead to taking the children's ot and the director of the company, this turned in to an ambush of hslo involvement as well as saying there attendance was not acceptable. Whilst and the children's ot was trying to explain the medical needs of the children including reason why they would be absent. raised the possibility of exemptions or partial enrolment but nothing come from this.

We received an email stating that he requests phone numbers from any and all health professionals for our 3 children as he would like to contact them and discuss our kid's needs. Him again confirming we must have medical certificates for all children on any absences.

And that he would be referring us to HSLO, and they would be working with us and be our go to between the school and ourselves. This HSLO was the step before he would contact DCJ.

We had a few incidents at the school, [redacted] had a teacher in class Mr [redacted] and he had used a whistle in the classroom to get the kids in the class to settle and gain their attention.

[redacted] came home this day extremely frustrated and in sensory overload. When I questioned why he told me his ears were sore from the teacher today and he didn't like it.

[redacted] also came home that day quiet upset and fearful of the teacher she had in her class that day, this casual teacher had screamed all day in the classroom and made [redacted] upset and nervous, she cried in class and the teacher did ask her what was wrong, but she was too afraid to speak to her in fear she would be yelled at too.

I immediately called the school to complain as this needed to be addressed immediately to avoid another term of Miss [redacted] behaviour to [redacted] resulting in [redacted] too scare and physically sick making her unable to attend school. Also, the damage that was being done to students with a teacher using a whistle in the classroom was awful. Not just for neurotypical kids, all kids could be affected, and I would hope this teacher would refrain from doing that again unless on a sports field outdoor setting. Mr [redacted] responded with this would not happen in his school and he would address the teachers regarding this. I did not receive a follow up of how this was handled and the outcome. I did request they have someone such as the councillor check in on my kids and see how they were dealing with what had happened.

We received a call from Wendy Dennis the last week of term 2 informing us that she would be working with us and what we wanted from the school, my partner [redacted] had informed her that in the policies it states the principal can sign off on a 100-day exemption under certain circumstances which we believe the kids complex needs fall into. We also explained to her that we are happy to share reports with the school from the specialists, but we cannot allow him to have their contact details as this time would be billed through the kids NDIS plans and we are already pushing it for amounts to cover the appointments and equipment needed for their disability needs. So, we asked for what information was need directly from the school, what medical information and reports do they require to achieve this outcome. Wendy said she wasn't sure of what was needed but she will find out and get back to us.

It was school holidays so we didn't think much of it and thought we would surely receive something start of term 3. We still had heard nothing and the number we were given to contact we weren't getting any answer or response. So, [redacted] had mentioned to Mr [redacted] via a phone call of Friday that we had not heard from the HSLO. This was also a week that we had the day previously [redacted] had come home with \$70 in cash from another student, as this student had pushed him to sell some Pokémon cards. [redacted] told me the students name and how many cards were exchanged for the money, I emailed Mr [redacted] immediately and asked if he could call regarding this. I called the school as well and said it was an urgent matter that I need to inform them of. I told Mr [redacted] what had happened and how I was not happy that this had happened, and I don't wish for buying or selling of

cards at school. Mr [redacted] said he would contact the boy's parents and let them know and he would tell [redacted] as well that this is not allowed at school. He thanked me for bringing it to his attention, and I asked that he quickly have a chat with [redacted] the next morning before we have appointments could he just tell him what was happening, and I would be sending the money to the school for them to return to the other family. He spoke with [redacted] and was told that Pokémon cards will not be banned at the school, but himself and Mr [redacted] spoke at lengths last night and agreed that cards will be ok to remain at school but that trading and swapping would not be allowed. We were grateful as [redacted] uses these cards as therapy tools, every day he stims and is calmer and more focused when using them. He also uses them to engage with peers in lunch and recess time, and before he started using Pokémon, he struggled to form friendships and have those moments with his peers. So, we were very happy he would have a way to engage in communication and bonding with other kids.

We received a notice in the newsletter that afternoon that effectively immediately all Pokémon cards were banned from the school, and any child found with cards would have them removed and taken to the office for their parents to collect at the end of the day.

[redacted] became very distressed of this outcome and was frustrated and flat out refusing to return to school over the news.

We received a call from Brooke from DCJ. She informed us that there was a complaint made against us as a Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) to the children, she couldn't tell us exactly what was in the complaint or why it was made. She just said she will need to book a time to speak to us and then she could tell us what the actual complaint was. [redacted] spoke to Brooke at length and explained that he had a feeling that the report had come from the school and that these were the reasons why, as we were already having issues and had already received the threat from Mr [redacted] that this was a child welfare issue. [redacted] outlined what we were struggling with in the school in means of support for the kids and out lined their disabilities and how it affects each of them differently and why they were needing time off. He also expressed that he feels this DCJ complaint was made in bad faith, and it was retaliation due to us complaining to department of Education for the discrimination and poor care that was being done for our kids whilst in the school's care. We even stated that a few years ago when [redacted] was in year 2 or 3 we had a complaint from the school to DCJ then FACS as [redacted] had some sores on his ankles due to his Dermatillomania, (a skin picking condition) I had bandaged his ankles up to help them heal a little more, and Miss [redacted] complained that he was picking them still in class and they weren't healing. I had complained about Miss [redacted] to the then school principal Mr [redacted] as I believed [redacted] was not a funded student for 1 on 1 supports in the classroom, she explained he wasn't funded, and we were lucky that another student had some support she could spread among 6 kids that really needed it. I was concerned for his Education as he had a long list of diagnoses and really needed the assistance. The school Councillor at the time informed me that [redacted] was one of the highest funded students and his needs meets the 1 on 1 support so that Miss [redacted] was incorrect, and he should be receiving help. Due to me reporting these findings to the

principal                    funding was used to support him alone and I believe Miss                    made the child welfare complaint in retaliation to my actions of reporting her. I expressed to the school that I did not believe she is capable of looking after and supplying adequate care for Children with disabilities. When FACS came to inspect us, they seen that we again were not a risk and that                    diagnoses were a direct result of his injuries on his ankles. We supplied Tracey from FACS a copy of all medical reports and information to add to our file, to update that the kids have these conditions and how we needed support.

We brought this information up to Brooke so hopefully she could look at the past case and see if there was anything that matched up, as we had the feeling this complaint was also a school one. We organised to see her on the following Monday, and we would have her meet the kids on the Friday, and if it set them into an overload or excessive stimming etc we would be able to handle it with the OT session on the same day. We did ask that they not disclose DCJ name to the kids and just introduce themselves as support workers, to avoid any anxiety risks for the kids. We also mentioned that                    is not very verbal to strangers so they may not get much out of him. She understood and said she looked forward to meeting us.

                  called Mr                    to ask why the outcome had changed with Pokémon, and our concerns when it comes to                    as he uses the cards in therapy and to stim as well. These are a daily requirement for him, and we feared how he would cope without the use of these. We also noted that                    really enjoyed recess and lunch time with the use of his cards he was able to engage socially with other students. We didn't want him to struggle socially. Mr                    understood ours concerns and said there would be a variety of things available for the students to do during recess and lunch and that the staff were running some activities.                    also explained our recent call from DCJ, and we were quiet upset that this had happened as we were told to work with the SLSO and this would be avoidable, we were doing all the school had asked and we felt it was in retaliation. Mr                    stated that the staff had many meetings, and it was raised for a DCJ report, and he had voted for this not to happen. He was shocked that the complaint went through.

The Monday morning, we dropped the kids off to school and drove into town for the meeting, upon arrival we met with Brooke and her boss Phil from DCJ, we stepped into the room, and they explained what the complaint was, 4 lines.

- Education
- Health
- Mental health
- Substance abuse

I broke down, substance abuse was awful to see on the paper, I questioned why that would be even mentioned. We offered to do any testing required to prove that's not an issue, and                    believed that section to be from Mr                    himself, due to at the meeting earlier in the

year, [redacted] was in a moon boot due to a torn ACL and a lot of damage in his ankle, he was on pain medicine, He mentioned at the end of that meeting he needed to go home and have his pain medicine as his ankle was hurting again, the pain medicine was Panadol osteo.

Mental health I agreed could be due to me crying at school one day to Miss [redacted], just after my nans funeral the first day back for the kids she asked how we were and I explained it had been tough to grieve when also helping 3 kids understand their own grief, but the school day would be good to distract them and get back a sense of normalcy. She seemed empathetic and agreed she would call if the kids were struggling that day at all.

The kid's education, yes, we can also agree as the last term had been awful for partial days and extra injuries resulting in more time off then we previously needed to get them back to school, I explained I do believe a lot of the injuries at school could be avoidable if the school had of followed the medical advice from their Allied Health team. That if the necessary equipment was in the classrooms the girl could spend more time in class and working at their best ability. But due to their negligence [redacted] had injured her wrist, we seen the GP, and she was given instructions to follow. She is not to sit on the floor during school as her pushing up from the ground causes worse dislocations and injuries. But [redacted] was sitting on the floor at school just days later and again further injured her wrist. This resulted needing an MRI and there was found tears and swelling in the wrist. Her worst and avoidable injury so far. We were let down but the policies and procedures in place that did not help her.

The kid's health, I was concerned as a parent to have all 3 of them with special needs, but I do believe that I am on top of all medical conditions, and I do have the kid's health always at the top of my priority list. I have always attended appointments and made specialist visits, and any requirements or follow up is seen to and I do my best to continue the work at home when it comes to therapy appointments.

I ask so what does this complaint mean for us as a family how can I prove that I'm not doing the wrong thing for these kids. Brooke and Phil explained they can clearly see Two parents who advocate well for their children and that they are in great health and were very on top of the additional needs. Due to this complaint coming in as a ROSH they need to still do checks to ensure there is no risk to the kids. She did say we can utilise them while we are a case and use them for support and things, I explained the worry about [redacted] and high school, she said they can request from them to the department that [redacted] be given a place, and she can do that for us. Phil also asked was there any therapist were still struggling for and we explained we do need a new speech therapist, and we were just starting the process for [redacted] hearing so we may need supports through that, but we would like to sign up with Brighter Futures again as we find their program helpful and would be interested in some of the parenting programs they offer.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 we received an email from Mr [redacted] that reads as follows. Good evening [redacted] and

I hope this email finds you well. As you are aware, [redacted] attended [redacted] Public School today, to discuss ongoing concerns relating to your children, [redacted] and [redacted].

In particular, matters relating to current DCJ family involvement were raised. During this meeting, we discussed, at length, the support structures in place for all three children, including explicit requests for further information to assist us to better inform the children's health care plans, as well as discussions relating to overall school attendance. I again offered my support in acquiring this information; however, those offers were rejected, with [redacted] citing a distrust for the Department and an unwillingness to have them involved in his children's medical history.

During this meeting, I also advised [redacted] of my concerns for the manner in which he has been approaching members of staff at [redacted] Public School to express his discontent with the school and, more broadly, the Department of Education. The manner in which these conversations have been conducted has left staff feeling uncomfortable and concerned. It is for this reason, following the advice from the Department Learning and Wellbeing team, as well as the Director of Education, that strict communication guidelines be put in place effective immediately. As discussed in the meeting, I am formally requesting the following:

- All communication with the school, whether it be via [redacted] or [redacted], be directed, in writing, to the [redacted] Public School email address. This includes any requests for meetings, whether they be via phone or in person. All correspondence will then be communicated internally, with a response provided to you within a reasonable time frame.
- At no time are you to approach staff on or outside of school grounds to raise issues directly with them. Any issue and/or concern is, again, to be raised in writing and directed to the school email address.

Of course, these expectations do not extend to matters of emergency. Further, this does not preclude either of you to attend school as part of normal drop-off and pick up routines. Further, to attend school in relation to programs, initiatives and events coordinated within the school as long as visitor sign-in protocols are followed. Simply, these expectations extend to communication directly with staff relating to concerns, issues and/or requests, as these must all now be provided in writing to the school email address.

Please understand, these parameters have been established not in an attempt to limit your voice. Rather, they allow us to streamline communication between stakeholders, ensuring that matters are expressed in a clear, concise, fair and appropriate manner. In the event that these expectations are not met, please understand that the matter will be further escalated as the wellbeing of my staff must be prioritised.

In the event you wish to submit a formal complaint or provide feedback in relation to concerns discussed, please feel free to do so by submitting an online form via the link below:

- <https://education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback/complaint-compliment-suggestion-form>

With these clear professional boundaries in place, I look forward to working with you and your family to ensure that they continue to access the high quality, safe and inclusive learning environment that \_\_\_\_\_ Public School offers.

**With gratitude,**

Education week Open day was the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2023 the school had an open day “that would like to invite friends and family to our education week celebration, to visit and see for themselves the huge positive differences our recent school and class changes have made to the children’s education.” This was to invite parents;

- To see the new classrooms
- Meet our new staff
- Enjoy a free sausage sizzle lunch with the kids

During the times 12.45pm – 1.15pm Open classrooms 1.15pm – 1.45pm BBQ picnic lunch

I was concerned if I would be able to attend and how I would feel if I was to see Mr \_\_\_\_\_ or in fact any staff as im not allowed to speak directly with them. I would feel discriminated against having to sign in to the school, as no other parents were required to do so. How would I be included into meeting the staff including the new SLSO staff that were introduced to each of the classroom. I waited at the gate until the exact time and was quite worried what was to come. I walked slowly into the school and went to \_\_\_\_\_ class first. Mr \_\_\_\_\_ asked how I was going, and I nodded without saying anything, I asked \_\_\_\_\_ i what he was working on and was he doing any work. I then told him I will go over to see \_\_\_\_\_ class quickly too and try to get back after seeing his sisters. I walked to her classroom and walked in, \_\_\_\_\_ ran over and guided me to her desk, no words were exchanged with myself and Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ It was very awkward and tense. I sat with \_\_\_\_\_ and told her I must go to \_\_\_\_\_ now; she was sad and wanted me to stay longer. I noticed another staff member in the class, female. But unsure of who she was or her role in the class. I walked over to \_\_\_\_\_ class, as I walked in the classroom was very packed with people Miss \_\_\_\_\_ said hello and I said hi. Feeling as though I was breaking the rules, I said I need to go back and see \_\_\_\_\_ again too and would get back. But at this stage the bell had gone. It was time to line up for the sausage sizzle, the staff there was Miss \_\_\_\_\_ was all I new the name of, again I didn’t speak besides polite exchange for the food and sauce. I walked \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ over to eat where Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ was talking to another staff member and had told the kids to sit on the concrete. They had their backs turned to the kids and was not watching them eat. I was concerned as apart of the ILP and plans we had mentioned with the school the girls, must be sitting on seats while eating as this can affect their digestive systems if they are eating without supports. It can cause bloating and pains. I

told \_\_\_\_\_ to come and sit at the table and eat with me. She did and then was able to eat more. As I left the school I noted these things and immediately contacted \_\_\_\_\_ as he was away for work that day and told him my findings at the school and how I felt this was extremely awkward to be there when I couldn't actually get to meet the staff properly as it was advertised. I also was unsure of where to send the complaints. I composed it into an email to send to the school's email address supplied which was as follows,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent limitations imposed during Education Week at \_\_\_\_\_ Public School. As a primary school parent, I was eagerly looking forward to the opportunity to meet the new staff and engage in meaningful conversations about my children's education. However, I was left feeling intimidated and isolated due to the restrictions outlined in the email sent by Principal.

I understand that the school may have reasons for implementing such limitations, but I believe that the approach taken has had a negative impact on the parent-school relationship. By strictly forbidding any direct approach to staff and insisting that all communication be conducted solely through the school email, it creates a barrier that hinders open dialogue and collaboration.

Education Week is an important occasion for parents to actively participate in their child's education and build connections with the school community. By not allowing parents to approach staff directly, it undermines the sense of inclusivity and partnership that should be fostered between parents and educators.

I request that the school reconsider these limitations and find a more balanced approach that allows for meaningful interactions directly between parents and staff. Encouraging open communication and providing opportunities for face-to-face interactions can greatly enhance the educational experience for both students and parents.

Whilst attending the open day, I also noticed multiple issues that regard my children and have not been able to discuss these directly with appropriate parties. Limiting my communication via one channel makes this even more of a concern when it comes to my children's wellbeing.

-Seating in the classrooms, the support structure of the seating, and classroom placement of child.

-Girls viewed not wearing glasses as been previously discussed.

-Eating time seating for

I request that I be granted access to speak directly to staff, and to address these issues, meetings to be scheduled where I will also have DCJ and or allied health professionals involved attending meetings.

I would also like to meet the new staff in my kids classrooms in a private meeting, as I was denied this opportunity through open day with the limitations in place.

I would like any dealings of Mr \_\_\_\_\_ the principal to be directed through a 3rd party, due to my concerns raised a few months ago to \_\_\_\_\_ at Department of Education, regarding my fear of intimidation of him, due to his phone calls and meetings not matching up with any follow up emails he sends regarding things spoken about. And the threat of reporting child

welfare issues which has since happened and the allegations were not done in good faith, and deformation.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and kindly request a prompt response regarding the actions that will be taken to address this issue. I am confident that, by working together, we can find a solution that benefits all stakeholders involved.

I look forward to hearing back about these issues and the outcomes taken to ensure My family and myself feel heard and accepted to the school community.

Complaints emails addressed to school

I emailed [redacted] and [redacted] on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2023. In these emails I had discussed that [redacted] had had anxiety effecting her the day before when she was sent home, and that I had given [redacted] a bag with items to help her ground and reset if she felt overwhelmed and needed to take a break at some stage, would she please allow that.

[redacted] could also still be on edge today and if there was any issue, please contact me and I can come to the school to collect her. We had also taken her to the GP the afternoon previously and requested a mental health plan to assist her with this further.

[redacted] is [redacted] teachers and I new she would be in safe hands with her. I sent the email direct as I seen this to be an emergency and couldn't wait the possible 20 days as per the school's policy for emails to be responded to via the schools email address provided, information available on the schools website.

I also sent an email direct to [redacted] teacher [redacted], In this email I stated that the day before [redacted] had come home very upset as a boy named [redacted] had repeatedly hit her and stolen her food the day before. She did say she told a teacher but was told to go away as the staff member was talking. I told her that [redacted] had a lunch order that day to hope that she would be able to eat something as she needs to have food during the day to help with her metabolism as this can be affected in people with EDS, Ehlers Danlos Syndrome and Hypermobility. Could someone please keep an eye on [redacted] and let her know a safe teacher to go with any issues with students in the future.

I did not receive any emails back from the teachers themselves, and I did cc Aley Light, [redacted] and Brooke from DCJ all into the emails to ensure that it was across all boards that I had emailed. I did receive an email from Mr [redacted] himself, referring me back to the previous email on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2023. The email read as follows.

Good morning

I hope this email finds you well. I have been made aware this morning that you have sent a direct email to [redacted] teacher. I would like to refer you to the email communication sent to both yourself and [redacted] Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2023. As stated, All communication with the school, whether it be via [redacted] or [redacted] be directed, in writing, to the Public School email address. This includes any requests for meetings, whether they be via

phone or in person. All correspondence will then be communicated internally, with a response provided to you within a reasonable time frame. This request has been endorsed by both the Director of Education and the Learning and Wellbeing team.

Again, I formally request that you respect and adhere to these fair and reasonable expectations to allow us to streamline communication between stakeholders, ensuring that matters are expressed in a clear, concise, fair and appropriate manner.

In the event you wish to submit a formal complaint or provide feedback in relation to concerns discussed, please feel free to do so by submitting an online form via the link below:

- <https://education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback/complaint-compliment-suggestion-form>

With these clear professional boundaries in place, I look forward to working with you and your family to ensure that they continue to access the high quality, safe and inclusive learning environment that Public School offers.

In response to concerns raised:

- Child taking food: Public School staff provide strict supervision of students during eating time. This is formally embedded within our supervision structures. At no time has this been observed by staff. However, we will remain vigilant in monitoring , as well as other students, during supervised eating times to ensure that no child is sharing food or having their food taken.
- Violence: Thank you for raising this concern. Again, this has not been something observed by staff that the Executive team has been made aware of. We have extensive proactive support structures in place both in the classroom and playground to ensure the safety and positive engagement of all our students. These structures allow us to continue monitoring interactions with other students moving forward. As we encourage all our students to do, please reinforce with the important of reaching out to a trusted adult at school to allow formal follow-ups to take place at the time of any alleged incidents.

Wishing you the very best of days.

**With gratitude,**

Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> of August 2023 during Therapy, I received a missed call from [redacted]. I was concerned as no message was left and as the no direct contact email was in effect, I was unsure at how I could get in touch with the person that had tried to call. I then received a call back it was Mr [redacted]. He wanted to know if I had a few minutes to talk. I expressed to him that I can't actually speak directly to staff and I can only in the case of emergency contact them. I requested an email stating that I did not ask for the call, nor did I speak about any issues. I did not want to get in any trouble from Mr [redacted] and break any policies or procedures.

Mr [redacted] wanted to discuss [redacted] ILP and what goals we can have him working on with Rick the SLSO, I told him that I have not met Rick as I was unable to speak with staff and so on Education week open day I did not speak to anyone and would of loved the chance to speak with all staff and the people directly involved with my kids to see how they were settling in to the new classroom change that happened week 10 term 2, which was effecting a lot of the kids not just my own. He explained a few programs of typing they do in school, so that was a goal to continued to work on that and his typing speed. And to be honest I can't remember the other 2 goals. As I was too nervous of the call being mad and the possible repercussions of this from Mr [redacted] I said I also don't know when an emergency is warranted so I can contact anyone and im very confused as my role now to be able to monitor my kids care. He agreed that most staff are not even sure of what is in place and what to do in this either. I asked to please end the call as I can't get into anything else and need this in writing to cover myself.

I got off the phone shaken and cried as I was angrier and more hurt that not even the staff new what was happening and how we were able to establish a relationship to help 3 kids with special needs with such barriers put in place. I asked my kids OT Aley how we are supposed to continue this with the school. What can I do to keep them safe if I can't talk to the staff about the new updates medically or the regressions of the kids needs.

Monday the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2023 I arrived to the school with the 3 kids and walked into the office, I asked the staff if there was a possibility I be granted access to talk with Mrs [redacted] in regards to [redacted] receiving her trial Hearing aid on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> of August 2023 in the afternoon and we needed to just let her know a few instructions of this as its vital that [redacted] not pull the hearing aid out of her ear at all and if she did could they call me and I can clean it and check it before reinserting it in her ear. If she does touch too much, please tell me as well as I need to keep it clean, and risk of germs could affect her ear health even more and we can't have that. Mrs [redacted] asked was it just the 1 hearing aid and is it the ear she had that was leaking previously. I said yes and if it does seem to be leaking im available all day and can come up and fix it. This week we needed to trial it without the mic to see how her hearing goes with the direct mic or just the hearing aid to amplify everything for her. Mrs [redacted] also asked were her glasses with her, to which I responded with yes, they're in the front pocket of her bag like always and she still must use them in class. She also asked how she was coping with the hearing aid, I responded with she has been speaking a lot quieter than before, and her pronunciation of some sounds were very clear. She responded

with [redacted] isn't loud here she is very quiet all the time and left for class, I followed this up with an email to the school's email address just for formality of things to avoid and look out for. I had no response to my email at 9.40am so I called the school at 1pm just to see if the email had been received, they responded with yes and they sent it through to where it had to go. I said thank you and just wanted to see if it was received or I could send it again. At no time did I ask to speak directly to Mrs [redacted] the office staff did say they asked her how [redacted] was going today, and she had informed them that [redacted] was a lot quieter than normal in class. I said thank you and hung up.

That afternoon I went to the school to pick up the kids, [redacted] came out to me and told me her hearing aid was leaking today in class and when she tried to tell the staff Mrs [redacted] just gave her a tissue and told her to take it out and wipe it. I was trying to ask where she placed the hearing aid and did, she washes her hands before touching it. I took her home and messaged her hearing aid specialist straight away and informed her that [redacted] had been able to remove it in class and I was now very concerned for infection. I was instructed to fully pull apart the device and sterilise it, as well as photos of the ear too see. But essentially it was a wait and see if she gets sick. I received a call from Brooke to touch base and try to organise a meeting with the school and department of education to fix some of the concerns and barriers in place. I explained my fear to Brooke that I can't trust the school to care for [redacted] at this time and I can't send her to school until the communication barriers are removed so I can check in on her and her health. Brooke suggested that she would call and see if I could be granted permission to attend the school daily, recess and lunch so I could check on the 3 kids and touch base with them and see if their needs are being met. I agreed that if the school will allow that I will allow them to return. This did not happen so [redacted] has not yet returned to school. I am upset as she is missing out on time with her peers and essential information we could use for the hearing aid trial, but until I know her health is not at risk, I can't allow her to go.

I also made a call to legal aid and told them my situation and that I need help to resolve this and make it safe for my kids to go to school again. They advised that I contact the Ombudsmen and the Australian Health commissioner and make a complaint for the school and department of education.

I received a response to my email the following morning around 7.30 am.

Im very confused as to why the different answers and to why them following up with an email the next morning that said I was requesting to speak to staff.

The email is as follows.

Good morning,

Hoping this email finds you well. Just touching base following on from your email.

Prior to school yesterday, you attended the front office with [redacted] to discuss her hearing aid trial with her classroom teacher. This conversation was facilitated, with Mrs [redacted] advising that she monitor [redacted] closely, providing feedback where necessary to inform future health care decisions as they relate to [redacted] s hearing. Administration staff then received an email approximately 30 minutes later, providing further update relating to [redacted] hearing, as well as requests for information. As you can appreciate, with staff members on class, it takes time to respond to such requests to ensure that information provided is clear, informed, and accurate. At approximately 1pm, our office staff received further contact from you, requesting an update on [redacted] progress for the day. You were advised that [redacted] teacher was on class and therefore could not speak at that time, however, were reassured that [redacted] was having a good day.

Please understand that, as a school, staff work tirelessly to ensure that students are happy, safe and healthy. We take all medical conditions seriously, and work closely with families to ensure that they are well supported. Moving forward, please trust that if there are any issues relating to [redacted] that we, as a school, will reach out and contact you. Further, that through reference to specialist advice we will endeavour to provide as much feedback as possible to best inform support structures at school.

To ensure that we have a clear understanding of the specialist advice, including recommendations specific to the school environment, is there a report you can share with us that outlines what the specialist is after in relation to feedback? This will help guide our observations and records. Further to this, a summary report will assist in giving us a clearer picture of [redacted] needs, again, allowing for individualised plans to be developed that are reflective of her current needs.

Also, if you can supply us with a date in relation to specialist follow up, we will ensure that a letter is written that provides an overview of our observations. This is something we do for many families to ensure that specialists have a clear understanding of the school context and a student's engagement within it. Please also feel free to share the contact email of the specialist as we are also able to forward a copy directly to them for you in preparation to any upcoming appointments. Moving forward, please ensure any medical documentation, requests and/or reports are directed to the front office (via email or in hard copy) to ensure the expediate triaging of student need and, ultimately, the response to that need.

Have a fantastic day.

Kind Regards

**Public School**

When I received this email, I was quiet concerned why they were pushing things that I did not say or ask for, and that when I get an email I don't have a point of contact of who the person is that im speaking with, I feel a big communication gap and it makes it hard to maintain a relationship with them when I'm unsure if all staff I need to communicate with have had a say in the email itself.

The lack of communication for the department regarding this including an email that was sent to the school which they forwarded though as a complaint has caused more issues to this being resolved. As we still after 27+ days haven't had communication regard that ether.

I need to ensure my kids needs and disabilities are met and taken seriously, I need the school and Department of Ed to understand the damage and trauma they have caused during this time, and the educational neglect that my kids have endured as well as disability discrimination, and health and safety negligence. I request they do an investigation into why these things have happened. I want the education staff held responsible for the things that have happened and to be reprimanded for the wrong doings. I want policies to be put in place to stop this happening to another family and further training and education for all involved.

We will forward all emails and relevant information very email as this is substantial.