

**INQUIRY INTO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND  
CARE SECTOR IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 21 March 2025

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Partially  
Confidential

Dear Committee Members,

I wish to raise the issue of the difficulty of reporting concerns with a childcare centre in small country or regional towns, where the person who is the only receiver of any complaints is a personal friend of the person/manager/childcare worker against whom the complaint is made. Often, these towns only have one, or maybe, two childcare centres so choice of a childcare centre can be extremely difficult and the alternative nearest may be 30-60 mins away.

We had that experience when our son attended a childcare centre attached to a university in a country town. He was diagnosed with multiple dietary intolerances and allergies and was later in life further diagnosed as a coeliac. This apparently singled him out for bullying by the manager, while the staff were very supportive of our son and us. The manager would often berate us (during pickup) about the apparent misdemeanours of our son. On one occasion, two staff members in the back of the room shook their heads 'no' and confided later that our son was not the 'devil' the manager made him out to be. We found out he was often made, by the manager, to sit in a corner and isolated from other children, especially during mealtimes or during outside playtime.

Our complaint to the university was ignored due to the personal relationship between the university administrator responsible for the childcare centre and the manager of the childcare centre. The manager laughed at us for even making the complaint; we heard absolutely nothing from the admin officer - not even an acknowledgement of our complaint.

For rural/regional areas, there needs to be a person external to the area who can hear any complaints/concerns and provide a course of action, and parents need to be provided with this information when enrolling their children/ren.

Bullying by any of the staff at a childcare centre should not occur, especially by the manager. These are children who have not the understanding, resilience or mental capability for coping or dealing with this abhorrent behaviour.

Thank you.