



213A
EDU

C01 Notification of Complaint

Thank you for submitting your notification. Below is a copy of the information provided in your notification. If there are any issues, please contact your [Regulatory Authority](#) for assistance.

Notification of Complaints

Provider

Provider Name	Stella Bella Little Stars Foundation
Provider Number	PR-40010082
Provider Approval Status	Approved

Service

Service Legal Entity Name	Stella Bella Little Stars Foundation
Service Trading Name	Stella Bella Children's Centre
Service Approval Number	SE-40008844
Service Approval Status	Approved

Complaint Details

Please select the relevant notification and provide/attach the information required	Complaints alleging that the Law has been contravened
Please supply the following information: - Complainant name and contact details	P01 P01 (AKA P01)
Please supply the following information: - Date complaint received - Copy of written complaint (or written summary) and any other relevant documentation (including correspondence, photographs, statements, etc) - Steps taken/actions planned by approved provider in response to the complaint	Complaint was received in writing today 23/9/2024 however conversations with the parent/s around this issue have been happening since around July. I will attach the actual email of the complaint but here is a summary: As you know, we have some of the most vulnerable children in the region in our care at Stella Bella Children's Centre with a variety of complex and life threatening medical conditions. We also cater to non medically fragile children in our centre and our strict policies and protocols around illness prevention are across the board for all family to protect our fragile ones. Our centre is the only place that some of our children are able to access early learning and care in the region as we have a registered nurse on staff and strictly follow well proven infection control policies that have been formulated inline with best practice medical advice. Our policies are clearly written and easy to read and provided to new parents in email and on our website. They are also explained verbally on our tours so that new parents understand clearly why we have the policies we do and the importance of adhering to them.

Submitted By: **P01** **P01**



When this parent first came for a tour I explained to her all about our unique care model and I also sent her our policies and asked her to read and sign that she understood them before applying for enrolment, which she did. She was happy to accept the policies and was complying with them from when the child started at the service late last year, until a couple of months ago when she and her new partner (who does some drop offs and picks ups) decided that they no longer wish to follow the mask wearing rule.

They started refusing to wear them at the door and also they had some new relatives start doing some drop offs and pick ups and they also made a big fuss at the door and were refusing to wear masks when kindly asked to by our educators.

I have spoken to P01 and to the man that has only recently been introduced to us as the child's father, P01 (He is not listed as a parent or guardian on the enrolment forms and only as a friend approved to pick up). I have had lengthy conversations with P01 and P01 about the importance of the policy and of our need to adhere to it both for the safety of our fragile little clients and also the fact that our policies are required to be followed under the national laws and regs. I had a long conversation with P01 on the phone on August 13th around the masks and why we use them and he stated that he thought it was a 'stupid' policy and that it was useless and that it wasn't true that it helps to prevent illness transmission. He told me that he and his partner P01 were fighting a lot about the masks as he didn't want to support our policy and would be happy to move the child to another centre but that her mum felt that she was happy in our care and didn't want to move her.

I explained that I totally understood that our policies may not suit their family anymore and that I would support them to move her if that would suit them all better as a family. I was calm and friendly and explained yet again that the children in our centre with chronic medical conditions don't have any other choices around where they can access education and care and that I can't bend the policies that protect them just because he doesn't want to wear a mask for a couple of minutes a day and that he should have a good open chat to P01 and make a decision that best suits their family. He seemed to understand a bit better after that call and they were wearing the masks for a few weeks until last week when they stopped again.

In the meantime P01 started asking other parents at the door if they agreed that the masks were a bad idea and we were informed about this by a parent who was a bit annoyed about being approached about it as his wife has a chronic medical condition and they chose our centre because of our policies around illness prevention. P01 called me on Sept 10th to ask about having a meeting with me and I said I was happy to. After a discussion with my 2IC around the conversations that had been witnessed outside the door, I called her back and asked if she would like me to include the team leader from her daughters room in the meeting if it was to discuss her daughters care and she said no that it wasn't about her daughter. I then asked her if it was about me removing the mask policy because I wanted to let her know that I won't be able to do that so I wanted to be upfront about that. She said it was but that she still wanted to meet so I then sent her a few options of times so that she could have that chance to chat with me about it again. She said she would respond that night but she didn't and I contacted her again on Sept 13th to confirm the meeting and she said she was going to send an email instead. As you will see in the email, she states that she wasn't given a fair opportunity to discuss our mask policy and her feelings around it and in fact, she was, on many occasions as was her partner P01.

After receiving the letter today, I contacted one of my senior board members to discuss the matter and to make a plan to respond appropriately. I advised my team to not mention the masks at the door



with this family as we don't want any more volatility around the child or any other children. I also contacted the ACT Children and Young People Commissioner who has referred my letter to the most appropriate member of the commission to advise me on the rights of the children in our care and on what to include in my response to P01. This situation has been causing stress to the team already for a few weeks now and has caused some unrest among the other parents and I would like to resolve it as quickly and calmly as possible to prevent any extra stress for all involved.

I have already reviewed the Human Rights stance on mask wearing and exemptions and as you will see attached there is strong evidence that would support our stance in protecting our very vulnerable children by enforcing this policy. I will keep in touch regarding this matter and hopefully it will resolve quickly.

Also I would like to add that at no time since October 2023 until now has P01 or P01 or any of the extended family listed for pickup and drop offs let us know that they any or all of them have a medical condition or disability that impacts their ability to wear a mask.

Please upload any relevant documentation

Letter from P01.pdf	Email from P01
letter re policies before enrolment.pdf	letter re policies pre enrolment
P01 P01 enrolment form.pdf	enrolment form with acknowledgement of policies

Child Details

Child's Name	P01 P01
Child's Gender	Female
Child's Date of Birth	P02

Contact Details

Name	P01 P01
Phone Number	P03
Email Address	P01