FORMAL COMPLAINT

Public copy - names, personal contact information, and identifying details redacted for privacy.

Programmes et Services - Programs and Services

Details

Subject: Formal Complaint Regarding the Conduct of a Staff Member Toward a Child

Dear Camp Director,

I am writing to file a formal complaint regarding the conduct of a staff member toward my child. Based on the child's account and my follow-up discussion with the staff member, I have serious concerns regarding professional conduct, respect for student boundaries, and the handling of these incidents.

Incident 1 - Classroom Confrontation

According to the child, he had finished his work and was preparing to get his lunch when the staff member suddenly began yelling at him in front of the class, saying, "No, you won't do this to me."

Feeling uncomfortable with how he was being spoken to, the child put his lunch back. The staff member instructed him to sit at a table, then took him out of the classroom and continued yelling at him.

The child repeatedly asked the staff member to give him space, but those requests were ignored. He described the staff member standing approximately one finger's width from his face while yelling. The child also asked that his father be called, but this request was refused.

Incident 2 - VR Activity

While wearing a VR headset and fully immersed in a classroom activity, the staff member intentionally startled the child. At first, the child believed it was part of the VR experience, but then realized it was the staff member. The child told him, "Leave me alone."

Despite this, the staff member repeated the behaviour. This occurred in front of the class, and the other students laughed at the child. Rather than stopping, the staff member continued the behaviour a third time by again coming directly into the child's face. The child then stated that the staff member's breath smelled. The staff member reportedly replied that he was "testing" the child.

Follow-up Discussion

When I later discussed the incident with the staff member, he told me that he was offended because the child said his breath smelled and stated that the child has "anger issues."

According to the child, he was not attempting to insult or provoke the staff member. He simply stated what he actually smelled after the staff member repeatedly entered his personal space despite being asked several times to stop.

I responded that if the child reported smelling his breath, then perhaps his breath did smell. The staff member stated that he was offended by my comment and then told me, "You can pick up your kids and leave. You are not welcome at my camp."

I am concerned that the discussion shifted to the child's comment instead of addressing the conduct that led to it. Any child can become frustrated when their personal boundaries are repeatedly ignored. The

responsibility of an educator is to de-escalate situations, respect student boundaries, and model appropriate behaviour, even if they feel personally criticized.

Request

I respectfully request that these incidents be investigated, that the students and staff who witnessed them be interviewed, and that the staff member's account be reviewed. I would also appreciate a written response outlining your findings and any steps that will be taken as a result of the investigation.

My expectation is that every child is treated with dignity and respect. Yelling at a child at extremely close range, ignoring repeated requests for personal space, refusing a request to contact a parent, repeatedly startling a child after being asked to stop, and responding to a parent's concerns by saying, "You can pick up your kids and leave. You are not welcome at my camp," are behaviours that I believe warrant careful review.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your written response.

Sincerely,

[Parent name and identifying details redacted for privacy]

Public copy - personal names redacted for privacy.

SAVOIR APPRENDRE

63 Glencoe Drive, Unit 101, Ottawa, Ontario

August 4, 2026

Bonjour Parent and family,

Re: Formal Complaint Regarding the Conduct of a Staff Member Toward the Child: Findings and End of Services

Thank you for putting your concerns about the staff member in writing. Any concern about how a staff member treats a student is taken seriously here, and I want you to know that a full review was done before this letter was written, including speaking directly with the staff member and with another staff member and the VR staff member who were present for these moments.

I also want to say, honestly, that this hasn't been an easy situation for anyone, including the child. What follows is what our review found, told as plainly and fairly as I can.

July 14: the countdown and lunch

Our mornings run on a routine the camp has used for years: a verbal countdown before we transition to lunch or a new activity, so the whole group can wind down together. That morning, no countdown had been given yet, and the child was the only child who got up for lunch. When he was asked to finish his work first, he insisted the staff member had told him it was time to eat. The staff member calmly repeated, more than once, that he hadn't said that. The child grew more and more upset, raised his fists, and stepped toward the staff member in front of the class. He was asked to sit down and was later brought out of the room once his behaviour began to feel unsafe for the other children, several of whom were frightened.

Out in the hallway, he balled his fists and moved toward the staff member a second time. It took real time and another staff member's help to calm him down. In that calmer moment, the child opened up: he talked about being asked to leave his previous school, about feeling like adults never listen to him, and said that when he gets like that, he sometimes says things he doesn't remember afterward. He also told the other staff member, quietly, that he hadn't actually heard the countdown, and that apologizing felt too hard after lying in front of everyone.

We want to be clear that we heard him. His history matters to us, and it shaped how patiently our staff handled that morning. But it doesn't change what has to happen when a child raises his fists at an adult in front of a room full of children.

This was discussed with you and with the child's father the same day, and with his mother the next morning. The staff member gently suggested that some outside support might help the child with moments like this. This incident was recorded as his official first warning under our camp's Terms and Conditions. We never received any written follow-up from either parent about it.

July 28: the basketball game

During an arcade basketball game, a dispute over game balls left the child feeling he'd been treated unfairly. He got frustrated and hit another student. He was taken out of the activity, given time to settle, and was welcomed back into group play once he was calm. This was shared with his mother at pickup, along with a reminder that it couldn't happen again.

July 31: the VR activity

The staff member and the VR staff were moving around the room in a playful robot voice, checking in on the kids and helping with headsets, something the whole group, the child included, was laughing along with as it started. A little later, while the child was fully immersed in his headset, the staff member was actually speaking to a different student nearby. The child, startled, thought he was being addressed and asked him to stop. The staff member apologized for the mix-up.

A few minutes after that, while the staff member and the VR staff member were helping another child whose headset wasn't working, the staff member was again using the robot voice, this time with the child standing right next to him. The child, startled again, told him to stop and added that his breath smelled. The VR staff member present can confirm the staff member was not addressing the child at that moment.

Today, August 4

This afternoon, while the group was at the park for outdoor activity time, you came to pick up your children and spoke with the staff member there about what the child had told you regarding the outing, that he'd asked the staff member to stop three times and hadn't been heard. The staff member tried to walk you through the fuller picture, including what was actually happening in that moment, but found himself repeatedly cut off. When he mentioned, gently, that the child had commented on his breath even though he hadn't been the one speaking to him, you responded, word for word, that maybe his mouth did stink. The staff member asked you to pick up your children and leave for the day.

I want to be clear on one point: the staff member was not offended by the child's comment about his breath. What caught him off guard was your own comment, made in the same condescending and flippant tone, coming from an adult in that exchange.

I want to be honest with you: that exchange, on top of everything before it, is where this reaches its limit for us.

Where this leaves us

Every family and every staff member at Savoir Apprendre deserves to be treated with respect. That's not a slogan for us; it's the first thing we ask of everyone who walks through our door. Across three documented incidents, including an official first warning, we've made real efforts to stay patient, to listen to the child, and to work with your family, and we have never once received a written follow-up from either parent acknowledging any of these incidents or engaging with next steps.

Today's exchange, where a comment from the staff member was met with a personal insult rather than a conversation, is not something we can accept from a parent toward a staff member, regardless of how the underlying disagreement started. In accordance with Article 6 (Behaviour and Discipline) and Article 7 (Respect for Staff) of our camp's Terms and Conditions, we are ending your family's enrollment at Savoir Apprendre, effective today. As outlined in our Terms and Conditions, camp fees are non-refundable.

This isn't a decision we're making lightly, and it isn't a judgment on the child as a child. He showed real moments of honesty and self-awareness with our staff, even when he was struggling, and that says something good about him. We simply aren't the right fit for what he needs right now, and we hope you're able to find him support, the kind the staff member gently suggested more than once, that helps him going forward.

We wish your family well.

Sincerely,

[Director name redacted for privacy]

Director, Savoir Apprendre

Public copy - personal names and contact information redacted for privacy.

Re: Summer Camp 2026 - Re: Formal Complaint Regarding the Conduct of a Staff Member Toward the Child

From: [Parent name and email redacted]

To: contact@savoirapprendre.com

Date: Wednesday, August 5, 2026 at 06:17 AM EDT

Dear Camp Director,

Thank you for taking the time to respond to my husband complaint and for explaining the camp's decision.

While I respectfully disagree with many of the findings in your letter, I understand that Savoir Apprendre has decided to end our family's enrollment. At this point, I am not writing to ask that this decision be reversed.

Instead, I am asking that you reconsider the decision to deny a refund for the remaining camp fees.

Our complaint was made in good faith because we genuinely believed my son had been treated in a way that warranted attention. As a parent, my husband have a responsibility to raise concerns when I believe my child has been treated inappropriately. Our intention was never to insult or attack your staff, but to seek an explanation and ensure that my husband concerns were properly investigated.

Although we clearly disagree about what occurred, I do not believe that a parent should lose the remaining camp fees simply because they brought forward a complaint they sincerely believed to be valid.

I recognize that emotions were high during the discussion on August 4. If any of my husband words were perceived as disrespectful, I regret that the conversation reached that point. However, my husband frustration came from his concern for my son and not from any desire to demean the staff member or anyone else.

Given that our family can no longer use the services we paid for, I respectfully ask that Savoir Apprendre reconsider its position on the remaining camp fees as a gesture of fairness and goodwill.

I hope you will give this request careful consideration. Thank you for your time and for reviewing it.

Sincerely,

[Parent name redacted for privacy]

Public copy - personal names redacted for privacy.

SAVOIR APPRENDRE

63 Glencoe Drive, Unit 101, Ottawa, Ontario

August 5, 2026

Dear Parent,

Thank you for your message, and for the respectful way you've approached this conversation. I want to respond to it just as directly.

I want to be clear that raising a concern about your son's experience was never the issue. Any parent who believes their child has been treated unfairly has every right to bring that forward, and we take those concerns seriously, as we did here. That part was never in question, and it isn't why enrollment ended.

What led to that decision was the exchange at the park on August 4. I understand emotions were high, and I don't doubt your husband's concern for the child was genuine. But the comment made to the staff member in that moment went beyond frustration. It was a personal remark, delivered in a dismissive tone, directed at someone caring for your children. That is a different thing from disagreeing with our findings or feeling unheard, and it's the reason this reached its limit for us.

I understand that from where you're sitting, the fees feel disconnected from that exchange, since they cover a program you're no longer able to use. But our Terms and Conditions, which were accepted at registration, are clear that camp fees are non-refundable, and that applies regardless of the reason services end. We aren't able to make an exception here.

I recognize this isn't the answer you were hoping for. I do want to say, genuinely, that I hope things go well for your family, and for the child in particular. He showed real moments of honesty with our staff even in difficult moments, and that will serve him well.

Sincerely,

[Director name redacted for privacy]

Director, Savoir Apprendre

Public copy - personal names and identifying details redacted for privacy.

Response to August 4 Findings

Dear Camp Director,

I am writing in response to the August 4 findings issued by Savoir Apprendre. After further discussion with the child, several material statements in those findings differ from his account and from information communicated directly to me.

The purpose of this correspondence is to ensure that the written record accurately reflects the disputed facts and that the conduct of each person involved is evaluated independently on its own merits.

Review Process

Your letter states that a "full review was done," including speaking with the staff member, another staff member, and the VR staff member.

Our complaint was submitted near the end of the day, and the findings were provided the following morning. To our knowledge, the child was not asked for his account in response to our complaint before those findings were finalized.

Please identify what steps were taken specifically in response to our complaint before the findings were issued and how the child's perspective was considered if he was not asked for his account at that stage.

July 14 - Lunch Incident

Your letter states that the staff member "calmly repeated" his instructions. According to the child, when he got up to retrieve his lunch bag, the staff member began yelling, "No, you are not doing this to me," raised his voice further as the interaction continued, and told him to sit down.

Your letter also states that the child "raised his fists and stepped toward the staff member" in front of the class. The child denies raising his fists and states that his hands remained in his pockets. Regarding whether he stepped forward, the child does not specifically recall doing so and acknowledges that he may have. He therefore cannot confirm or dispute that part of the account.

The child states that, in the hallway, the staff member subsequently moved within inches of his face while yelling. According to the child, he repeatedly asked for space and also asked for his father to be called. He states that neither request was granted.

The following day, the staff member personally described his response to the child stepping forward by telling me: "You take my space, I'll take yours."

Your letter further states that the child's behaviour became unsafe for the other children and that several children were frightened. The child states that the children were reacting to the staff member yelling. His younger brother cried and subsequently told us that he did not want to return the following day because he did not want to hear the staff member yelling again.

Please identify the evidence supporting the findings that the child raised his fists and that his behaviour presented a safety concern to the other children.

We addressed the child's behaviour at home and told him that his response when upset was not appropriate. We are not excusing his behaviour. However, his behaviour and the adult's response must be evaluated separately.

The child is still learning how to regulate his emotions and handle conflict. An adult working with children should reasonably be expected to demonstrate greater patience, judgment, and restraint.

We have taken responsibility for addressing the child's behaviour. I am asking Savoir Apprendre to apply the same level of scrutiny to the staff member's behaviour.

"Official First Warning"

Your letter states that July 14 "was recorded as his official first warning under our camp's Terms and Conditions" and also emphasizes that no written follow-up was received from either parent.

We were not provided with a written warning or incident report identifying July 14 as an official warning, nor were we asked to provide a written response.

Please provide the contemporaneous record showing when the incident was formally recorded as an official warning and whether written notice was provided to either parent.

Please also explain why the absence of a written response from us was considered significant when no written warning or request for a written response was provided to us.

July 31 - VR Incident

The accounts differ regarding the precise sequence of the VR interaction. Those differences do not resolve the underlying issue.

The relevant question is whether it was appropriate for staff to approach children immersed in VR headsets in a manner that startled them.

During our August 4 discussion, the staff member referred to children laughing as an explanation for the interaction. Children laughing at an interaction does not, by itself, make the conduct appropriate.

Please clarify whether Savoir Apprendre considers this type of interaction with children immersed in VR appropriate.

August 4 - Park Discussion and Termination

Your letter states that the staff member "was not offended" by the child's comment about his breath. That differs from what the staff member communicated directly to me. During our discussion, he told me that he was offended by what the child had said.

I responded that perhaps his breath did smell. My response was direct and was intended to explain the child's perspective based on what he had reported to me.

The staff member is entitled to disagree with my wording or find it offensive. I do not agree that this comment warranted ending our family's relationship with Savoir Apprendre. Characterizing my comment as disrespectful also does not resolve the underlying concerns regarding his interaction with the child.

Because Savoir Apprendre subsequently refused further service to our family and retained payment for services that were not provided, please provide the policy, Terms and Conditions, cancellation/refund policy, or other basis relied upon for that decision, together with the specific conduct Savoir Apprendre determined justified it.

Requested Response

I am asking Savoir Apprendre to provide a written response addressing the following:

1. For each disputed factual finding identified above, please provide the evidence or information relied upon in reaching that finding, including whose account supports it and any contemporaneous documentation relied upon.

2. Please identify the steps taken specifically in response to our complaint before the written findings were issued, including whether the child was asked for his account at that stage.
3. Please clarify the roles of the individuals involved in the review process, including their relationship to the staff member whose conduct was the subject of our complaint, and their involvement in reviewing the concerns raised, reaching the findings, and making the decision regarding our family's enrollment.
4. Please provide the contemporaneous documentation showing when the July 14 incident was recorded as the child's "official first warning" and confirm whether that warning was provided to either parent.
5. Please explain whether the concerns raised regarding the staff member's conduct on July 14 and July 31 were independently considered and what conclusion was reached.
6. Please provide the Terms and Conditions, cancellation/refund policy, or other basis relied upon for refusing further service to our family and retaining payment for services that were not provided.

The factual discrepancies identified above require clarification.

We have taken responsibility for addressing the child's behaviour. I am asking Savoir Apprendre to apply the same level of scrutiny to the staff member's behaviour and to provide the basis and documentation supporting the decisions made regarding our family.

I would appreciate a written response addressing the six points above individually.

Sincerely,

[Parent name redacted for privacy]