

# Family Support and Child Protection



## Statutory Complaints, Compliments & Representations

**Annual Report  
2016/2017**

## **Contents**

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>2. Children Act Complaints (Statutory Complaints)</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>3. Compliments</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>4. Alternative Dispute Resolution</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>5. Complaints Registered</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>6. Service Improvement</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>7. Diversity Monitoring</b>	<b>Page 20</b>
<b>8. Future Development</b>	<b>Page 21</b>

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides information on Compliments, Representations and Complaints received by Kirklees Directorate for Children and Adults Service between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.
- 1.2 The Council operates three separate complaints procedures:
- Complaints about Children's Social Care services are subject to statutory regulations under the Children Act 1989.
  - Schools have a duty under the Education Act 2002 to have their own complaints procedure and the Local Authority continues to provide information and guidance to parents, pupils, school leaders and Governors in order to promote resolution of complaints about schools.
  - Other complaints which do not fall into the aforementioned are processed under the corporate complaints procedure.
- 1.3 This report provides information on the Statutory Complaints Procedure and compliments received by Family Support and Child Protection.

## **2. Children Act Complaints (Statutory Complaints)**

### **2.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

This report provides information about compliments and complaints under the Children Act 1989 complaints procedures for children, young people and their carers. The report relates to complaints received during the twelve months between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017.

Under the Children Act 1989 the provision of an Annual Report is a statutory requirement.

### **2.2 STAGES OF THE PROCEDURE**

The Complaints Unit plays an active role in seeking early resolution by advising the service and the complainants. The majority of complaints were resolved by this approach without being registered as a formal complaint under the statutory complaints procedure.

The statutory complaints procedure has three stages.

**Stage One.** This is the most important stage of the complaints procedure. Children Social Care Service teams and Independent Providers providing services on the Council's behalf are expected to resolve complaints at this initial point.

The Council's complaints procedure requires complaints at Stage One to be responded to within 10 working days (with an automatic extension to a further ten days where necessary).

**Stage Two.** This stage is usually implemented where the complainant is dissatisfied with the findings of Stage One. Stage Two is an investigation usually conducted by an Investigating Officer with an Independent Person. An Independent Person must be appointed to the investigation (regulation 17(2)). The Independent Person should be in addition to the Investigating Officer and they must be involved in all aspects of consideration of the complaint, including any discussions about the action to be taken in relation to the child.

The Manager responsible for the service complained about adjudicates on the findings.

Stage Two complaints falling within the Children Social Care Service statutory complaints procedures should be dealt with in 25 days, although in certain cases this can be extended to 65 days.

**Stage Three.** The third stage of the complaints process is the Review Panel. Where complainants, who are not satisfied with the response at Stage Two, wish to proceed with complaints about Children Social Care Service functions, the Council is required to establish a Complaints Review Panel. The Panel makes recommendations to the Assistant/Director of the service who then makes a decision on the complaint and any action to be taken. Complaints Review Panels are made up of three independent panellists.

There are various timescales relating to Stage 3 complaints. These include:

- setting up the Panel within 30 days
- producing the Panel's report within a further 5 days
- producing the Local Authority's response within 15 days.

A further option for complainants is the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) who is empowered to investigate where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint. Complainants can refer their complaint to the LGO at any time, although the Ombudsman normally refers the complaint back to the Council if it has not been considered under the Council's procedure first.

## 2.3 ACCESSIBILITY OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- **Complaints Leaflets** – Child friendly leaflets are distributed to all residential homes. All children are given a copy of the complaints leaflet at assessment and/or reviews.
- **Community Languages leaflets** - these are available in Chinese, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu and Polish. In addition the Complaints Manager speaks three languages.
- **Internet** – The complaints procedure is available on the Kirklees website.
- **Pledge** – Children and young people can access the complaints procedure through the internet using the pledge link:  
<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/young-people/in-care-in-kirklees/our-pledge.aspx>
- **Children Rights Service** - this service advocates on behalf of a young person to access the complaints procedure. All children and young people who make a complaint are informed of this service.
- **Visually impaired** – The complaints procedure is available in braille, CD, video and large print.

### 3. STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF COMPLIMENTS RECEIVED FROM 1 APRIL 2016 TO 31 MARCH 2017.

#### Compliments by Service

Service Area	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Disabled Children's Service	6	5	3	1	0
Assessment and Intervention	2	6	2	4	15
Children's Residential	17	7	3	9	2
Children & Disability Residential	5	8	8	2	2
Fostering/Placements	2	4	7	9	11
Looked After and Care Leavers	1	3	5	2	12
Youth Offending Team	0	0	1	0	2
Children's Rights	5	3	2	6	1
Family Support / Early Help	0	0	2	0	0
Contact team	1	2	0	0	0
Adaptions Team	0	1	0	3	0
Child Protection & Review	0	2	0	1	2
Emergency Duty Team	0	1	0	0	0
Integrated Youth Support	0	1	16	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>49</b>

In this reporting period, **49** compliments were recorded by the Complaints Unit.

It remains impossible to determine the number of compliments received about the service accurately because most compliments are received directly by front line staff and managers and they do not always record and inform the Complaints Unit for registration. The Complaints Unit encourages as many managers as possible to pass on compliments so that they can be recorded centrally and the service can learn from the views and experiences of service users and carers.

7 Compliments were received directly from young people about Residential Care, Looked After Children and Fostering service.

#### Examples of compliments received:

- A young person complimented staff at the children's home and said 'I would like to say a massive thank you to ALL of the staff for making the best place environment for us. I really appreciate all the hard work. However, I still think I should become a member of staff here!'
- Management received a compliment about the social worker who worked on a complex case where several Local Authorities had been involved. Her work was described by the person making the compliment as; very high quality; the social work assessment was carefully analysed and concluded with a well devised care

plan for rehabilitation. Despite, the challenge of lack of cooperation from the family members.

#### 4. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The Complaints Unit played a key role in mediating between the complainant and the service. It is in the complainants and the service best interest to try and resolve complaints as close to the root as possible. This approach helps to improve the relationship between the complainant and the service.

It is acknowledged that early intervention may resolve issues raised by the complainants without the complainant feeling the need to resort to the formal complaints process.

88 representations were dealt with during 2016/17 through Complaints Unit Intervention. This is when the Complaints Unit agreed with the person raising the concerns/complaints that the informal resolution was appropriate without denying the complainant's right to use the complaints procedure, if dissatisfied with the response.

Below is a breakdown of the outcomes as a result of Complaints Unit Intervention:

<b>Outcome of Complaints Unit Intervention</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Service Resolved Informal Complaint	55	19	30	7	8
Legal Proceedings Ongoing/Risk Insurance	2	8	1	11	7
Complainant does not qualify due to confidentiality	3	2	2	0	1
No further contact from complainant	3	0	1	1	1
Complaint not resolved	0	1	0	1	2
Referred to LGO	0	0	0	0	1
Complainant/service advised response satisfactory	0	34	41	72	44
Complaint withdrawn	1	1	0	1	2
CIlr or MP enquires	0	11	2	6	17
Referred to Service	0	10	3	4	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>88</b>

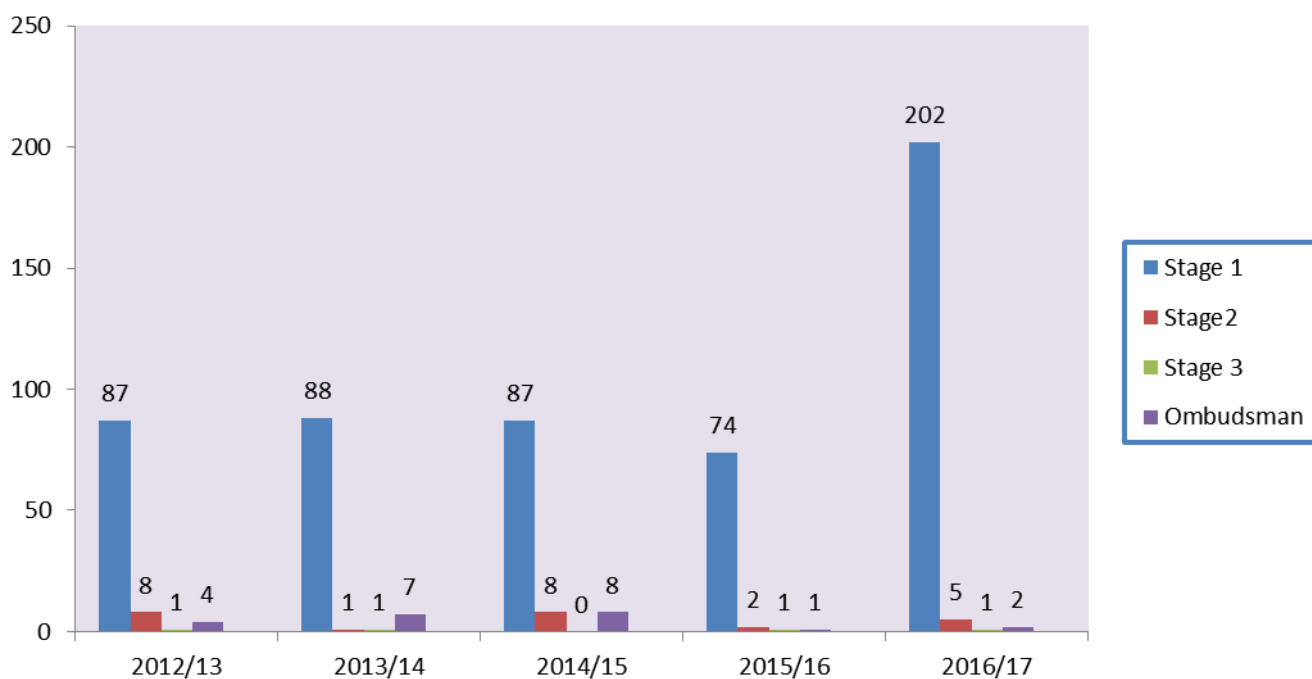
The number of complainants satisfied without recourse to the complaints procedure has reduced slightly. The Complaints Manager believes that this is because complainants are more determined to use the complaints procedure rather than informal resolution. The approach to resolving complaints as close to the root as possible is effective and in the best interest of both complainant and service.

## 5. STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED FROM 1 APRIL 2016 TO 31 MARCH 2017

### 5.1 STAGE ONE ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS

Below shows the number of people who made complaints and enquiries through the various stages of the statutory Childrens Act Complaints Services procedure over the last 5 years:

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Stage One</b>	87	88	87	74	202
<b>Stage Two</b>	8	1	8	2	5
<b>Stage Three</b>	1	1	0	1	1
<b>Ombudsman</b>	4	7	8	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>210</b>





This report will provide information for 2016/17. In 2016/17 there were **202** complainants whose complaints were registered at Stage One. There is a significant increase in complaints compared to the previous year. This may be due to the impact of the publication of the Ofsted report.

The Complaints Unit continues to be successful in consistently encouraging the service to resolve the complaint as close to the root as possible to the complainants satisfaction.

It can be noted from the table below that most of the preferred methods of initial contact with the Complaints Unit by service users and carers was either telephone, email or use the complaints leaflet.

**Complaints - The overall preferred methods of contact are shown below:**

<b>Methods of contact</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Leaflets	16	16	20	23	32
In Person	4	9	7	1	1
Letter	16	13	12	8	18
Email	12	19	24	12	58
Telephone	34	25	20	22	76
Via the Ombudsman	0	0	0	0	0
Internet: 'Smile' database	4	6	4	8	13
Other	1	0	0	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>202</b>

Majority of the Formal Stage One complaints in the table below are from parents or young people directly. This demonstrates that young people are aware of and have access to the complaints procedure and are voice their concerns.

**Complaints – How Involved (relationship with child).**

<b>Complainant – How Involved</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Parent	47	47	30	35	114
Young Person	20	22	36	30	53
Relative	16	10	12	6	24
Foster Carer	0	4	8	2	10
Other Person	4	5	0	1	1
Solicitors	0	0	0	0	0
Ex-service user	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>202</b>

## Complaints received by Service Area

Below is a breakdown of complaints by service area.

Most of the complaints received are about; Assessment and Intervention; Looked After and Care leavers.

Out of the 53 young people that complained 26 complained about Looked After and Care Leavers service; 17 young people complained about Residential Care ; 8 about Assessment and Intervention; 2 about the Fostering/ Placement .

This demonstrates that the services encourage young people to use the complaints and compliments procedures and work effectively in line with safeguarding principles to ensure that children have a voice and have a say about the quality of care they are receiving.

Service Area	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Assessment and Intervention	54*	45*	28*	24*	101*
Disabled Children's Service	3	26	4	6	12*
Children Residential	11	10*	18*	16*	20
Children & Disability Residential	0	0	0	0	2
Fostering/ Placement	3	8*	5	4	12*
Looked After and Care Leavers	14	20*	31*	21*	51*
Family Support /Early Help	1	1	1	1	9*
Child Protection & Review	2*	6*	1	5*	2*
Contact Centre	2	1	1	2	0
Emergency Duty Team	0	0	0	0	1
Integrated Youth Support	0	0	0	0	1
Other	0	0	1	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>212</b>

\*Eight Complainants, complained about more than one service. The services that they complained about were: Assessment and Intervention; Disabled Children Service; Fostering/ Placement; Child Protection & Review. Looked After and Care Leavers.

## Outcome of Complaints

### Outcome of Stage One Complaints

There were 202 complainants who had complaints registered at Stage One. Each complainant raised more than one issue.

Below is a breakdown of the outcome of Stage One complaints received. It can be noted that of the completed investigations, largest number were consistently not agreed.

### Analysis of Stage One issues

Outcome	2012/13	2013/2014	2014/15	2016/16	2016/17
Not Agreed	96	88	91	56	178
Partially Agreed	34	26	7	29	95
Agreed	39	26	35	17	106
<b>Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>379</b>

Below is a breakdown of the types of issues/complaints made by the complainants at Stage One

	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
Issue	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Delay in Provision	4	1	0	4	8
Failure to consult/communicate	34	14	21	23	115
Welfare Issue	10	7	6	5	31
Inappropriate Management	3	9	4	1	4
Inaccurate Decision Making	5	1	11	6	33
Issues relating to Staff	49	56	43	24	61
Bullying by Service User	3	2	4	2	9
Service Provision/Assess	9	17	15	15	32
Provision/accuracy of Information	31	16	16	6	27
Financial Problems	5	9	6	4	14
Contact Arrangements	0	0	0	5	25
Other	16	8	7	7	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>379</b>

There were a total of 379 issues raised by complainants at Stage One. Most of the issues related to failure to consult or communicate effectively.

Below shows the outcomes of complaints that were partially agreed, agreed or not agreed at Stage One:

### **Partially Agreed**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Issues</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Delay in Provision	1	0	0	0	3
Failure to consult/communicate	13	3	1	13	49
Welfare Issue	1	0	1	0	5
Inappropriate Management	1	0	0	0	2
Inaccurate Decision Making	1	0	0	0	4
Issues relating to Staff	5	10	2	5	11
Bullying by Service User	0	0	0	0	1
Service Provision	5	2	1	2	3
Provision/accuracy of Information	3	5	1	1	3
Financial Problems	0	3	0	0	4
Contact arrangements	0	0	0	3	6
Other	4	3	1	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>95</b>

### **Agreed**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Issue</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Delay in Provision	3	1	0	4	0
Failure to consult/communicate	5	3	4	1	22
Welfare Issue	1	0	1	1	12
Inappropriate Management	0	1	0	1	2
Inaccurate Decision Making	0	1	1	0	6
Issues relating to Staff	12	5	10	3	13
Bullying by Service User	2	2	4	2	8
Service Provision /Assess	0	4	5	1	23
Provision/accuracy of Information	10	5	4	2	9
Financial Problems	2	1	3	0	1
Contact Arrangements	0	0	0	1	3
Other	4	3	3	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>106</b>

## **Not Agreed**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Issue</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Delay in Provision	0	0	0	0	5
Failure to consult/communicate	16	8	16	9	44
Welfare Issue	8	7	4	4	14
Inappropriate Management	2	8	4	0	0
Inaccurate Decision Making	4	0	10	6	23
Issues relating to Staff	32	41	31	16	37
Bullying by Service User	1	0	0	0	0
Service Provision	4	11	9	12	6
Provision/accuracy of Information	18	6	11	3	15
Financial Problems	3	5	3	4	9
Contact Arrangements	0	0	0	1	16
Other	8	2	3	1	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>178</b>

## **5.2 STAGE TWO ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS**

Prior to complaints being considered at Stage Two the Complaints Unit explored with the complainant and the service all reasonable options of resolution. Where this is not feasible, the complaints are registered at Stage Two.

In 2010/11, 7 complainants out of 55 registered at Stage One proceeded to Stage Two – formal investigation.

In 2011/12, 9 complainants out of 97 registered at Stage One proceeded to Stage Two – formal investigation.

In 2012/13 \*8 complainants out of 87 registered at Stage One proceeded to Stage Two – formal investigation.

In 2013/14, only 1 complainant out of 88 registered at Stage One proceeded to Stage Two – formal investigation.

In 2014/15, 8 complainants out of 87 registered at Stage One proceeded to Stage Two formal investigation.

In 2015/16, 2 complainants out of 74 registered at Stage One proceeded to Stage Two – formal investigation.

In 2016/17, 5 complainants out of 202 registered at Stage One proceeded to Stage Two – formal investigation.

Below is a breakdown of the Stage Two complaint by service area:

Service Area	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Disabled Children's Service	*1	0	*1	0	0
Assessment and Intervention	*2	0	2	*2	0
Duty and Assessment	4	0	*1	*2	1*
Children's Residential	0	0	0	0	0
Child Protection & Review	0	*1	1	0	1
Fostering/Placements	1	*1	0	0	3*
Looked After and Care Leavers	0	*1	3	0	1
Youth Offending Team	0	0	0	0	0
Children's Rights	0	0	0	0	0
Family Support/ Early Help	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>

\* Complainant made complaints about more than one service.

There were 5 complaints registered at Stage 2. Each of the complainants raised more than one issue. The outcome of the issues can only be recorded after the investigation and response have been concluded at Stage two. The following table shows the types of issues and the outcome of the complaints on conclusion.

Issues	Partially Agreed	Agreed	Not Agreed
Decision Making	0	0	1
Inaccurate/Failure to provide General Information	1	5	1
Issues Relating to Staff	0	0	1
Welfare Issue	0	0	0
Financial problems	1	0	0
Failure to Consult/Listen	0	1	1
Inappropriate Management	0	0	0
Contact Arrangements	1	0	0
Delays/Quality in Service Provision	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>

There are a total of 11 issues which were partially and fully agreed and 5 issues not agreed.

### 5.3 STAGE 3 COMPLAINTS – REVIEW PANEL HEARINGS

Complainants who are not satisfied with the stage two responses have a right to have their complaints considered by three independent people who form the Stage Three Panel.

Prior to complaints being considered at Panel the Complaints Unit explored with the complainant and the service all reasonable options of resolution. All complainants were satisfied with the stage two responses. There was only **one complainant** who was dissatisfied with the Stage Two response and preceded to Stage Three.

The complaint mainly related to: disclosure of information and information not shared appropriately; poor communication.

## 5.4 OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS AND ENQUIRIES:

Complainants have the right to refer their complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman at any time. The Ombudsman will decide whether or not to investigate for maladministration. The meanings of the terminology used by the Ombudsman when terminating complaints are given below:

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Definition</b>
'preliminary' or 'informal' enquiries	Requesting basic information in the preliminary stages.
investigation discontinued – injustice remedied	Investigation stopped without any recommendations, because the Local Authority may have put things right. .
Not to initiate an investigation	No or insufficient evidence to suggest an investigation is appropriate.
Outside Jurisdiction	The issue is not one the Ombudsman can deal with.
Investigation complete, satisfied with authority's actions, not appropriate to issue report	This is now covered under one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upheld: Maladministration and Injustice</li> <li>• Upheld: Maladministration, No Injustice</li> <li>• Not upheld: No Maladministration</li> </ul>
Investigation complete – Maladministration and injustice	Investigation completed with evidence of maladministration and injustice caused to the complainant.
Ongoing/pending	Awaiting final decision.
To discontinue investigation	Investigation has been stopped. No further action is needed as the injustice caused to Mr X by the alleged fault is not so significant that the Ombudsman would recommend a remedy.
Assessment/enquiry	Collecting basic information prior to being passed to an investigator.
Not upheld; no further action	No fault found & no further action required.
Not upheld; no maladministration	Complaint investigated, council has not acted with fault.
Closed after initial enquiries; out of jurisdiction	Early decision made not to investigate complaint. May be out of jurisdiction/cannot lawfully investigate/inappropriate to investigate. Early assessment may show an investigation could not achieve anything.
Upheld; maladministration & injustice	Authority found to be at fault, evidence of injustice caused to the complainant. Recommend how the organisation should put things right.

## Breakdown of Ombudsman complaints and enquiries

Outcome	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Assessment/enquiry	0	1	0	0	0
investigation discontinued – injustice remedied	0	0	0	0	0
Not to initiate an investigation	2	2	0	0	0
Closed after initial enquiries; out of jurisdiction	1	3	4	1	1
Not upheld; no maladministration	1	0	1	0	0
Upheld; maladministration & injustice	0	1	1	0	1
Ongoing/pending	0	0	0	0	0
To discontinue investigation	0	0	0	0	0
Not upheld; no further action	0	0	2	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

There was one complainant who contacted the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman decided not to investigate after making initial enquires as the complaint was outside the ombudsman jurisdiction.

The Local Government Ombudsman found maladministration in one complaint due to delays in the complaints procedure. The Children Act statutory Complaints Procedure is in place to provide complainants with a clear time bound method of complaining. We failed to follow that process in a timely manner.

## 5.5 TIMESCALE PERFORMANCE

The table below shows that all complaints were acknowledged within 3 working days.

Days Acknowledgement Letter sent within	Total	Average Days	Within 3 Working Days	After 3 Working Days
<b>2012/13</b>	87	3	87	0
<b>2013/14</b>	88	3	88	0
<b>2014/15</b>	87	3	87	0
<b>2015/16</b>	74	3	74	0
<b>2016/17</b>	202	3	202	0



Stage One responses	Total	Average Days	Within 10 Working Days	Within 20 Working Days	After 20 Working Days
<b>2012/13</b>	87	22	37	25	25
<b>2013/14</b>	88	18	41	28	19
<b>2014/15</b>	87	14.5	42	31	14
<b>2015/16</b>	74	16.4	37	25	12
<b>2016/17</b>	202	20	81	68	53

Majority of the complaints are consistently responded to within 10 working days. The complaints that take longer than 20 working days were complex and the complainant was kept informed. Some of the delays in responding were due to the service changes and change management.

Stage Two Response	Total	Average Days	Within 25 Working Days	Within 65 Working Days	After 65 Working Days
<b>2012/13</b>	8	166	1	2	5
<b>2013/14</b>	1	99	0	0	1
<b>2014/15</b>	8	67	1	3	4
<b>2015/16</b>	2	105	0	0	2
<b>2016/17</b>	5	70	1*	2*	2

\*One complaint is ongoing.

The reason why complaints investigations were not completed within 25 working days was due to the following reasons: the amount of information to be reviewed; the number of people to interview; staff unavailable during holidays and sickness; availability of the investigating officer. The complainants were notified and accepted the reasons for the delay.

The Complaints Unit monitor complaints to ensure that response times are met as far as reasonably possible and ensure complainants are kept informed.

## 5.6 COMPENSATION PAYMENTS

Under Section 92 of the Local Government Act 2000, Local Authorities are empowered to remedy any injustice arising from a complaint.

If a service user makes a complaint to the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman finds the Council guilty of maladministration, then it is open to the Ombudsman to make a recommendation that compensation be paid by the Council to the complainant.

No payment was paid out in compensation.

## 6. SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

At all stages, any lessons/findings identified through complaints are followed up by managers in staff supervision to inform individual learning and development.

The Complaints Unit monitors the implementation of recommendations made and agreed at Stage Two, Stage Three and those made by the Local Government Ombudsman.

At Stage Two the Adjudication Manager meets with the Investigating Officer, Independent Person and Complaints Manager to discuss the findings from the investigation and any lessons to be learned. An Action Plan is agreed and monitored by the Complaints Unit to ensure implementation.

At Stage Two, following formal investigation, the appointed Adjudication Manager always apologised where complaints were agreed and acted upon recommendations related to service improvement.

There were various actions and learnings to the complaints which cannot be shared in this report without identifying the complainant.

**The following are examples of learning or action taken as a result of responses to complaints through to the statutory complaints procedure:**

- Responding Managers always apologise to complainants and gave assurance that the error would not re-occur.
- Officers were reminded of the importance of visits being conducted in a timely manner and where delays are unavoidable for the family to be contacted.
- The practice of earlier oversight of family networks and a genogram to be produced at the start of any social care intervention was highlighted. This would then ensure that all had a full understanding of the family and ensure more timely decisions were made.
- The importance of minutes of meetings to be made available as promptly as possible and checked for accuracy before they are shared was emphasised.
- A Social Worker was reminded of the importance of checking the dates of meetings related to casework and the importance of attending Core Group meeting.

- A manager apologised for the disclosure of the complainant's address.
- Apologies were offered for not returning telephone calls.
- An apology was offered due to a Social Worker not visiting when an access visit should have occurred. The Social Worker was reminded of the statutory requirements of Social Workers in Kirklees Children's Services to inform the Team Manager when an access visit is missed so that arrangements can be for a Social Worker to make a further home visit within forty eight hours.
- An apology was offered because a planned visit to the family was significantly delayed.
- A manager noted that recording could be improved to avoid confusion related to the actions/recommendations made and policy/procedures implemented.
- An officer was reminded of the importance of being mindful of the interpretations of suggestions and being clear about advice being given.
- A complaint highlighted the importance of prioritising returning calls, regular communication with parents is required during the process of transferring cases.
- The responding manager apologised and agreed that changes in social workers had an adverse effect on the family.
- A young person was misadvised that she would have to leave the placement. An apology was offered.
- A complaint resulted in a need for a review of procedures for allocating adoption support services where children are considered to be in need or in need of protection is required to ensure that cases are allocated to appropriate teams to offer the best possible support to families, and that this support if provided in a timely way.
- A complaint highlighted the importance of when cases are transferred, the practice of social workers fully familiarising themselves with the case is vital and management reinforced this good practice.

## 7. DIVERSITY MONITORING

The purpose of collecting information on ethnicity, gender and disability is to be able to measure the extent to which the Complaints Procedure is reaching all service users and/or their carers.

### ETHNICITY

The ethnicity of the complainants is majority UK/European, with the next largest ethnic groups represented being Mixed White/Black Caribbean.

#### Complainants by Ethnicity

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
White/British	60	46	56	44	74
Mixed White/Asian	2	3	5	1	3
Mixed White/Black Caribbean	0	5	4	3	8
Asian/Pakistani	6	3	4	4	17
Black African	1	2	0	1	2
Not Stated	16*	26*	17*	19*	93*
Asian/Indian	1	1	1	1	0
Black Caribbean	1	2	0	1	3
White/Other	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>202</b>

\* Complainants that did not provide information on ethnicity were mainly relatives or parents.

### GENDER

#### Complainants by Gender

<b>Gender</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Female	51	51	47	41	124
Male	33	33	29	27	70
Joint eg: Mr & Mrs	3	4	11	6	8
Not Known	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>202</b>

## **8. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

The Complaints Unit is continuing to provide feedback to managers with suggested amendments, with the aim of improving the quality of response letters to complainants.

The Complaints Manager will continue to attend Team/Service Managers meetings to reinforce the importance of timely responses to complaints, discuss quality of responses and recording learning from complaints.

Formats/template for response letters have been shared with new appointed managers. This will continue.

Weekly performance reports on response times will continue to be sent senior managers with a view to improving response times.

There is no clear protocol for MP and Cllr enquires. Whilst the Complaints unit receives such enquires, a protocol needs to be agreed with senior managers with clear time scales. The Complaints Manager will draft a protocol which will be forwarded to senior management for approval.

An Independent Person has been appointed to review how the complaints procedure was implemented in a complaint that was considered by the Local Government Ombudsman and to identify and learnings.

The Complaints Unit remind managers of response dates as managers find it helpful. The impact on improving stage one response time following the introduction of weekly reports on outstanding responses to complaints to service managers will be monitored.

The Complaints Manager will continue to attend the Quality Improvement Group Meetings.

Quarterly Complaints Performance Reports will continue to be shared with the Service Managers and Learning and Organisational Development this includes examples learning from complaints.

Responding to Complaints will be part of induction for Managers.

If you would like to comment on this report, please contact:

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