

Family Support and Child Protection



Statutory Complaints, Compliments & Representations

**Annual Report
2018/2019**

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1. Introduction

1.1 This is the 2018/19 Annual Compliments, Representations and Complaints report for Kirklees Children and Young People Service. Under the Children's Act 1989, the provision of an annual complaints report is a statutory requirement.

1.2 The Council operates three separate complaints procedures:

- Complaints about Children Social Care Services (as per statutory regulations under the Children's Act 1989).
- Schools have a duty under the Education Act 2002 to have their own complaints procedure. The Council provides information and guidance to parents, pupils, school leaders and Governors in order to promote resolution of complaints about schools.
- Corporate complaints procedure – this handles complaints falling outside of the above regulations.

1.3 This report solely provides information on the Statutory Complaints Procedure

2 Childrens Act Complaints (Statutory Complaints)

2.1 The Complaints Unit plays an active role in seeking early resolution through engagement and advice to both service and the complainants.

The majority of complaints in 2018/19 were resolved by this approach, negating the need to proceed as a formal complaint.

2.2 The statutory complaints procedure has three stages.

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

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

Stage Two. This stage is generally 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 which has been complained about adjudicates on the findings.

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

Stage Three. The third stage of the complaints process is a Review Panel where complainants, who are not satisfied with a Stage Two response, can proceed to with their complaint about Children Social Care Service functions. At this stage, the Council is required to establish a Complaints Review Panel. The Panel makes recommendations to the Service Director who makes a decision regarding the complaint and any action to be taken. Complaints Review Panels are made up of three independent panelists.

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 Children's homes. Children are given a copy of the Complaints leaflet when a Children's Social Care assessment is undertaken and/or at Reviews.

Community Languages leaflets - these are available in Chinese, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu and Polish. In addition one of the Complaints Manager speaks three languages.

Internet – The Complaints procedure is available on the Kirklees Local Authority 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>

Childrens 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. The Complaints Unit have a close working relationship with the Advocacy service.

Visually impaired – The Complaints procedure is available in braille, CD, video and large print.

Links with Complaints Officers: Complaints are also received via other designated Complaints Managers from other services in the Local Authority including the Complaints Managers for Adult and Corporate Complaints.

3 Compliments

Statistical summary of compliments received from 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019.

Compliments received:

Service Area	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Disabled Children's Service	3	1	0	3	4
Assessment and Intervention	2	4	15	20	5
Children's Residential	3	9	2	2	1
Children & Disability Residential	8	2	2	4	6
Fostering/Placements	7	9	11	0	2
Looked After and Care Leavers	5	2	12	13	3
Youth Offending Team	1	0	2	0	0
Children's Rights	2	6	1	2	2
Family Support / Early Help	2	0	0	0	0
Contact team	0	0	0	0	0
Adaptions Team	0	3	0	0	0
Child Protection & Review	0	1	2	5	1
Emergency Duty Team	0	0	0	1	1
Integrated Youth Support	16	3	2	0	0
Total	49	40	49	50	25

The above table shows the number of compliments received by the service. In this reporting period, **25** compliments were recorded by the Complaints Unit. The majority of compliments received were about Children and Disability Residential. There is a reduction in the number of compliments registered compared to the previous year. However it is difficult to determine the actual number of compliments received about Children's Social Care accurately, because most compliments are received directly by front line staff and managers and these are not always forwarded for registration.

There has been a push to encourage Compliments to be forwarded for formal registration. When compliments are received by the unit they are shared with managers and can be used in the staff member's annual appraisal. Compliments can also be used to share good practice in teams.

Examples of compliments received:

- A Young Person complimented her/his independent visitor and said she/he was 'caring, making the YP laugh'.
- A compliment was received from a young person thanking a Children's Rights Officer for helping her stay with 'fantastic foster mum'
- Grandparents praised a Social Worker's work with their grandchild. They said that the Social Worker's personality, friendship (and commitment) has been positive, paced and understanding throughout. They talked about their initial fears that the Social Worker was going to look into 'difficult issues' and how these would be dealt with. However, they were put at ease, they said that the family felt listened to and supported in a structured environment. They said that 'There is nothing now 'off limits' and we can talk with and about anything with our grandchild. They said

that they 'were so pleased that as a result of the Social Workers intervention their grandchild is 'growing and developing by the day (and so are we).

4 Early resolution of Complaints:

The Complaints Unit plays a key role in mediating between Complainants and the service. It is in a Complainant's and the service's 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 Complainants without the Complainant feeling the need to resort to the formal complaints process.

155 representations were dealt with during 2018/19 through the Complaints Unit mediating or advising upon how complaints could best be resolved. This is when the Complaints Unit agreed with the person raising the concern/complaint that informal resolution was appropriate without denying the complainant's right to use the complaints procedure.

Below is a breakdown of the outcomes of the result of Early Intervention:

Outcome of Complaints Unit Intervention	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Service Resolved Informal Complaint	30	7	8	28	23
Legal Proceedings Ongoing/Risk Insurance	1	11	7	19	12
Complainant does not qualify due to confidentiality	2	0	1	5	3
No further contact from complainant	1	1	1	1	2
Complaint not resolved	0	1	2	0	1
Referred to LGO	0	0	1	0	3
Complainant/service advised response satisfactory	41	72	44	55	82
Complaint withdrawn	0	1	2	1	2
Cllr or MP enquires	2	6	17	12	3
Referred to Service	3	4	5	11	19
Not related to Social Care	0	0	0	0	2
Referred to stage one	0	0	0	0	3
Total	84	103	88	132	155

The number of complainants satisfied without recourse to the Complaints procedure has increased. This has been due to various factors, including: Senior management encouraging staff to use a Restorative Practice approach. This has influenced the approach taken by responding managers when dealing with complaints. Responding managers are keen to meet with Complainants prior to responding in writing. A Complaints Manager has mediated between the service complained about and the complainant, with the complainant's agreement. This approach has been successful in seeking a resolution and has resulted in a significant reduction of formal complaints.

5 Complaints analysis

Analysis covering the period 01 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

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:

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Stage One	87	74	202	152	85
Stage Two	8	2	5	5	5
Stage Three	0	1	1	1	2
Ombudsman	8	1	2	5	4
Total	103	78	210	163	96

In 2018/19 complaints relating to 85 complainants were registered at Stage One. This is a significant reduction in complaints compared to the previous year. This is assessed to be a result of the visibility of the Complaints Unit staff; responding managers eagerness to engage in early resolution; Complaint Manager/s playing an active role in mediating and advising on how to best seek resolution; complaints staff quality assuring responses to complaints; Monthly reporting on Complaints, Performance and Learning from Complaints.

The number of Stage 2 and Stage 3 Complaints continue to be very few and relate to Complaints where the complainant does not agree with the response from the responding manager and /or refuses to discuss his/her dissatisfaction further and wishes to exercise his/her right to proceed through the complaints procedure.

Stage 1 Complaints - Preferred methods of initial contact:

It can be noted from the table below that most of the preferred methods of initial contact with the Complaints Unit is by letter and telephone. The number of complaints received and registered by leaflets has reduced. It is understood that this is has been influenced by the fact that children have Children's Right's advocates who assist them in making complaints.

Methods of contact	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Leaflets	20	23	32	10	4
In Person	7	1	1	3	2
Letter	12	8	18	31	34
Email	24	12	58	52	13
Telephone	20	22	76	35	15
Via the Ombudsman	0	0	0	0	0
Internet.	4	8	13	19	17
Other	0	0	4	2	0
Total	87	74	202	152	85

Complaints – How Involved (relationship with child).

The majority of the Formal Stage One complaints in the table below are from young people with the support of the Children's Right's service. This demonstrates that: young people are

aware of and have access to the complaints procedure; voice their concerns with the assistance of the Childrens Act Complaints Procedure; Children’s Social Care Service commitment to the voice of the child and the value of the Children’s Right’s Service in advocating on behalf of children and young people.

Complainant – How Involved	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Parent	30	35	114	77	30
Young Person	36	30	53	50	43
Relative	12	6	24	18	8
Foster Carer	8	2	10	5	4
Other Person	0	1	1	2	0
Solicitors	0	0	0	0	1
Ex-service user	1	0	0	0	0
Total	87	74	202	152	85

Complaints received by Service Area

Below is a breakdown of complaints by service area. Most of the complaints received follow the trend, and relate to; Children Looked After and Care leavers, and Children’s Social Care Assessment and Intervention service area.

Service Area	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Assessment and Intervention	28*	24*	101*	60*	25*
Disabled Children’s Service	4	6	12*	9	6
Children Residential	18*	16*	20	6	4
Children & Disability Residential	0	0	2	1	0
Fostering/ Placement	5	4	12*	5*	4*
Looked After and Care Leavers	31*	21*	51*	68*	48*
Family Support /Early Help	1	1	9*	1	1
Child Protection & Review	1	5*	2*	1	28*
Contact Centre	1	2	0	2	1
Emergency Duty Team	0	0	1	0	0
Integrated Youth Support	0	0	1	0	0
Other	1	2	1	3	1*
Total	90	81	212	156	94

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

Complaints made by Young People

From the total number of complaints registered at Stage one, **43** of these were from young people. The table below shows the service areas complained about by young people:

Service Area	2017/18	2018/19
Assessment and Intervention	3	2
Disabled Children’s Service	2	0
Children Residential	5	4
Children & Disability Residential	0	0
Fostering/ Placement	1	3*

Looked After and Care Leavers	39	36*
Family Support /Early Help	0	0
Child Protection & Review	0	0
Contact Centre	0	1
Emergency Duty Team	0	0
Integrated Youth Support	0	0
Other	0	2*
Total	50	48

*Complainants, complained about more than one service

The above demonstrates that the services encourage young people to use the complaints procedure and work effectively in line with safeguarding principles to ensure that children have a voice and a say about the quality of care they are receiving. The Complaints Unit works closely with the Children's Rights service and advises on the child's right to use the complaints procedure when their concerns cannot be resolved, using the concerns protocol in place, which is in line with the restorative approach. All complaints received by the Complaints Unit from the Advocacy service were registered at Stage one

Outcome of Complaints

Outcome of Stage One Complaints

There were **85** Complainants who had complaints registered at Stage One. Some Complainants 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, the largest number were consistently not agreed and were not upheld.

Analysis of Stage One issues:

	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
Outcome	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Partially Agreed	7	29	95	95	45
Agreed	35	17	106	46	31
Not Agreed	9	56	17	11	50
Total	133	102	379	257	126

Below is a breakdown of the total types of issues/complaints made by Complainant's at Stage One:

	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
Issue	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Delay in Service Provision	0	4	8	17	1
Failure to consult/communicate	21	23	115	68	36
Welfare Issue	6	5	31	14	0
Inappropriate Management	4	1	4	1	0
Inaccurate Decision Making	11	6	33	27	4
Issues relating to Staff	43	24	61	45	26
Bullying by Service User	4	2	9	1	1
Service Provision/Assess	15	15	32	27	24

Provision/accuracy of Information	16	6	27	18	11
Financial Problems	6	4	14	17	10
Contact Arrangements	0	5	25	22	13
Other	7	7	20	0	0
Total	133	102	379	257	126

There were a total of 126 issues raised by Complainants at Stage One, some Complainant's raised more than one issue. Most of the issues related to failure to consult, issues relating to staff, service provision and assessment.

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

Complaints Partially Agreed:

Issues	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Delay in Service Provision	0	0	3	3	1
Failure to consult/communicate	1	13	49	30	15
Welfare Issue	1	0	5	3	0
Inappropriate Management	0	0	2	0	0
Inaccurate Decision Making	0	0	4	7	1
Issues relating to Staff	2	5	11	21	9
Bullying by Service User	0	0	1	0	0
Service Provision /Assess	1	2	3	11	6
Provision/accuracy of Information	1	1	3	9	8
Financial Problems	0	0	4	3	3
Contact arrangements	0	3	6	8	2
Other	1	5	4	0	0
Total	7	29	95	95	45

Complaints Agreed:

Issue	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Delay in Service Provision	0	4	0	14	0
Failure to consult/communicate	4	1	22	12	15
Welfare Issue	1	1	12	3	0
Inappropriate Management	0	1	2	0	0
Inaccurate Decision Making	1	0	6	4	0
Issues relating to Staff	10	3	13	4	3
Bullying by Service User	4	2	8	1	1
Service Provision /Assess	5	1	23	5	7
Provision/accuracy of Information	4	2	9	2	1
Financial Problems	3	0	1	1	2
Contact Arrangements	0	1	3	0	2
Other	3	1	7	0	0
Total	35	17	106	46	31

Complaints Not Agreed:

Issue	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Delay in Provision	0	0	5	0	0
Failure to consult/communicate	16	9	44	26	6
Welfare Issue	4	4	14	8	0
Inappropriate Management	4	0	0	1	0
Inaccurate Decision Making	10	6	23	16	3
Issues relating to Staff	31	16	37	20	14
Bullying by Service User	0	0	0	0	0
Service Provision/Assess	9	12	6	11	11
Provision/accuracy of information	11	3	15	7	2
Financial Problems	3	4	9	13	5
Contact Arrangements	0	1	16	14	9
Other	3	1	9	0	0
Total	91	56	178	116	50

5.2 Stage two analysis of complaints.

Prior to complaints being considered at Stage Two the Complaints Manager/s explored with the Complainant and the service all reasonable options for resolution. Where this is not feasible, the complaints were registered at Stage Two.

- In 2014/15, **8** complainants out of 87 registered at Stage One proceeded to a Stage Two formal investigation.
- In 2015/16, **2** complainants out of 74 registered at Stage One proceeded to a Stage Two formal investigation.
- In 2016/17, **5** complainants out of 202 registered at Stage One proceeded to a Stage Two formal investigation.
- In 2017/18, **5** complainants out of 152 registered at Stage One proceeded to a Stage Two formal investigation.
- In 2018/19, **5** complainants out of 85 registered at Stage One proceeded to a Stage Two formal investigation.

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

Service Area	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Disabled Children's Service	*1	0	0	1	2
Assessment and Intervention	2	*2	0	2*	1
Duty and Assessment	*1	*2	1*	0	1
Children's Residential	0	0	0	0	0
Child Protection & Review	1	0	1	0	0
Fostering/Placements	0	0	3*	1*	1*
Looked After and Care	3	0	1	2	1
Youth Offending Team	0	0	0	0	0
Children's Rights	0	0	0	0	0
Family Support/ Early Help	0	0	0	0	1
Total	8	4	6	6	7

* Complainant made complaints about more than one service.

There were **5** complaints registered at Stage Two. Each complainant raised more than one issue. The outcome of the issues can only be recorded after the investigation and response have been concluded. 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
Issues Relating to Staff	0	0	1
Financial problems	0	0	1
Failure to Consult/Listen	0	0	1
Delays/Quality in Service	3	0	0
Lack of Communication	1	1	0
Confidentiality (personal	0	0	2
Standard/Quality of Service	1	0	1
Failure to provide service	0	1	0
Total	5	2	7

7 issues were partially or fully agreed and 7 issues were not agreed.

5.3 Stage 3 complaints - Review Panel Hearings.

Complainants who are not satisfied with the Stage 2 responses have a right to have their complaints considered by three independent people who form the Stage 3 Panel.

Prior to complaints being considered by the Stage 3 Panel, the Complaints Manager/s explore with the Complainant and the service all reasonable options for resolution. The majority of the Complainants were satisfied with the Stage 2 responses. There were only **two** Complainants who were dissatisfied with the Stage 2 responses and proceeded to Stage 3.

One complaint related to the quality of an assessment and issues relating to a relationship with a Social Worker. Another complaint related to: Adult Social Care; an external agency, Children's Social Care and monitoring of external residential placements.

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:

Outcome	Definition
'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"> • Upheld: Maladministration and Injustice • Upheld: Maladministration, No Injustice • Not upheld: No Maladministration
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.
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 organization should put things right.

Breakdown of Ombudsman complaints and enquiries

Outcome	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Assessment/enquiry	0	0	0	2	2
investigation discontinued –	0	0	0	0	0
Not to initiate an investigation	0	0	0	0	0
Closed after initial enquiries; out of jurisdiction	4	1	1	1	2
Not upheld; no maladministration	1	0	0	0	0
Upheld; maladministration &	1	0	1	1	0
Ongoing/pending	0	0	0	1	0
To discontinue investigation	0	0	0	0	0
Not upheld; no further action	2	0	0	0	0
Total	8	1	2	5	4

In the period, very few complaints that were considered by the Local Government Ombudsman and there were no complaints investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman made initial enquiries from the Local Authority and was satisfied that the Local Authority had considered the complaints appropriately.

5.5 Timescale performance.

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

Days Acknowledgement Letter sent within	Total	Within 3 Working Days	After 3 Working Days
2014/15	87	87	0
2015/16	74	74	0
2016/17	202	202	0
2017/18	152	152	0
2018/19	85	85	0

The following table shows time taken to respond to Stage One Complaints:

Stage One responses	Total	Average Days	Response within 20 working days	After 20 Working Days
2014/15	87	14.5	73	14
2015/16	74	16.4	62	12
2016/17	202	20	149	53
2017/18	152	12.9	129	23
2018/19	85	10	80	5

The majority of the complaints are consistently responded to within the statutory deadlines at Stage one. There has been a great improvement in the average time taken in responding to complaints. The complaints that took longer than 20 working days were complex and the Complainant was kept informed.

The Childrens Act requires complaints from children and young people registered at Stage one to be responded to within 20 working days including the allowed extension. As a matter of good practice and in acknowledgement that children and young peoples' voices must be heard and responded to in a timely manner, the

Complaints unit has reduced this time scale, and all responding managers are asked to respond to children /young people within 6 working days, where possible.

The table below shows that **100%** of the Stage One complaints from children and young people were responded to within the statutory time scales of 20 working days and that **91%** of complaints were responded to within 10 working days.

Complaints from children Stage One	Total	Average Days	Within 6 Working days	Within 10 Working Days	Within 20 Working days	After 20 Working days
2017/18	50	8.7	12	33	5	0
2018/19	43	8.3	15	24	4	0

The table below shows the time taken to respond to complaints following investigation at Stage 2

Stage Two Response	Total	Average Days	Within 25 Working Days	Within 65 Working Days	After 65 Working Days
2014/15	8	67	1	3	4
2015/16	2	105	0	0	2
2016/17	5	70	1	2	2
2017/18	5	84	0	0	5
2018/19	5	79	0	1	4

Reason for why complaint investigations were not completed within 25 working days related to: the amount of information to be reviewed; the number of people to interview; Complaints Manager (s) holiday and absence from work due to ill health; availability of the investigating officer and the responding manager. Complainants were notified and accepted /understood the reasons for the delay.

The Complaints Unit have demonstrated proactive practice, the Unit monitors complaints to ensure that response times are met as far as reasonably possible and also to ensure that Complainants are kept fully 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 the Ombudsman may make a recommendation that the Council pays the Complainant compensation or a payment. In this period no such recommendations were made, and no payments were paid out in compensation as an outcome of any complaint.

6. Service Improvements

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

Learning identified from complaints investigations and responses are shared with the Learning and Development Service. An audit of complaints over the last twelve months has been completed by the Learning and Development Service, with the aim that key learning is included in the Learning and Development Service and Kirklees Safeguarding Children partnership learning and development sessions to staff who work with children and their families. Representatives from the Learning and Development team will be meeting with the Complaints and Compliments Unit every three months to review any new complaints and compliments, to ensure that key messages continues to influence practice.

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.

The following are a sample of learning or actions taken as a result of responses to complaints through the statutory complaints procedure:

- A complainant was given assurance that their complaint highlighted the importance of reviewing training and care practices. The learning from the complaint was incorporated into training courses and supervisory support provided to foster carers.
- A complaint highlighted the importance of workers being careful with the words they use when sharing information.
- A Team Manager apologised for the delay in a referral being made to the Early Help service.
- Staff were reminded that they should record when information is a fact or an opinion. They should also state the source of the information.
- A manager apologised for the delay relating to an assessment being completed and the sharing of the final report.
- A complaints investigation found that the complaint had arisen because of poor communication between the professionals and this resulted in carers receiving conflicting or unclear messages. This highlighted the importance of improving the recording of meetings and decisions and a shared understanding of agreed actions.
- Due to the recent changes with regards Data Protection, a complaint informed that the Training for foster carers should include awareness of GDPR.

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. This is also a requirement of Ofsted.

ETHNICITY

The ethnicity of the complainants is majority White / British with the next largest ethnic groups represented being Asian / Pakistani.

Complainants by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
White/British	56	44	74	77	42
Mixed White/Asian	5	1	3	1	0
Mixed White/Black Caribbean	4	3	8	0	2
Asian/Pakistani	4	4	17	8	9
Black African	0	1	2	1	1
Not Stated	17*	19*	93*	63*	29*
Asian/Indian	1	1	0	0	0
Black Caribbean	0	1	3	0	0
Other	0	0	2	2	2
Total	87	74	202	152	85

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

GENDER

Complainants by Gender

Gender	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Female	47	41	124	98	51
Male	29	27	70	49	29
Joint e.g.: Mr. &Mrs.	11	6	8	5	5
Not Known	0	0	0	0	0
Total	87	74	202	152	85

8. Present position and future developments:

Present position:

- Performance on responses to complaints from young people and service users /carers and member of the public has vastly improved since the change in Senior Leadership. This has influenced and supported the management of complaints in seeking early resolution.
- The high number of complaints that have been resolved through early resolution and restorative practice has reduced the number of complaints registered through the complaints procedure. This has been in line with the restorative practice model in Children's services. There is a noticeable

change in the culture in Children's Social Care and in the commitment by Leadership and senior management to early resolution.

- The voice of the child is apparent in the process of managing complaints, all responding managers are asked to ensure the child / young person has been met. The Children's Right's Service advocates on behalf of the child / young person to ensure that they are satisfied with responses and outcomes. This is effective as in this period there were no complaints that proceeded through to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure from young people. Where a young person is not happy with the response at Stage 1 the Complaints Manager/s and Children's Right's Service work together to seek a satisfactory outcome.
- Complaints Manager/s attend the Yorkshire and Humberside Complaints Managers Group; Team Meetings and Children's Right's Team Meetings.
- The Complaints Unit is more visible and accessible to responding managers having been relocated to Civic 1.
- Complaints Manager/s meet with Learning and Development Manager quarterly to ensure that learnings from complaints are embedded within Training and development opportunities.
- Greater links have been established with the Children's Right's team with a view to achieving early resolution.

The Annual report is presented to the Corporate Parenting Board. Monthly Information on complaints is also shared with the Service Improvement Board.

The Service Director, Family Support and Child Protection, meets with the Complaints Manager/s with the Stage 2 responding manager to discuss the learning from complaints and also during the process of responding to Stage 3 complaints.

Further Developments:

- Continue to raise the profile of complaints in a positive manner to reinforce the ethos for aiming for a more family focused and restorative approach to complaints management.
- Ensure that all communities from different ethnic backgrounds are aware of the Children's Act complaints procedure.
- Complaints Manager/s will present quarterly reports to the Senior Leadership Team around themes emerging from complaints.
- The Complaints Manager/s will continue to support managers with responding to complaints in line with restorative practice.
- Written Procedure with timescales on responding to enquiries from MP's and Cllr's
Will be presented to senior management and the Corporate Service.
- Further emphasis will be given to the sharing of compliments with the

Complaints
Unit.

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

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