compliments comments complaints

Children's Services

information

Birmingham City Council

children & young people matter BIRMINGHAM

Introduction

Birmingham City Council's directorate for Children, Young People and Families is committed to putting people first. We are always working hard to improve the services we provide. If you use our services, or wish to use our services, you may want to make a comment, compliment or complaint. If so, this leaflet tells you how to do this.

Equal Opportunities

It is your right to be treated fairly, respectfully and with dignity when making a complaint, regardless of your racial identity, sexuality, disability, age, culture, religion, gender or status.

Comments and Compliments

When monitoring the quality of the services we provide, it is also important for us to know about things that are going well or how the service can be improved. It is good to be able to give staff positive feedback.

Who Can Complain?

You can complain if you are a user of a service, or feel you have a right to a service from the directorate for Children, Young People and Families, or if you are a carer or a representative acting on the user's behalf.

What can I complain about?

- lack of service
- refusal of service
- delay in receiving a service
- the conduct or attitude of staff
- a decision by a member of staff or panel
- lack of involvement in decision making processes or any other aspect of social care.

The Human Rights Act 1998 places a duty on the local authority to ensure that complainants have the right to a fair hearing. The directorate for Children, Young People and Families is committed to fair and equal access to all its service users.

Your views are important; you can help us to do things better.

The complaint process

Mediation

Mediation is a method used to help complaints to be resolved quickly. It can be used at any stage of the complaints process. It is a process where the complainant meets with an officer of the service that they are complaining about. This is organised by the Customer Relations Service.

Stage One – Problem Solving/Mediation

If you are unhappy with the services provided by the directorate for Children, Young People and Families, you should talk to your social worker, key worker, foster carer, manager of the service concerned, an adult you trust or complete the form in this leaflet.

What to do if you want to make a formal complaint

Stage Two – Independent Investigation/Mediation

When you have talked things over, you may be satisfied with the outcome. If not, you may want to take it further by making a formal complaint or attending a mediation meeting.

If you do, you should:

- Tell the manager that you want to make a formal complaint

or

- Complete the form in this leaflet (if you have not already done so)

or

Phone the Customer Relations Service on tel: 0121 303 5161

You should receive an acknowledgement to your complaint within two working days.

An Independent Investigation Officer will investigate your complaint.

The outcome of your complaint

You will receive a copy of the independent investigation officer's report and a letter of response within 65 working days to three months from the senior manager concerned. You will be notified of any delays.

What to do if you are unhappy with the outcome

You should first contact the person who sent you the letter to try to sort the matter out. This process is known as problem solving. If you are still unhappy, you have the right to ask for your complaint to be looked at by an Independent Review Panel of three people. This can be arranged if you contact the Customer Relations Service within 20 working days of receiving the Directorate's response to your complaint.

Stage Three – The Review

The Independent Review Panel will look at the way your complaint has been dealt with by the Children, Young People and Families directorate. You will have the chance to express your views. The panel members will be independent of the Children, Young People and Families directorate. You will be sent the relevant information before the Review. You can also speak to the Customer Relations Manager if anything is unclear.

The outcome of the review

The Panel will tell you verbally on the day of the review the recommendations it will make to the Children, Young People and Families directorate. You will also be sent a copy of the Review Panel's report.

The service or stategic director will write to you within 15 working days with a response and a copy of the Review Panel Report. At the end of this process, if you are still dissatisfied, you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman (leaflets are available from the Customer Relations Service).

Help and support that is available to you

It is important that you can get support from outside the Children, Young People and Families directorate. The Customer Relations Service can arrange for an independent advocate to assist you. This service is free of charge if you are a child or are unable to present your views either in writing or verbally. The role of the independent advocate is to promote and protect your rights and interests.

You can also talk to a children's rights officer on
0121 303 7217 or 0121 303 7224.

Interpreters

Complainants whose first language is not English can be provided with an interpreter through an independent agency. This service is free of charge if you need it.

Friends or relatives

Friends or relatives can complain on behalf of a service user. They should inform the service user or carer before making a complaint on their behalf. The Customer Relations Service will always check out consent where the complaint is not received directly from the service user.

Children, Young People and Families Directorate

Staff have a responsibility to assist any service user or carer to make a complaint, particularly vulnerable users of residential and day care services. The Customer Relations Service can assist in providing an independent advocate to support the complainant throughout the process.

Solicitors

Some complainants may use a solicitor when making a complaint. Where complainants have chosen to do this, the Customer Relations Service will correspond directly with the solicitor.

Councillors and MPs

Councillors and MPs sometimes complain on behalf of their constituents. These complaints are usually processed in the normal way. However, councillors and MPs' enquiries on behalf of their constituents are not dealt with as a complaint.

Access to records

The Data Protection Act 1998 gives you the right to see information that we hold about you. You can only see information about another person if they agree.

Comments, Compliments or Complaints Form

Note: All personal data is collected and processed in compliance with the principles of the 1998 Data Protection Act and you have certain rights in respect of this information.

This form should only be completed if you wish to register a comment, compliment or Stage 1/Stage 2 complaint.

(Please tick boxes where appropriate).

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

Email: _____

If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone, please provide us with their name and address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

To assist us in measuring our service quality for all user groups, please help us by providing the following information:

Date of Birth: _____ Preferred Language: _____

Religion: _____ Racial Identity: _____

Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Disability: Yes ☐ No ☐

Nature of - Please Specify: .....

I want to make a comment: ☐

I want to give a compliment: ☐

I want to make a Stage One Complaint: ☐

I want to make a Stage Two Complaint: ☐

My comment, compliment or complaint is about:

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Please detach form and send to:

Customer Relations Service
Children, Young People and Families Directorate
Room 11, Council House Extension,
6 Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BU

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Freepost RSHT-XYRR-SXBG
Customer Relations Service
Children Young People
Margaret Street
BIRMINGHAM
B3 3BU

Further Information

Customer Relations Service
Children, Young People and Families Directorate
Room 11, Council House Extension,
6 Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BU

Tel 0121 303 5161
www.birmingham.gov.uk/childrenservices

Useful Contacts

Children's Rights and Engagement Service	0121 303 7217
Childline – 24 hour advice	0800 1111

City Councillor or MP – ask for the name, address and advice surgery times at your local neighbourhood office or library.

Lawyer – ask a children's rights officer or any of the organisations listed above.

If you need the information in this leaflet in a different format or language, contact the Communications Team on Tel 0121 464 2388.

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Birmingham City Council

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