Children's Services - Social Care Complaints (Stage 1,2,3)

Complaints Manager/HOS uses discretion to accept or refuse the complaint. If refused or deferred, CM will write to complainant advising them of the LA's decision why the complaint cannot be considered and provide information & contact details for the LGO.

Complaint received within 12 months of issue occurring?

On Day 1 of receiving the complaint, the complaint is referred to CM via childrensfamilies&communityhealthcomplaints@swindon.gov.uk. Within 3 days of receipt, CM to acknowledge the complaint, central logging on LAGAN and allocation of reference number. Once logged details will be forwarded to Head of Service requesting allocation to a Team Manager to investigate with timescales attached for Stage 1 Process. (10 working days)

Stage 1 – (Local Resolution)

Local investigation and written response completed by allocated TM within the statutory 10 working days. If an extension in response time is required (total 20 working days) Team Manager to contact CM to request. It is advisable that team managers should try and resolve the complaint by offering to meet with the complainant in person or at least pick up the phone and conduct a telephone interview. CM can assist in setting this up.

TM then writes to complainant outlining their findings and ends letter by advising complainant's right to progress to Stage 2 along with LGO details. *copy of Stage 1 Letter to be emailed to CM for central logging and closing of Stage 1*

If the complainant responds with further questions in response to the Stage 1 letter, their questions should be logged and responded to swiftly. The main objective is to try and resolve the complaint at Stage 1 v's progressing to Stage 2. This is not always possible for different reasons but shows evidence of trying to resolve the complaint as best we can.

*It is important to respond within statutory timescales. Did you know the complainant can request to progress to Stage 2 if there is a delay in responding to Stage 1.

Complainant must request progression to Stage 2 within 20 working days of receiving the Stage 1 written response.

Request of progression to Stage 2

On Day 1 complaint is referred to CM/TM via email. Within 3 days of receipt, CM to acknowledge the request, central logging on LAGAN and allocation of reference number. Once logged details will be confirmed with timescales attached for Stage 2 of the process. (25 Working Days – 65 Working Days Max)

Stage 2 – (Independent Investigation)

The CM will oversee this process. An Independent Investigator (IO) & Independent Person (IP) are appointed by the CM. They will conclude their investigation within **25 working days**. Once their individual reports are completed and received, the Head of Children's & Families will respond to the complainant, enclosing the two reports from the IO & IP. Complainant must be reminded at this stage of their right to progress to Stage 3 of the process.

Complainant must request progression to Stage 3 within 20 working days of receipt of Stage 2 Letter.

Request for progression to **Stage 3**

On Day 1 complaint is referred to CM/TM via email. Within 3 days of receipt, CM to acknowledge the request, central logging on LAGAN and allocation of reference number. Once logged details will be confirmed with timescales attached for Stage 3 of the process. (30 Working Days)

Stage 3 – (Review Panel Hearing)

Review panel should meet within **30 days** of receiving the complainants request to progress to Stage 3. The CM makes the arrangements for the hearing. Complainant is provided with 10 working days notice before the hearing. The panel will produce a written report of their findings within 5 working days, providing an explanation behind final decisions reached. The Director of Children's Services must respond to the complainant within 15 working days, providing an explanation behind final decisions reached. The complainant must be reminded of their right to contact the LGO and given their contact details.

END OF COMPLAINT PROCESS action, complaint closed.

Complaint

Upheld/Partially/

Not Upheld?

No further

IMPORTANT

Are there any agreed actions resulting from complaint to record and follow up at a later date and report on?

Complaint resolved – no further action, complaint closed.

¹ CS Flowchart (v1)