



CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:	Learning & Achievement Complaints Annual Report
CMT Lead:	Mary Phillips
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Policy context:	Quality and high customer satisfaction

SUMMARY

1. The Learning & Achievement report attached as Appendix 1 provides information on the complaints received during 2015/16. It should be noted that Maintained Schools and Academies have their own complaints procedure which are dealt with through their Governing Bodies and are not included within this report. Schools admissions and exclusions are dealt with through a statutory appeals process and also not included in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That members note the content of the attached report for information.

REPORT DETAIL

3. The number of Ombudsman enquiries decreased slightly in 2015/16 with two of these being premature/informal enquiries and one where no investigation was warranted. The number of complaints overall increased by 58% however, with the majority of these resulting from school expansions and the introduction of the new Children and Families Act. This was reflected in those teams dealing with these areas, i.e. Education Provision & Commissioning Service and Children & Adults with Disabilities Team (CAD). Enquiries, which are complaints about school related matters that were referred to the school/academy or college dropped by 27%.

4. The main reasons for complaint were 'suitability of the service' and 'quality an reliability' relating to the school expansion programme and also to SEN transport and Special Educational Needs.
5. For those enquiries that were referred back to either the school/academy or college the main reason for complaint was 'level of service' relating to bullying and how the relevant school/academy or college dealt with this. Some of these type complaints also linked to safeguarding, however it should be noted that following robust investigations, were identified as perceived risks to either an individual child or children's safety within a school/academy or college rather than actual risks. Complaint reason 'behaviour of staff' was in relation to childminders' behaviour within education premises.
6. The majority of complaints were 'not upheld', and for those partially upheld involved new provision being agreed, increased or changes to practice and provision.
7. Response times continue to be at a very high rate within Learning & Achievement with 97% corporate complaints being responded to within timescale. Learning & Achievement have also responded well to Members enquiries with 93% being responded to within timescale.
8. Complainants continue to prefer making complaints via email or letter which has shown an increase in 2015/16 of 79% and 59% respectively.
9. Compliments have decreased by 58% in 2015/16, although there were increases across Admissions, CAD and Governing Body Support relating to help and support provided. Learning & Achievement will need to ensure that compliments continue to be forwarded to the Complaints Team to be logged.
10. During 2015/16 there has been structural changes within Learning & Achievement as a result of SEND and also within schools, in particular the schools expansion programme which impacted on the number of complaints received. However, Learning & Achievement continue to have a high response rate to complaints and member enquiries.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no financial implications or risks arising from this report, as it only notes details of previous complaints..

Legal implications and risks:

There are no apparent legal implications from noting this Report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no direct HR implications or risks to the Council, or its workforce, that can be identified from the recommendation or contents of this report.

Equalities implications and risks:

The report demonstrates that there is a transparent and structured (both informal and formal) route for concerns or complaints, to be registered for review and action where required.

The Council is working towards improving the monitoring of the diversity profile of complainants and service users against relevant protected characteristics such as age, disability, ethnicity, etc, The Governing Body Support Unit is providing complaints training within schools and can explore how information can be obtained. In line with the Council's corporate policy on translation and interpreting services, this service also offers information in other languages and alternative formats on request.

The Service will continue to look at ways in which information can be obtained from schools in order to identify areas for improvement through the Governing Body Support Unit, as well as exploring other options.

The Service will be looking to possible inclusion of an overview or analysis for any equality and diversity complaints in future reports

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.