



CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE 28 NOVEMBER 2017

Subject Heading:	Learning & Achievement (now Education Services) Annual Complaints Report 2016-17
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Policy context:	This report is for information purposes only.
Financial summary:	There are no financial implications as this report is for information purposes.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	[X]
Places making Havering	[]
Opportunities making Havering	[]
Connections making Havering	[]

SUMMARY

1. The Education Services report attached as Appendix 1 provides information on the complaints received during 2016/17. 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. Education Services went through structural changes in 2016/17 resulting in senior management and team changes.
4. There was one Ombudsman enquiry in 2016/17, which did not progress to investigation, decreased from 3 in 2015/16. The number of complaints also decreased from 31 in 2015/16 to 18 in 2016/17. The school expansion programme resulted in the high number of complaints for Education Provision and Commissioning Service, however this dropped significantly for this area in 2016/17 from 7 to 1. Children & Adults with Disabilities Team complaints have almost halved. The number of complaints for Education & Inclusion remained at the same level as in 2015/16.
5. The main reasons for complaint were related to quality and reliability, late delivery or slow service and availability of the service. This referred to delays in completing EHC Plans and implementing provision, placements at special units and general concerns about schools in particular penalty charges for non-attendance.
6. Complaints that were directed to either the relevant school or college were mainly related to level of service which covered concerns by parents on how a school dealt with a particular issue or parents disputing exclusion of their child.
7. Of the complaints received 13 were upheld and 5 being partially upheld.
8. Complaints responded to within timescale was slightly down from 97% in 2015/16 to 72% in 2016/17, which could have been attributed to the structure changes during the year.
9. Member enquiries decreased slightly from 54 in 2015/16 to 49 in 2016/17 with 84% being responded to within timescale, compared to 93% in 2015/16.
10. Email is the preferred method of contact, although this has dropped from last year. The use of online forms has increased slightly from 2 in 2015/16 to 3 in 2016/17.
11. Compliments have decreased from 23 in 2015/16 to 16 in 2016/17. Examples of some compliments are provided in Appendix 1. The Complaints & Information Team will need to remind and encourage staff in the Service to send compliments to the team for recording.
12. Education Services continue to use complaints as a feedback resource for learning and the collection of complaints data relating to schools is to be encouraged to identify particular themes arising within schools. Structure changes have had an impact on response times, however as the Service

stabilises this should see a return to the high response rates seen in previous years.

13.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There is a Complaints & Information team within the Directorate. This team addresses complaints received and manages associated resource implications, which are funded from within overall service budgets.

There are no new financial implications or risks arising from this report, which is for information purposes. It should be noted however that any material increase in investigations following on from complaints could result in additional costs to the authority, which is being managed as part of the overall financial management responsibilities of the service.

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

There are no background papers

