

CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 September 2015

Subject Heading:	Children, Adults & Housing: Learning & Achievement Annual Complaints Report 2014/15
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Policy context:	Service Quality and Customer Service

SUMMARY

1. The Learning & Achievement report attached as Appendix 1 provides information on the complaints received during 2014/15. 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 contents of the attached report for information.

REPORT DETAIL

3. There were four Ombudsman enquiries during 2014/15, two informal enquiries, one which the LGO decided was outside of her jurisdiction and one in which the LGO found maladministration with no injustice. This is in relation to a complaint in 2013/14 and the final decision being received in 2014/15.

4. The number of complaints received during 2014/15 dropped by 52% compared to 2013/14. The number of enquiries recorded, which are complaints referred back to the schools has increased by 71%. These consist of complaints that are referred back to schools to be taken through their own complaints procedure, but are recorded as an enquiry for monitoring purposes.
5. Of those complaints regarding education/schools, this ranged from parents complaining about welfare/safety of their child within the school, school holiday fines, adult education, school placements and decisions around SEN.
6. The current CRM system provides only limited reports and therefore the Complaints, Information & Communication Team have obtained information in relation to outcomes. Monitoring information in relation to age, disability and ethnicity is not available within corporate reports
7. Learning & Achievement responses to complaints were good during 2014/15 with 77% of complaints being responded to within the 10 day timescale, this dropped slightly compared to 2013/14 (93%) due to complex SEN complaints. Members' correspondence response times were also slightly lower in 2014/15 (91%) compared to 2013/14 (95%).
8. Compliments continued to increase slightly, up 15% in 2014/15. This is likely to be due to continued encouragement by the Service for these to be sent to the Complaints, Information & Communication Team to be recorded.
9. The main learning points from the report are to continue to improve recording especially around outcomes/recommendations/monitoring information and using complaints information as a tool to improve service delivery.

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.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None