

## APPENDIX 2

# Children's Services - Education Services

## Annual Report 2021 – 2022 Complaints and Compliments

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## **Executive Summary**

At London Borough of Havering we believe we have a contribution to make in improving outcomes for children and young people by supporting education providers to be as effective and efficient as they can be in their day to day work.

The service works with schools, academies, colleges and early years providers to provide critical education services. With a long established history, we have strong partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders in these institutions ensuring high quality day-to-day support.

As well as providing support for education settings, the service also has statutory responsibilities for ensuring high quality provision for children from early years, to reception, and throughout all their schooling to aged 18, and up to 25 years for those young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), as well as the statutory responsibility for the placement of those children and young people, via the statutory admissions process and early education entitlement placement processes.

The service also provides support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities across education and social care, and are responsible for implementing the legislation under the Children and families Act 2014, working together to bring about coordinated support for children, young people and their families. Collectively they are responsible for the Education Health and Care assessment and planning process, support from advisory teachers and educational psychologists in schools and the children social care statutory processes around Children in need, Child protection and looked after Children.

The number of Corporate complaints significantly increased within the year, with many complaints relating to schools, that may need to be referred to their own complaints process. Information is still collated in relation to these type of complaints and are referred to as enquiries within this report.

Overall response times have delined slightly with 65.3% being responded to within timescale compared to 68% in 2020/21, however, the number of complaints received has almost doubled from 29 in 2019/20 to 75 in 2020/21.

The service area has been relatively stable, however, response times may have been impeded due to increased pressure as the country came out of lockdown. Efforts will need to be made in order to improve response times, across complaints. Although member enquiries are slightly down, efforts will be made to improve response times for both corporate complaints and enquiries.

### **1. Ombudsman referrals**

Encouragingly there have been zero Ombudsman enquiries for 2021/22 compared to 1 maladministration during 2020/21.

## 2. Total number of complaints

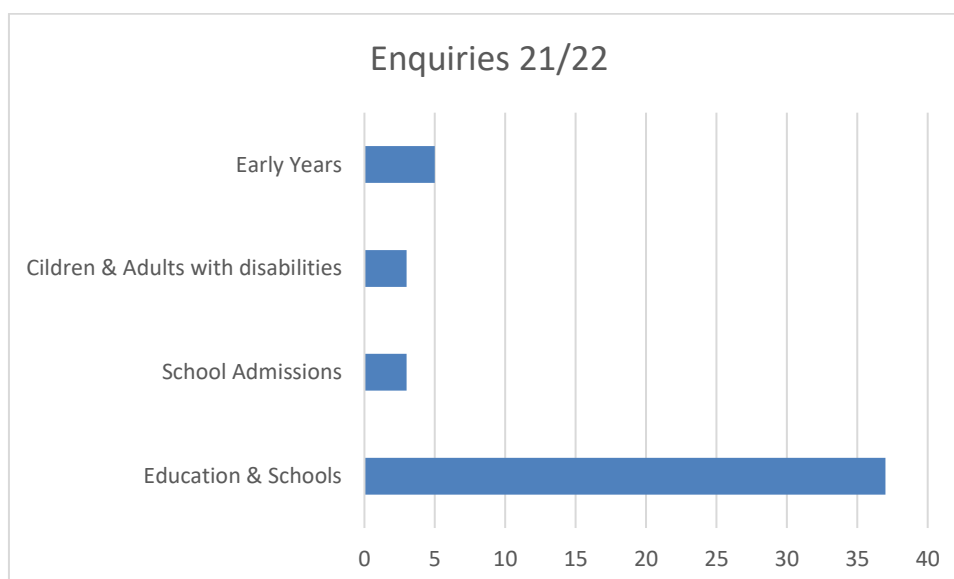
The total number of Corporate Complaints have significantly increased from 7 in 2020-21 to 26 in 2021-22, and are reported within the Corporate Complaints reports. Enquiries have also increased from 32 in 2020-21 to 49 in 2021/22. Enquiries are complaints received that relate to schools, academies or colleges that may need to be taken through their own complaints procedure. It is likely that the low number of complaints in 2020/21 are as a result of the pandemic, many schools were still restricting attendance in line with Government policy, and many parents are likely to have had other priorities during such a difficult time.

|                | Corporate Complaint | Enquiry   | Total     |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>2021/22</b> | <b>26</b>           | <b>49</b> | <b>75</b> |
| <b>2020/21</b> | <b>7</b>            | <b>32</b> | <b>39</b> |
| <b>2019/20</b> | <b>22</b>           | <b>35</b> | <b>57</b> |

### 2.1 Service Areas

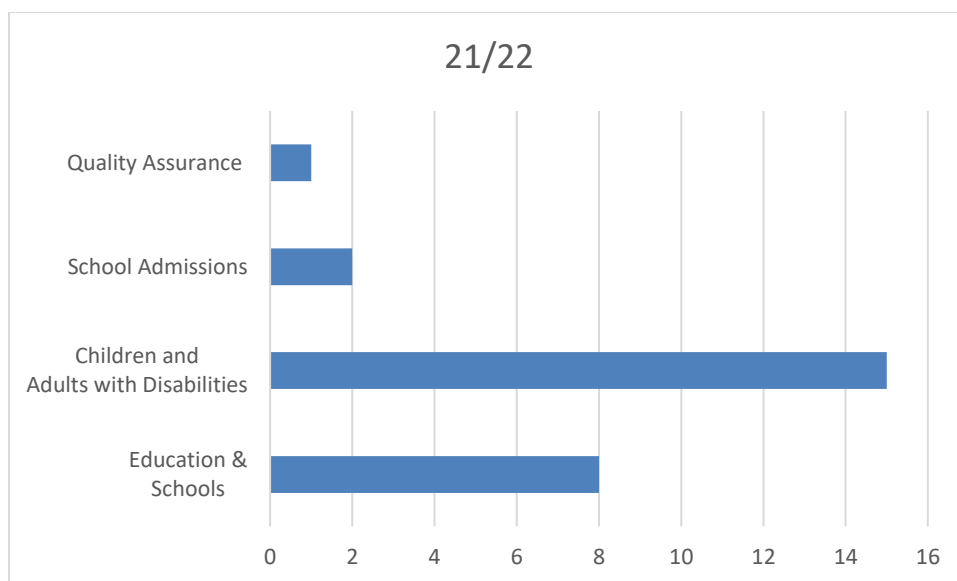
The following table shows the breakdown of enquiries received. As expected the highest number (37) are those for Education & Schools, referred to the relevant education provision.

|       | Education & Schools | School Admissions | Children & Adults with disabilities | Early Years |
|-------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| 21/22 | 37                  | 3                 | 3                                   | 5           |



The following table shows the breakdown of Corporate complaints received.

|       | Education & Schools | Children and Adults with Disabilities | School Admissions | Quality Assurance |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 21/22 | 8                   | 15                                    | 2                 | 1                 |



## 2.2 Reasons

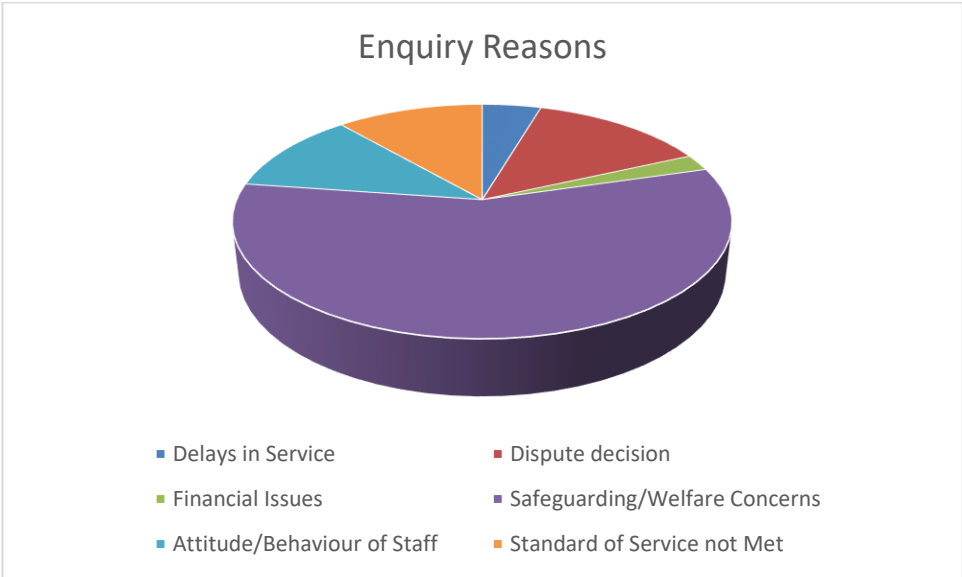
Below shows the breakdown of reasons for Corporate Complaints. 'Delays in service, disputing decisions and standards of service not being met and attitude/behaviour of staff are the main reasons for complaints.

| Inaccurate Information | Dispute decision | Lack of Comm | Delays in Service | Inaccurate Info | Financial Issues | Attitude/Behaviour of Staff | Standard of Service not Met |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1                      | 4                | 1            | 7                 | 1               | 1                | 5                           | 6                           |



The table below shows the breakdown of reasons for enquiries and relate to those complaints relating to school, academy or college issues. The main reason by far is 'safeguarding/welfare concerns'.

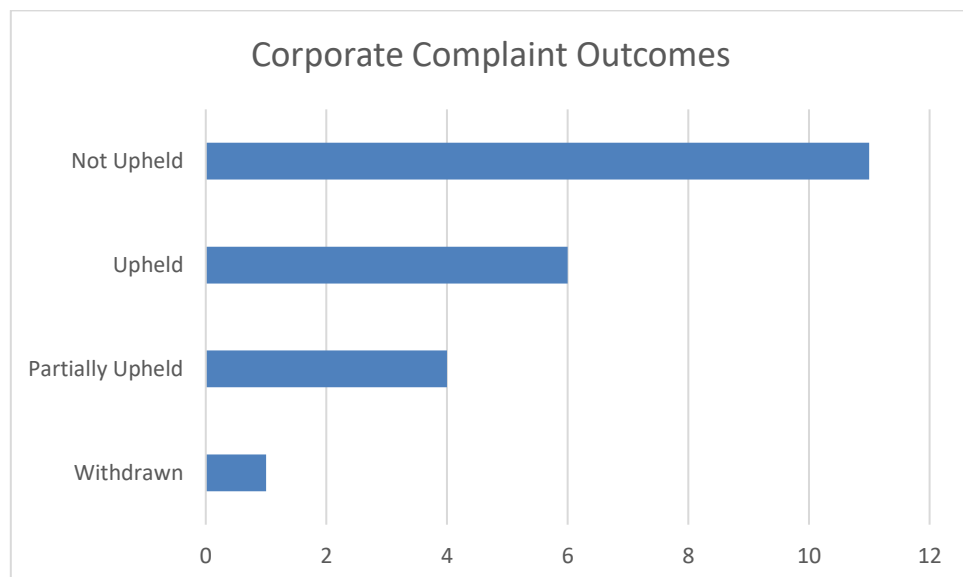
| Delays in Service | Dispute decision | Financial Issues | Safeguarding/Welfare Concerns | Attitude/Behaviour of Staff | Standard of Service not Met |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2                 | 6                | 1                | 25                            | 5                           | 5                           |



## 2.3 Corporate Complaint Outcomes

Of the Corporate Complaints received, eight were not upheld and explanation was given, four were partially upheld and explanation given, six were upheld and apology given, one due to lack of communication, two for delays in service and three for standard of service not met. Upheld complaints are reviewed in order to feed into the learning for the service to identify areas for improvement. Four complaint outcomes are yet to be determined

|           | Withdrawn | Partially Upheld | Upheld | Not Upheld |
|-----------|-----------|------------------|--------|------------|
| Corporate | 1         | 4                | 6      | 11         |

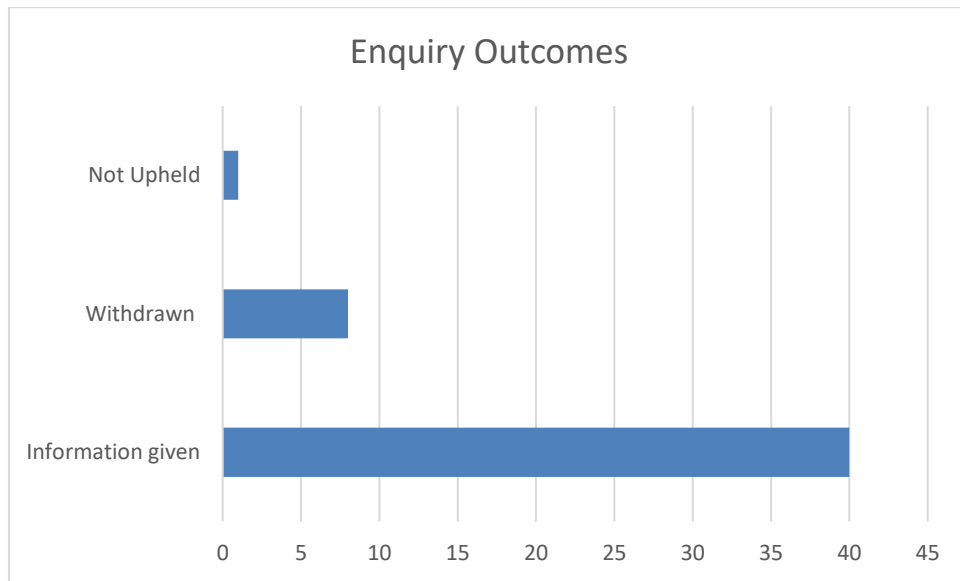


## 2.4 Enquiries

Enquiry outcomes are shown below with 40 being 'information given' to advise of the correct process, 8 were withdrawn and 1 not upheld. Half of the enquiries received were Ofsted enquiries mainly in relation to safeguarding concerns, these enquiries are sent on for the attention of the Assistant Director for Education Services, and some may result in follow-up enquiry with the school or academy.

|  | Information given | Withdrawn | Not Upheld |
|--|-------------------|-----------|------------|
|  |                   |           |            |

|           |    |   |   |
|-----------|----|---|---|
| Enquiries | 40 | 8 | 1 |
|-----------|----|---|---|

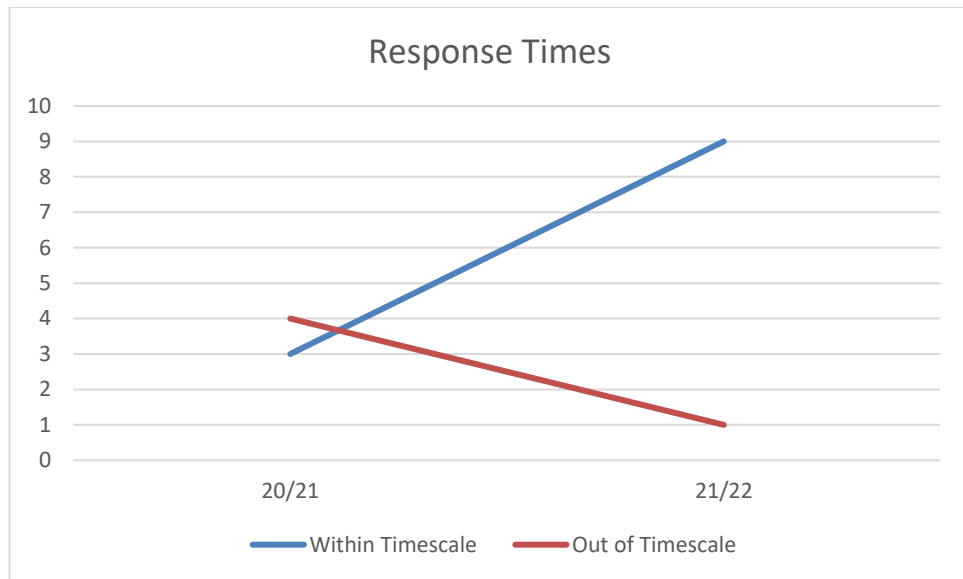


## 2.5 Response times

Education have improved their response times for Corporate Complaints in 2021/22, with 85% being responded to within timescale compared to 42% in 2020/21. The delayed response times in 2020/21 were likely to be a result of the start of the pandemic, which brought different priorities to the service.

|                      | Within 15 days |       | Outside of timescale |       |
|----------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
|                      | 21/22          | 20/21 | 21/22                | 20/21 |
| Corporate Complaints | 14             | 3     | 12                   | 4     |





### 3. Members' Correspondence

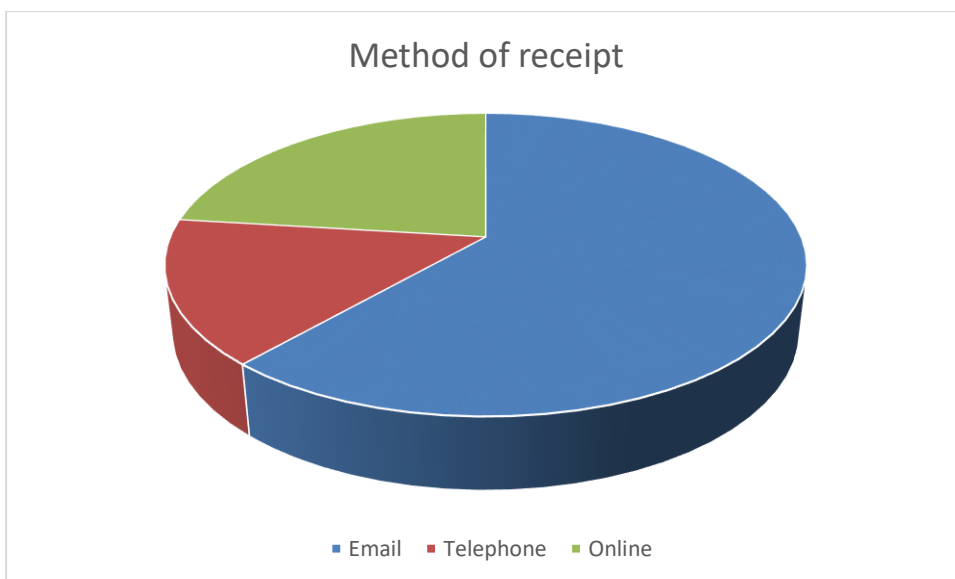
Members correspondence has increased by 69.5% to 39 in 2021/22 compared to 23 in 2020/21 with 97.4% being responded to within timescale.

|  | 21/22 | 20/21 |
|--|-------|-------|
| Members Correspondence (from MP's & Cllrs) | 39    | 23    |

### 4. How Complaints were received

Email was the preferred method of contact for Corporate Complaints in 2021/22, as it was in 2020/21 however we have seen an encouraging increase of those coming through online.

| Email | Telephone | Online |
|-------|-----------|--------|
| 16    | 4         | 6      |



## 5. Compliments

There are only two compliments recorded for Education in 2021/22. One for the Quality Assurance Team : *X has given me a half day of support to help me with my development planning and self evaluation, and it was a superb session - she is extremely knowledgeable, supportive and patient, and was able to answer my (many!) questions.*

One for School Admissions Inclusion Service: *Can I just put on record my sincere thanks for everything you have done in supporting X and us in trying to find a solution to her direction offsite? I do not think you could have worked any harder or been any more compassionate and understanding.*

Education should encourage and remind staff to ensure compliments are sent to the Complaints Team for logging and recording.

## 6. Conclusion

Education Services complaints are dealt with through the Corporate Complaints process and as such, the detailed breakdown of information is recorded where available.

The information collated for those complaints that relate to schools/academies/colleges are recorded as enquiries within this report. Although this is only a snapshot of complaints, this does provide information on particular themes arising. In 2021/22 these were predominantly around safeguarding and welfare concerns.

As Education receive a number of Corporate Complaints, this report has been included as an additional appendix as part of the Children's Services Statutory Complaints Annual Report.