



APPENDIX 2

Children's Services - Learning & Achievement

Annual Report 2022 – 23 Complaints and Compliments

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Education Service Annual Complaints & Compliments Report 2022-23

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Executive Summary

At the London Borough of Havering our Education Service is focused on 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 developed and maintained 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 is 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's social care statutory processes around Children in need, Child protection and looked after Children.

We saw the number of Corporate complaints decrease within the 2022- 2023 period. We did however receive , many complaints relating to schools, the majority of which need to be referred to the school's 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 for both corporate complaints and enquires have improved significantly to 81% in 2022 – 2023 being responded to within timescale, compared to 65.3% in 2021-22 despite numbers received increasing by over 80%.

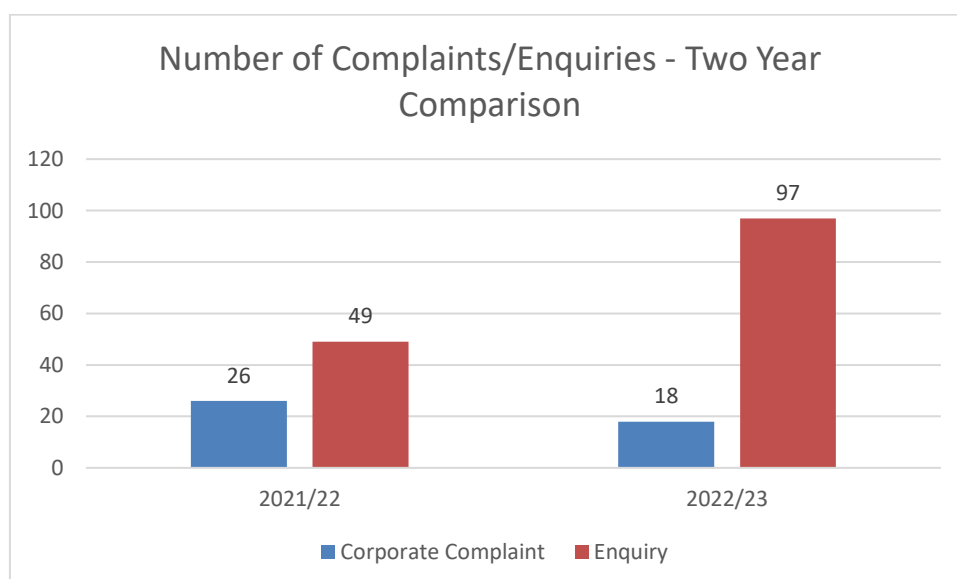
Our action plan for 2023 – 2024 is focused on continuing to improve response times, across complaints. We are also focused on improving the member enquiry response times which were slightly down, on 2021 – 2022 figures.

1. Ombudsman referrals

Encouragingly there has been only one Ombudsman enquiry for 2022-23 however this was not investigated due to robust evidence of the actions taken by Havering Services being provided.

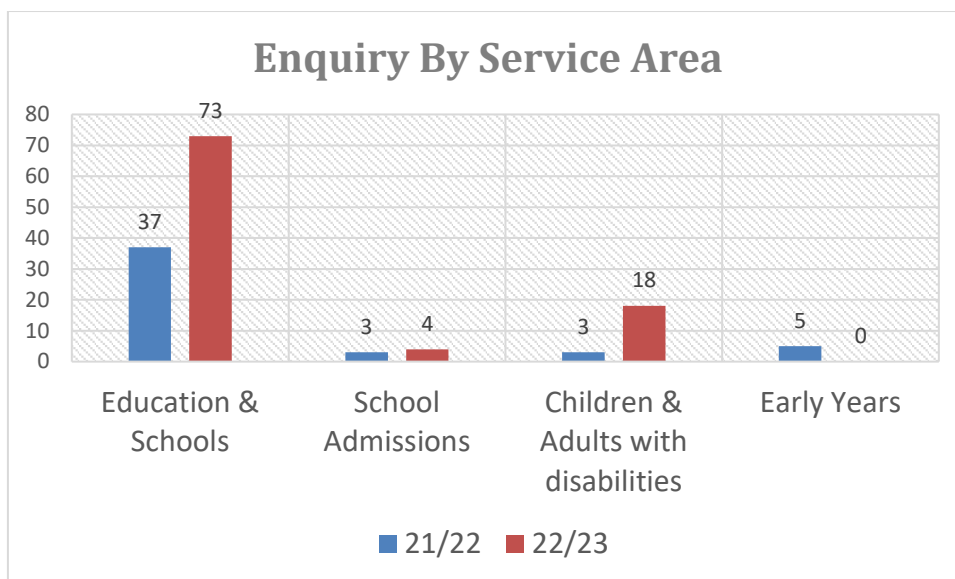
2. Total number of complaints

The total number of Corporate Complaints has decreased by 30% from 26 in 2021 - 2022 to 18 in 2022-23, and these are reported within the Corporate Complaints reports. However, enquiries have significantly increased by 51% to 95 in 2022-23 from 49 in 2021-22. Enquiries are complaints received by the authority that relate to schools, academies or colleges that may need to be taken through their own complaints procedure. It is likely that the increase in enquiries received relating to schools is a result of schools returning to normal practice following the Covid-19 pandemic.

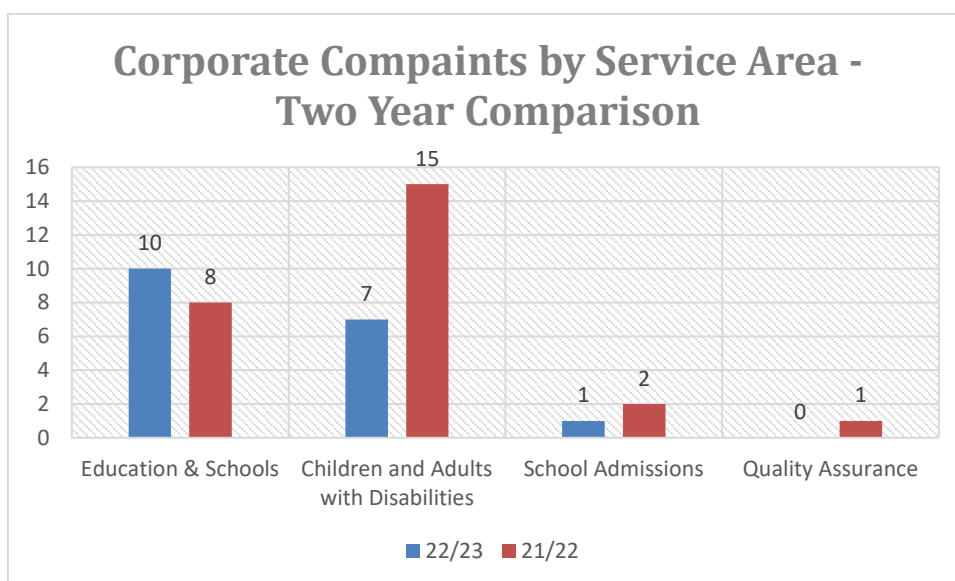


2.1 Service Areas

The following chart (2) shows the breakdown of enquiries received in 2022-23. As expected the highest number (73) are those for Education & Schools, referred to the relevant education provision.

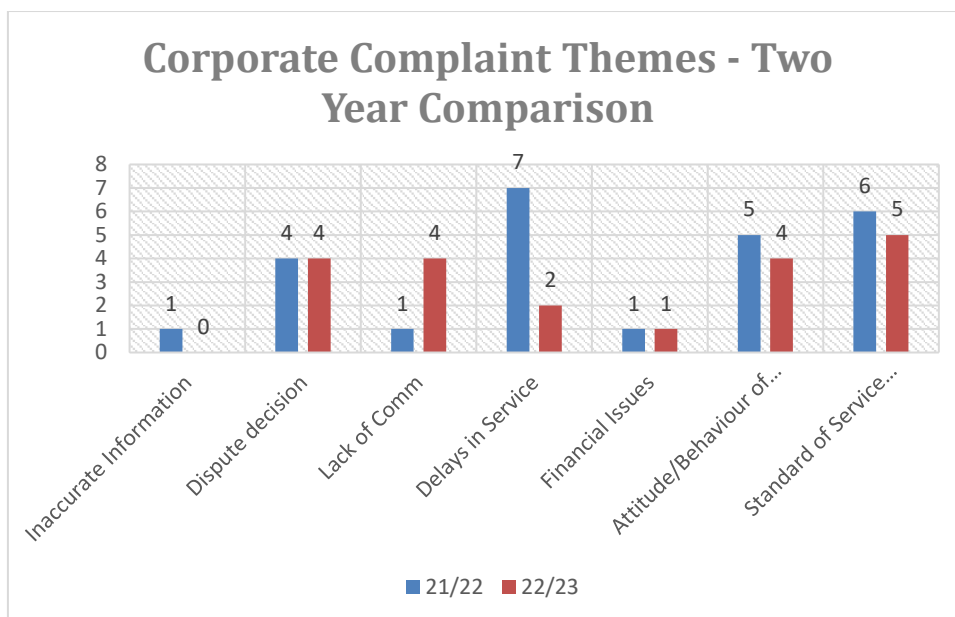


The following chart (3) shows the breakdown of Corporate complaints received. Across the teams 2022-23 saw a reduction in the number of corporate complaints received with the exception of Education & Schools where there has been a small increase.

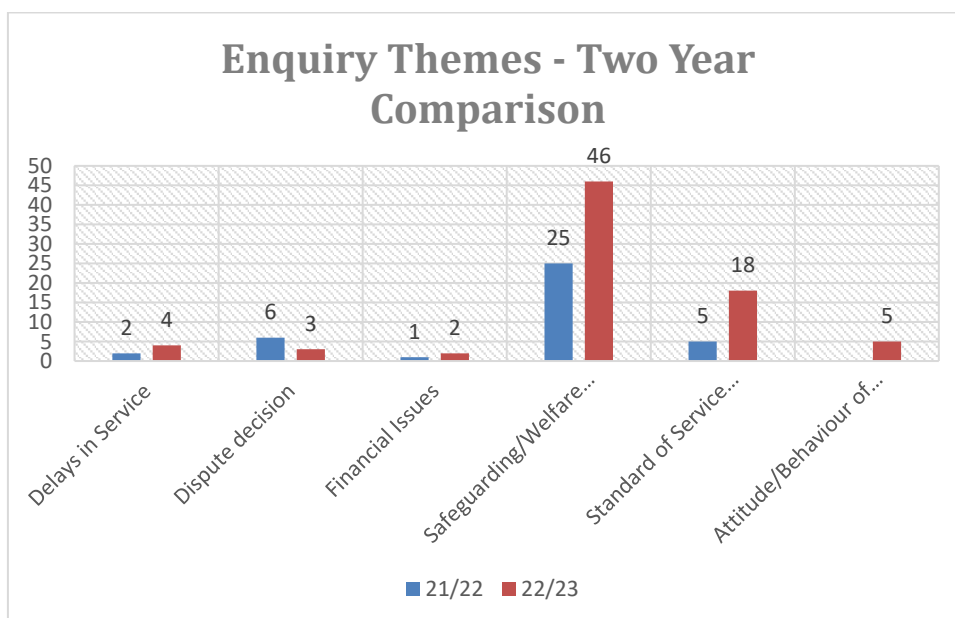


2.2 Themes

The Chart (4) below shows the breakdown of Corporate Complaints themes. Dispute decisions, Lack of communication, standard of service not being met and attitude/behaviour of staff are the main reasons for complaints received. Encouragingly there has been a reduction in the number of complaints received in relation to delays in service during 2022-23 to two from seven in 2021-22.



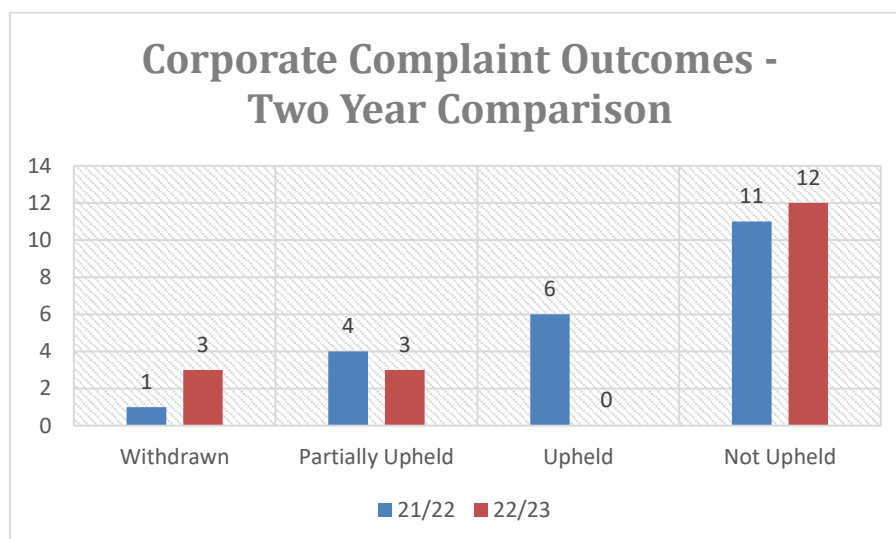
The chart below (5) shows a breakdown of themes for enquiries received and relate to those complaints relating to schools, academy or college issues. The main reason by far is safeguarding/welfare concerns which make up 59% of all enquiries received, 83% of which were received from Ofsted. There has also been an increase of 28% in the number of enquiries received in relation to standard of service not met in 2022-23 to 18 compared to five in 2021-22, these generally relate to a lack of support being provided by the education provision.



2.3 Outcomes

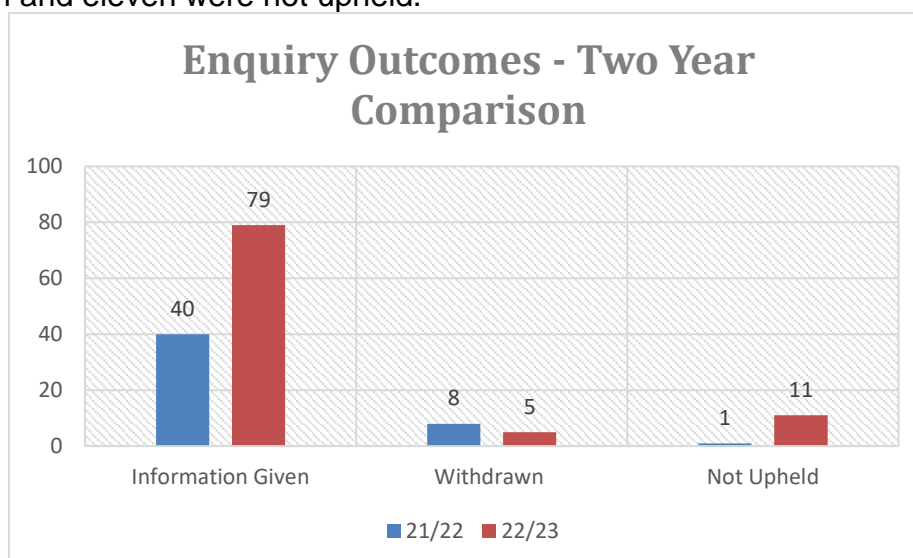
Corporate Complaint Outcomes

Of the Corporate Complaints received in 2022-23, 12 were not upheld and explanations were given, 3 were partially upheld and explanations given, no complaints were upheld and 3 were withdrawn. Upheld complaints are always reviewed in order to feed into learning for the service and to identify areas for improvement.



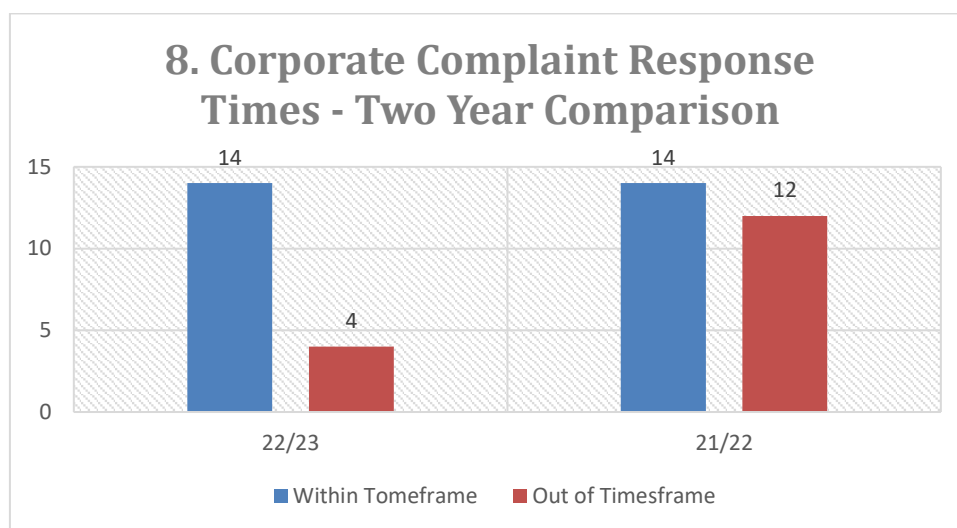
Enquiry Outcomes

Enquiry outcomes are shown below with 79 being 'information given' to advise complainants of the correct process. There was a 50% increase in the number of Ofsted enquiries received in 2022-23. 59% of the enquiries received from Ofsted were mainly in relation to safeguarding concerns, these enquiries are routinely sent on for the attention of the Assistant Director for Education Services, and some may result in follow-up enquiries with the school or academy. Five enquiries were withdrawn and eleven were not upheld.

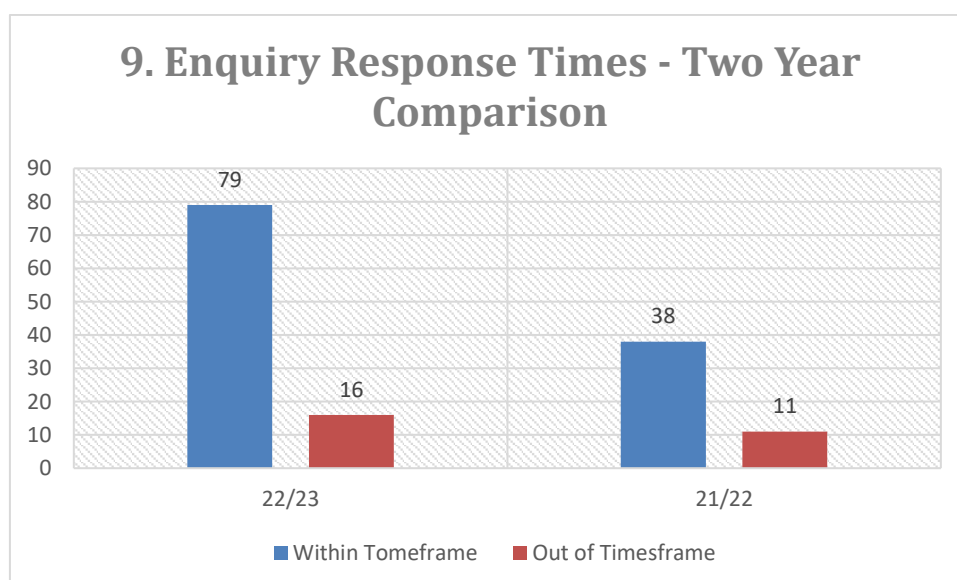


2.4 Response times

There has been a slight reduction in the number of corporate complaints being responded to within timeframe down to 77% during 2022-23 compared to 85% in 2021-22. However, we have hypothesised this is likely due to the higher volume of enquiries that were received throughout the year.

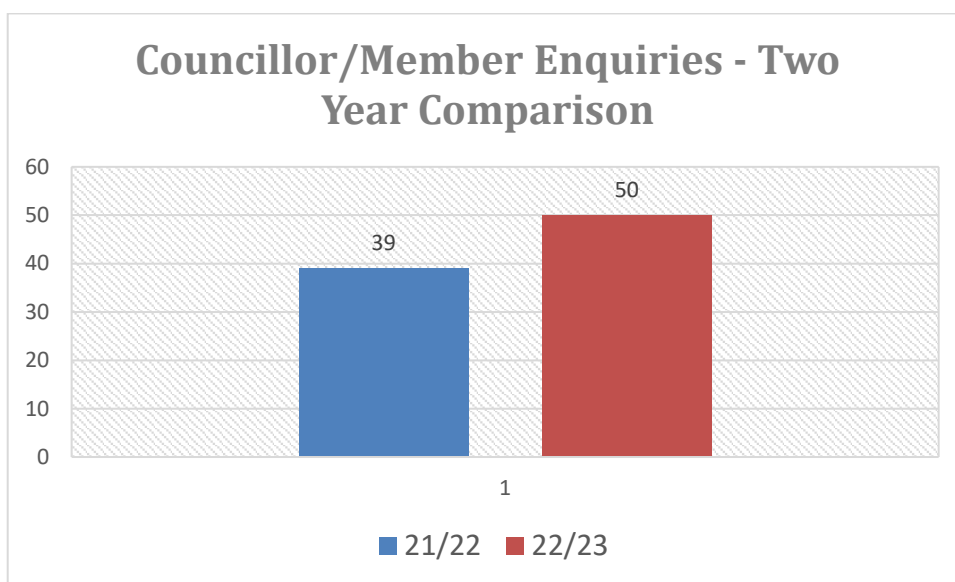


Of the 95 enquiries received during 2022-23, 79 (80%) were responded to within timeframe an improvement on the 72% in 2021-22, coupled with the fact that the number of enquiries received rose by 93% in 2022-23, this is very encouraging.



3. Members' Correspondence

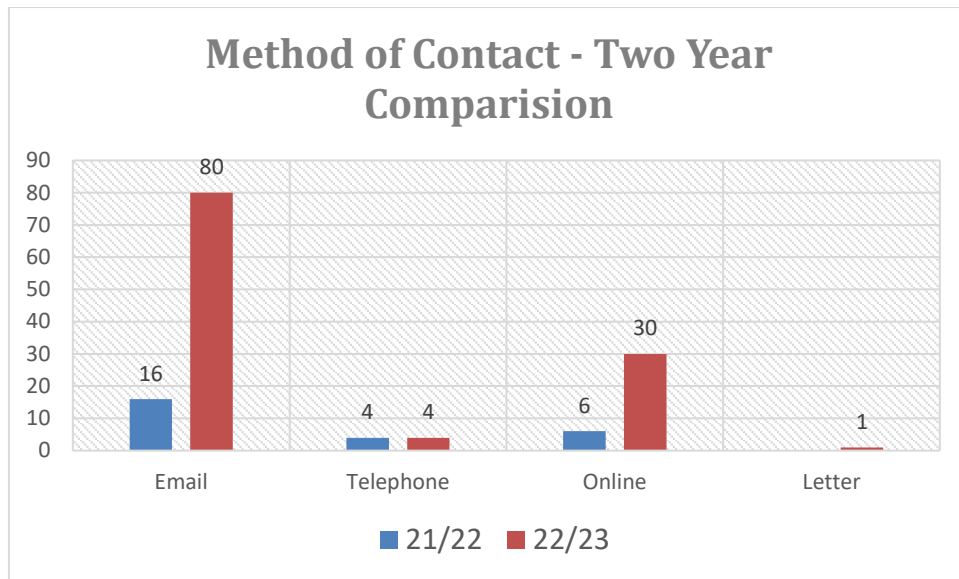
Councillor and Member enquiries increased by 28% to 50 in 2022/23 compared to 39 in 2021/22, with 92% being responded to within timescale. It should be noted that it is likely that there may have been many more enquiries than the numbers being reported here due to them being sent directly to officers within the service. Officers are reminded to ensure that SCCI is aware of such enquiries so that we can report on them more accurately.



4. Method of Contact

Email continues to be the preferred method of contact for Corporate Complaints and Enquiries in 2022/23 at 69%. Despite numbers still being relatively low, we have seen an encouraging increase in those coming through online with a rise of 80% from six in 2021-22 to 30 in 2022-23.

Havering is currently in the process of procuring a new complaints and information case management system from ROL Solutions, Freedom of Information requests will be rolled out first, followed by Subject Access Requests, and then complaints. It is hoped that this will enhance user experience and improve on reporting capabilities.



5. Compliments

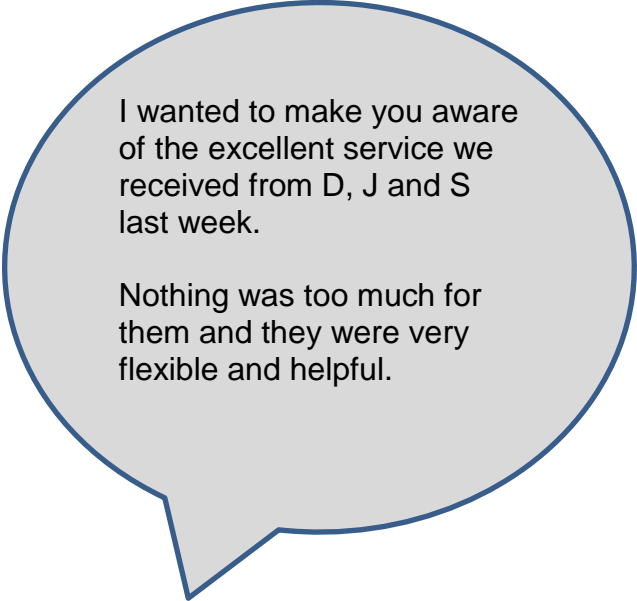
There was an increase in the number of compliments received for Education from two in 201-23 to 13 in 2022-23, however, the low numbers reported here are likely to be a result of compliments not being shared with SCCI by the officers within the service. Officers are reminded to share all compliments so that we are able to accurately reflect the good work being undertaken.

Overall, the service provided is exceptional and impactful

We have found the service of a superior quality and we really appreciate your time and efforts.

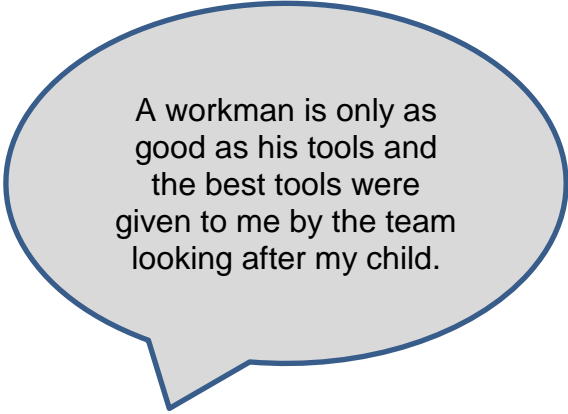
It's a real relief, I can't describe just how elated I am. So, this is just a little note from me on behalf of J to say we are grateful and what you do makes a big difference.

Doing a job is one thing but to understand you job and do it with love and dedication is something which B is an expert in. Thanku so much for all the help love and affection u have given to H me and my family.♥



I wanted to make you aware of the excellent service we received from D, J and S last week.

Nothing was too much for them and they were very flexible and helpful.



A workman is only as good as his tools and the best tools were given to me by the team looking after my child.

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, and 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 2022-23 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.