

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

Comments, Compliments and Complaints



Leicester
City Council

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Introduction

Leicester City Council's Children's Services are committed to putting people first. We are always working hard to improve the services we provide. If you use our services, or wish to use our services, you may want to make a comment, compliment or complaint.

Comments

Your comments and ideas can help us change the way we do things for the better – sometimes the simplest suggestion can make the biggest difference. We can't promise to use every suggestion we get, but we do promise to listen and to use what we can. If you have ideas about how we can improve, talk to the staff working with you, their team manager or the customer feedback and complaints manager.

Compliments

If the service we provide to you has pleased you, let us know - compliments help us to share and promote good practice. If you think a member of staff (or a team) has been particularly helpful and deserves special recognition we would like to know. With your permission we will publish your comments in our staff newsletter so that we can ensure that everyone gets to know when someone has done well. You can let us know when you are pleased with our service or a member of staff has done well by contacting the team manager or the customer feedback and complaints manager on 0116 454 6516.

Complaints

You can complain if you are a user of a service, or feel you have a right to a service from Children's Services, or if you are a carer or a representative acting on the user's behalf.

If you do not fall into one of the groups above, you may be entitled to make a complaint under Leicester City Council's corporate complaints procedure. You can obtain a corporate complaint form by contacting Customer Services on 0116 454 1000, by visiting one of our customer contact centres or by visiting www.leicester.gov.uk

If you want to make a complaint, you can:

- Talk to your social worker (if you have one) or anyone who works for Children's Services
- Ring and speak to the customer feedback and complaints manager
- Write to or email the complaints manager

Although we always try to deliver good quality services, we know that from time to time things can go wrong. If this happens, it is important that you let us know. Initially we will try to resolve issues quickly and informally, however this is not always possible and you may wish to make a formal complaint. We see complaints as valuable feedback – please be assured that you will not be treated less favourably or have any services withdrawn as a result of making a complaint.

Social Services legislation says that we must set up a simple-to-use complaints procedure for service users who have had a problem with the services we provide. We have a three-stage complaints process so that you can be sure that your concerns are looked into properly and treated fairly.

Stage 1

If you are unhappy with the services we provide or the way you have been treated by a member of staff it is important that you let us know as soon as possible. Once we know something isn't right we can start to sort it out. The easiest and quickest way for you to let us know there is a problem is to talk to the staff working with you or their team manager, but if you don't feel able to do this you can contact our complaints manager who will make sure your complaint is looked into (see back of booklet for contact details).

The complaints manager will allocate your complaint to a manager who has knowledge of your case. They will investigate and respond to you formally in writing. This should take no more than 20 working days. For more serious complaints you may ask to start at Stage 2 of the complaints procedure.

Stage 2

If things have not been resolved to your satisfaction at Stage 1 you can ask for your complaint to progress to Stage 2. To do this you need to contact the complaints manager within 20 working days of receipt of the Stage 1 response.

An independent person who does not work for Leicester City Council will be asked to investigate your complaint. They will meet with you, record your 'Record of Complaint' and ask you to sign it. Once they have looked at the files and talked to everyone involved they will produce a written report with recommendations. A service director will then decide what action we should take and confirm this to you in a letter. We will aim to respond within 25 working days from the date we receive your signed Record of Complaint.

If there is a delay, the independent investigator will inform you of the reasons for this and the date on which you can expect to receive a response. This should take no more than 65 working days.

Stage 3

If you are still dissatisfied you can ask for a review panel. To do this you should contact the complaints manager within 20 working days of receipt of the Stage Two response.

An independent panel (made up of 3 people who don't work for the Council) will look at the way your complaint was handled. You will be invited to the meeting of the review panel and will be asked which areas of your complaint remain unresolved. You are able to bring a friend or another person to the meeting to support you. Once the panel has heard from both sides they will produce a list of recommendations about what should happen next (you will get a copy). This should happen within 5 working days of the date of the panel.

The director of Children's Services will consider the recommendations, decide what action to take and confirm this decision to you in writing. You should receive this decision within 20 working days of the Review Panel.

What if I am still dissatisfied?

Stage 3 is as far as you can go within the department's procedure. You can, however, contact the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman investigates complaints about services provided by local councils. They would usually ask you to follow the three stages before investigating your complaint.

Local Government Ombudsman

PO Box 4771

Coventry CV4 0EH

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Fax: 024 768 20001

Text: "Call Back" to 0762 480 3014

Or you can fill out an online complaints form on www.lgo.org.uk

Contact

Customer feedback and complaints Manager
Freepost RTRZ-TSAH-EXBZ
Complaints and Access to Records Team
Leicester City Council
10 York Road
Leicester
LE1 5TS

Or Email: youngpeople-complaints@leicester.gov.uk

If you wish to speak to the customer feedback and complaints manager
Tel: 0116 454 6516

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