

Standards Committee

27th November 2008



Annual Report of Children and Young People's Services Representations Procedure 2007/08

Report of David Williams, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services

Purpose of Report

- 1 To inform Standards Committee about the performance of Children and Young People's Services in respect of the handling and consideration of Representations, as contained in the attached Annual Report on Representations 2007/08.

Background

- 2 Publication of an Annual Report on Representations is a statutory requirement in accordance with the 1989 Children Act, which specifies requirements for Children's Social Care to publish details about representations, including comments/suggestions, compliments and complaints, received from service users, carers and their representatives during the year.
- 3 Legislation also requires that the Annual Report contains information about how Children and Young People's Services has performed in its management and operation of the Representations Procedure against national and local standards.
- 4 Non-statutory representations are covered by a separate regulatory framework. There is no legislative requirement for the reporting of these however, as part of our commitment to providing an integrated system, information has been included in the overall report.
- 5 Complaints about schools received from children, young people and their representatives are not dealt with by the CYPS Complaints Officer. They are recorded and handled by the School and Governor Support Service. This report does not include any information about these representations.
- 6 The Annual Report was considered and endorsed by Children and Young People's Services Senior Leadership Team on 22nd October 2008.

Content

- 7 This is the second annual report to cover performance of statutory and non-statutory representations within CYPS. The report brings together information gathered in relation to the activities involved with the receiving, handling and consideration of compliments, comments/suggestions and complaints from service users, carers and their representatives.
- 8 Information includes statistical data on performance against standards, key issues arising from investigations of complaints, in particular, and their impact on policy, procedure and practice, and any lessons learned across the Service.

Performance

- 9 In 2007/08, CYPS received a total of 170 Representations. 89 related to statutory Representations. Of these, 61 were formal complaints about children's social care services, 26 were compliments and 2 were comments. 81 related to non-statutory Representations. Of these 11 were complaints and the remainder were compliments.
- 10 During the reporting year performance was as follows;
 - The overall number of statutory complaints reduced and the number of statutory compliments increased from 2007/08.
 - The overall number of non-statutory complaints and compliments increased from 2007/08.
 - 86.4% of statutory complaints received were acknowledged within the timescale of 2 days.
 - 57.4% of statutory complaints were responded to within the 20 working day timescale.

Learning from Statutory Representations

- 11 The underlying message from complaints/complainants is that communication is vital to building and retaining the confidence of service users and their representatives. Lack of communication is the root cause of most complaints. The reasons for this are many-fold. However the relatively low ratio of statutory complaints to contacts suggests that the service is working hard to maintain good levels of communication with children, young people and their representatives.
- 12 As a direct result of some of the statutory complaints received, action has been taken to improve practice and minimise further complaints in the future. Specific examples include:
 - Additional training for staff about autism and Aspergers syndrome
 - Care Team meetings being held every 4 weeks to enable appropriate information sharing
 - Partnership working with families in crisis situations

Recommendations

13 Standards Committee are requested to:

- note the content of the Annual Report and provide feedback on the contents if appropriate.
- endorse the publication of the Report and its circulation to key stakeholders.

Background Papers

Annual Report on Representations 2007/08.

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