



**Durham County Council**

**Children and Adult Services (CAS)**

**Annual Representations  
Report 2011/12**

**Services to Children, Young  
People and their Families**



# CAS Annual Representations Report 2011/12 Services to Children, Young People and their Families

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***This report is published under the provisions of the Children's Act 1989  
Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006***

# Annual Representations Report 2011/12

## Services to Children, Young People and their Families

### Executive Summary

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the sixth annual report detailing the performance of Durham County Council's Representations function in respect of services to children, young people and their families for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. Representations cover compliments, suggestions, comments and complaints made by children and young people who are service users or by their carers and/or representatives on their behalf.
- 1.2 The aim of this report is to provide performance information in a concise manner. Detailed information, such as the aims of and procedures for handling complaints, can be supplied upon request.
- 1.3 It should be noted that former Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) Service Areas reduced from six to five, with some title changes, with effect from 1 April 2011 (and then further reduced to four service areas on 1 April 2012 when Finance services became part of the Council's Resources Service).
- 1.4 Explanations of terms used can be found in Appendix A and in the Glossary of Abbreviations in Appendix D at the end of the report.
- 1.5 Statutory complaints are complaints made about social care services, as defined in *The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006*, and the guidance documents which accompanies the regulations: *Getting the Best from Complaints*.
- 1.6 Corporate complaints are complaints which are not about social care services but are about other services for children, young people and their families. For matters where there is an appeals process, the complaint may be made about the process but not the decision.

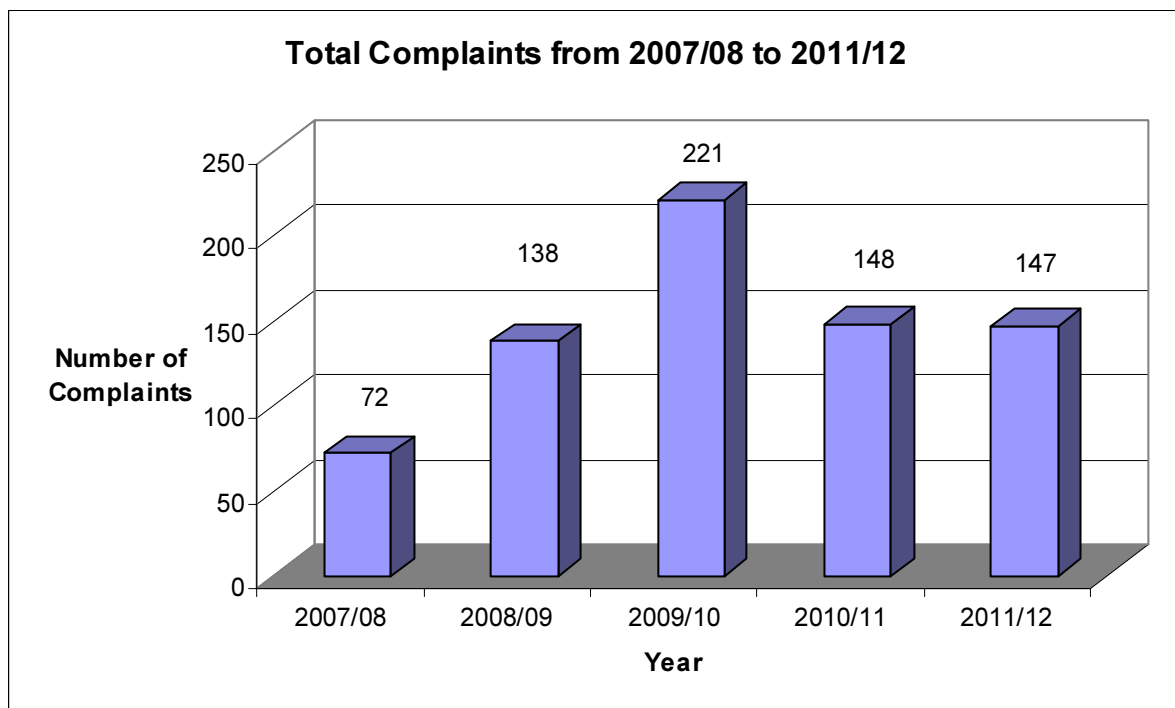
#### 2.0 Key Messages

##### Representations Overview

- 2.1 In 2011/12, a total of 661 representations were received in relation to services for children, young people and their families in comparison to 625 in 2010/11. This represents an increase of 5.8% in representations received.

	2010/11	% of Total	2011/12	% of Total	Direction of Travel
Complaints	148	24	147	22	Improved
Compliments	414	10	446	10	Improved
Comments	61	<1	64	1	Improved
Suggestions	2	66	4	67	Improved
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>100</b>	Improved

- 2.2 Of the 661 representations, the majority were compliments, representing 67% of the total representations received. Complaints represented 22%.
- 2.3 Performance has improved across all types of representation when compared with the previous year. Complaints have reduced marginally and there are more compliments, comments and suggestions. There are more representations being made but a higher percentage of these were of a positive nature.
- 2.4 Compliments as a % of total representations received as increased year on year since 2006/7. Additionally, 2011/12 represents the second year running where the number of complaints received has reduced as illustrated below:

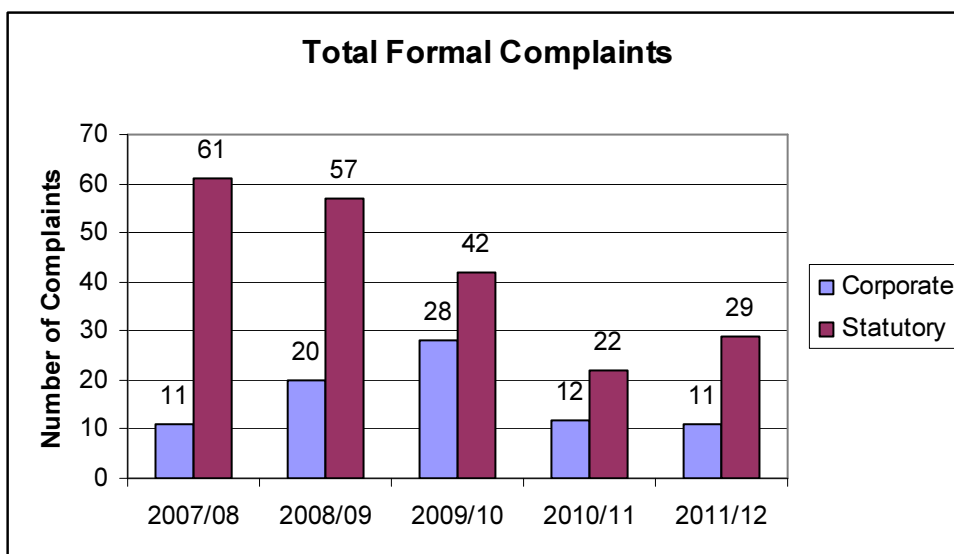


- 2.5 The service area which delivers a high number of ‘front line’ services (Safeguarding and Specialist Services) received the highest proportion of complaints with 127 out of 147 complaints (86.4%) relating to social care services.

**Performance**

- 2.6 The timescale for sending an acknowledgement of receipt of a complaint to the complainant is 2 working days from receipt of complaint. 100% of formal complaints received were acknowledged within 2 working days.
- 2.7 Performance has been sustained in acknowledging formal complaints over the past 2 years. 100% of all new formal complaints were acknowledged within 2 working days in 2011/12 and 2010/11 in comparison to 94.2% in 2009/10.
- 2.7 Informal complaints are where the complaints are dealt with *informally, normally at a local level within a reasonable length of time*. Formal complaints are where resolution at an informal level has not been successful or the complaint is particularly complex and requires to be immediately actioned under the formal procedure at Stage 1. An investigation will be undertaken by a Senior Manager within the service. The reporting

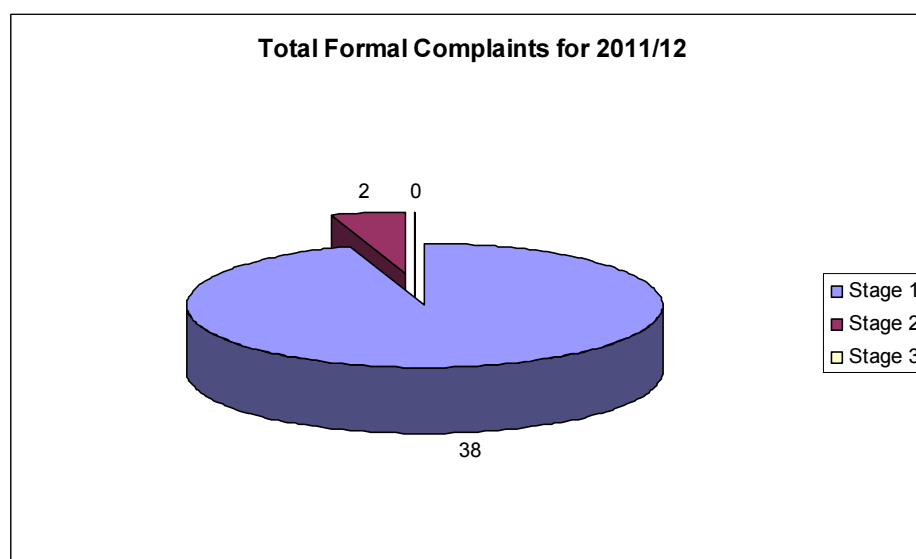
year has seen a slight increase in the number of complaints dealt with under the formal procedure, as illustrated below:



2.12 A lower percentage of complaints were resolved at first point of contact before entering the formal process in comparison to the previous year. 72.8% of complaints received were resolved informally compared with 77% in 2011/12 (68% in 2009/10 and 42% in 2008/09).

2.13 There are 3 stages within the formal procedure. Stage 1 involves an investigation by a strategic manager within the service. Stage 2 is where an independent evaluation and investigation into the complaints are undertaken by an impartial and independent person who may be from outside the Council. Stage 3 is either a Review Panel or the Local Ombudsman depending on whether the complaint is statutory or corporate.

Of the 40 formal complaints in 2011/12, 38 were stage 1 complaints, 2 were stage 2 complaints. There were no stage 3 complaints as the pie chart below shows.



- 2.14 Overall performance in resolving formal complaints within timescale has marginally deteriorated over the reporting year.
- 50% (19 out of 38) of Stage 1 complaints were resolved within timescale in comparison with 51.6% the previous year and 72.3% in 2009/10.
  - Neither of the 2 stage 2 complaints received were resolved within timescale. Both investigations were carried out by Independent Investigation Officers (IOs) and Independent Persons (IPs) from outside the Local Authority. Reasons for this are given in Part 2.
- 2.15 An Ofsted Inspection of Durham's safeguarding and looked after children services reported very favourably about the complaints process for services for children and young people, noting that "Complaints policies are well developed and disseminated. The council has a robust approach to the collation and evaluation of complaints. Complaints are dealt with swiftly....Lessons learned from complaints have helped to improve services.... They are well developed and used successfully by looked after children and young people...." (Ofsted, 28 November - 13 December 2011)

## **Benchmarking**

- 2.16 Results of a benchmarking exercise with a random sample of North East Local Authorities shows that Durham's number of complaints are below the average for the number per 1,000 0-19 population, number per Looked After Child and per number of children on a child protection plan. Durham also has fewer stage 2 investigations per 1,000 0-19 population than 3 of the 4 comparator authorities and is equal with the 4<sup>th</sup> Local Authority.

## **Outcome**

- 2.17 All complaints are taken seriously and investigated. This does not necessarily mean that all complaints, or even the majority, are upheld (justified)\*, as the figures for the reporting year show:
- 20% of formal complaints were upheld (justified)
  - 30% of formal complaints were partially upheld (partially justified)
  - 42.5% of formal complaints were not upheld (not justified)
  - 2.5% of formal complaints were withdrawn  
(5% of formal complaints are ongoing at time of writing report)

*\* (see Appendix D Glossary of terms and abbreviations)*

## **Themes**

- 2.18 A perception of poor service accounted for 35% of formal complaints in 2011/12, a decrease from the 2010/11 figure of 29.4% (from 42.1% the preceding year).
- 2.19 It is pleasing to note that the percentage of formal statutory complaints regarding the attitude and conduct of staff has again shown a decrease from previous years to 2.5% (from 14.7% in 2010/11, 17.1% in 2009/10 and 28.6% in 2008/09).
- 2.20 The main theme that has been identified from complaints received during 2010/11 is 'not feeling listened to'.

## Learning as a result of Complaints

2.21 Durham County Council learns from complaints that service users and their representatives make. Below are some examples of lessons learned.

Recommendation	Action
Staff should ensure that they are more helpful regarding telephone enquiries and retain a positive attitude with service users	This was included in team plans which are monitored by each strategic manager. A mystery shopping exercise was followed up by Business Support Services to check on improvement with positive results.
Keep families informed when staff are unable to attend appointments, so that service users are able to make alternative arrangements in their lives.	This issue has been raised by Head of Service in 2 of the last 3 practitioner briefings (over 150 staff attend) as part of a slide covering feedback and learning from complaints.
Ensure that there is good joined-up working between agencies working with children and young people with complex needs, to ensure that the most appropriate services are in place.	Services are now fully integrated and co-located and lead professionals are in place. Levels of complaints from parents of disabled children have dropped significantly in the last five years (they were the highest number of complainants previously).
Staff to be regularly reminded of their roles, duties and responsibilities with respect to children who are being placed for adoption.	Half day training sessions are currently being delivered by a member of adoption panel and adoption Team Manager for all social worker staff to emphasise this.

# Annual Representations Report 2011/12

## Services to Children, Young People and their Families

### PART ONE – INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

- 1 This is the sixth Annual Report detailing the performance of Durham County Council's (DCC) Representations function in respect of services to children, young people and their families. Representations cover compliments, suggestions, comments and complaints made by children and young people who are service users; or by their carers and/or other representatives on their behalf.
- 2 For brevity, the aims and details of procedures for handling complaints are not provided within this report. This information can be supplied upon request.
- 3 It should be noted that former Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) Service Areas reduced from six to five, with some title changes, with effect from 1 April 2011 (and then further reduced to four service areas on 1 April 2012 when Finance services became part of the Council's Resources Service).
- 4 A number of terms are used throughout this report which are explained at Appendix A.
- 5 Requirements on the procedures for handling and considering statutory representations about children's social care services are enshrined in statute; The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 sets down the procedures that Local Authorities (LAs) with social care responsibilities must follow when a representation about social care services is made.
- 6 The same legislation requires the publication of an Annual Report to inform service users, their carers and/or representatives, elected members, staff, the general public and other statutory organisations such as Ofsted, about how the service has performed in meeting key national and local standards, in respect of handling complaints.
- 7 Although there is no legislative requirement for the reporting of corporate complaints, CAS is committed to making such information available in order that there is integrity in the governance procedures and open and transparent communication with the people who use our services, the wider public and other partners. The Service also learns from *all* representations, both statutory and corporate. This report therefore provides information on the full range of representations made across the service.
- 8 As noted at Appendix A, there are various stages to the complaints process with specific timescales for each stage of the process. These are shown in Figure 1 overleaf. The statutory and corporate procedures each have their own timescales, however, the 'customer' (service user / complainant) does not see any difference in the level of service offered.



**Figure 1 – Timescales for complaints acknowledgement and resolution**

	<b>Statutory</b>	<b>Corporate</b>
<b>Acknowledgment of complaint</b>	Within 2 working days of receipt of complaint	Within 2 working days of receipt of complaint
<b>Stage 1 (formal) resolution and response</b>	20 working days from receipt of complaint	10 working days from receipt of complaint
<b>Stage 2 (formal) resolution and response</b>	Within 65 working days from agreement to commence Stage 2 investigation	Within 20 working days from agreement to commence Stage 2 investigation.
<b>Stage 3</b>	Review Panel convened within 30 working days of request to go to Stage 3	Not applicable (Stage 3 is to the Local Government Ombudsman)
<b>Stage 3 response</b>	Within 5 working days of panel meeting (response from Legal Services)	Not applicable
<b>Stage 3 final response</b>	Within 15 days of final response (from Head of Service)	Not applicable

*For a more detailed overview of the representations procedures, the Representations and Quality Officer (RQO) can be contacted as detailed at the end of this report or further information can be accessed via the intranet (DCC employees only) or the internet for members of the public.*

- 9 No formal timescales exist for resolution of complaints at an informal level but the service aims to resolve these as soon as possible, at first point of contact and within a reasonable length of time.
- 10 Whilst there are processes to be adhered to in the handling of complaints, the real issues that arise within people's complaints are rarely reflected in statistical analysis. This report therefore reflects the quality of life issues for service users that have led them to complain about (or compliment) the services they receive as well as providing data on measurable performance.
- 11 Lessons learned from the issues raised in representations are used to inform service improvements, examples of which are detailed in Section Eight of this report.
- 12 It should be noted that complaints about school-based matters are dealt with directly by the school and governing body, in line with the School Complaints Procedure, a copy of which is available from School and Governor Support Services (SGSS). Information about such complaints is therefore not included in this report. For matters where there is an appeals process, a complaint may be made about the process but not the decision.

## Annual Representations Report 2011/12 Services for Children, Young People and their Families

### Overview of Representations

#### Breakdown of Representations by type 2011/12

- 13 As Figure 2 below shows, 661 new representations were made in 2011/12, an increase of 5.8% (36) on the previous year.
- 14 The overall number of compliments also increased and it is pleasing to note that 67.4% of all representations received were in relation to compliments (in comparison to 66% in 2010/11, 65% in 2009/10 and 64% in 2008/09).
- 15 73% of complaints received were resolved informally compared with 77% in 2010/11, 68% in 2009/10 and 42% in 2008/09. The high levels of compliments recorded mean that for every negative representation received (via a comment or complaint) there were over twice as many positive ones (ratio 1:2.1).

**Figure 2 – Overview of Representations received 2011/12 (table)**

	Corporate	Statutory	Total 2011/12	Total 2010/11	DOT*
<b>Complaints – Informal</b>	9	98	107	114	↓
<b>Complaints – Stage 1</b>	11	27	38	31	↑
<b>Complaints – Stage 2</b>	0	2	2	3	↓
<b>Total Complaints</b>	20	127	147	148	↓
<b>Compliments</b>	239	207	446	414	↑
<b>Comments</b>	0	64	64	61	↑
<b>Suggestions</b>	2	2	4	2	↑
		<b>Total number of Representations</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>625</b>	↑

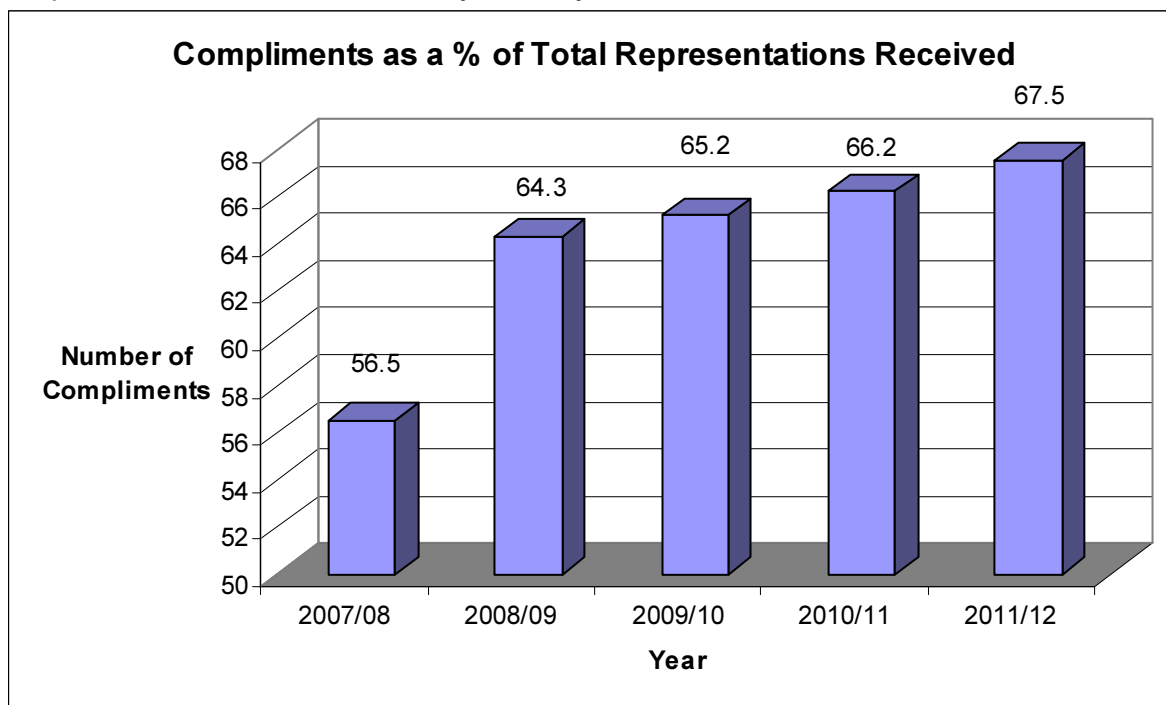
\* Direction of Travel

#### Complaints

- 16 The overall number of complaints decreased marginally from 148 to 147 over the period 2010/11 to 2011/12.
- 17 Fewer complaints were resolved informally before entering the formal process. There were fewer stage 2 complaints compared with the previous year.

## Compliments

- 18 The overall number of compliments has increased by 7% from 414 in 2010/11 to 446 in 2011/12 and compliments received by the service as a percentage of all representations have shown a year on year increase since 2006 as shown below:



## Comments and Suggestions

- 19 There has been a slight increase in the number of comments and suggestions submitted.

## Corporate Representations

- 20 It is pleasing to note that during the reporting year the number of corporate complaints about services for children and young people fell despite efficiency savings being implemented. A total of 261 corporate representations were received during the reporting year, compared with 364 in 2010/11, 449 in 2009/10 and 335 in 2008/09. Compliments accounted for 91.6% of corporate representations, compared with 90.4% in 2010/11, 83.7% in 2009/10 and 83.6% in 2008/09. Although representations have decreased in relation to corporate representations, a greater percentage of these are compliments.

## Statutory Representations

- 21 The number of statutory complaints rose during the same period but this is believed to be as a result of increased actions to safeguard children leading to more parents making representations to the Council.
- 22 In relation to statutory representations, a total of 400 were received, compared to 261 in 2010/11, 417 in 2009/10, 331 in 2008/09 and 89 in 2007/08. The past few years have seen system improvements for more robust recording of representations, and particularly compliments. It is noted that of the 400 representations, over half (51.8%)

were compliments about children's social care services, compared with 32.6% of statutory representations being complimentary in 2010/11.

## Annual Representations Report 2011/12 Services for Children, Young People and their Families

### PART TWO – PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING

#### Informally Resolved Complaints

23 Over the past few years, efforts have been made for more complaints to be resolved 'informally' at a local level without the need for a formal investigation by a senior manager. This is a view supported by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). In the Annual Review letter to the Councils' Chief Executive (22 June 2012) the LGO confirmed that *"We support local complaint resolution as the most speedy route to remedy"*.

Informal resolution improves service user relations and satisfaction and minimises the number of complaints initially actioned at a formal level, thereby potentially resulting in cost and time savings to the Local Authority

24 The Ofsted inspection report of Safeguarding and Looked after Children services dated 25 January 2012 made a number of positive references to the handling of complaints and noted that "Complaints are dealt with swiftly" and "virtually all complaints are dealt with at an early stage."

25 The table below summarises the numbers and percentages of complaints which were informally resolved during the reporting and preceding years:

	% resolved informally 2009/10	% resolved informally 2010/11	Total number complaints 2011/12	Number resolved informally 2011/12	% resolved informally 2011/12
Statutory	-	80.9%	127	98	<b>77.2%</b>
Corporate	-	63.6%	20	9	<b>45.0%</b>
All	<b>31.7%</b>	<b>77.0%</b>	147	107	<b>72.8%</b>

26 Every complaint is considered on a case by case basis to decide if it can initially be actioned 'informally' or 'formally' at stage 1 of the formal process.

27 If an informal complaint cannot be resolved within a reasonable timescale (usually within a few days), it will usually be logged as a 'formal' complaint to be investigated fully and formally under the appropriate Stage 1 procedure.

28 Informal resolution can provide greater service user satisfaction and gives the Service an opportunity to resolve matters before they are escalated into the 'formal' arena. Where a formal investigation is carried out, this will be by a senior manager of the service, and may be time-consuming if the complaint has reached such a point that there are numerous elements. It is therefore costly in terms of time and people resources; and this cost increases further if a statutory complaint is subsequently escalated to the next stage, as statutory Stage 2 investigations incur a cost to the LA for an independent Investigating Officer (IO) and Independent Person (IP).

29 In recent years Durham has had fewer complaints taken to Stage 2 than neighbouring local authorities therefore the practice of trying to resolve more complaints 'informally' at the outset appears to be beneficial.

- 30 A benchmarking exercise using a random sample was undertaken with neighbouring authorities within the North East region. Durham performs better than the average in relation to the number of complaints made, number of stage 2 complaints and number of complaints per LAC and Children on a Child Protection Plan, using the relevant populations as a comparator.
- 31 The table below outlines that Durham has fewer complaints per 1, 000 of the 0-19 population than 3 of the 4 neighbours; and fewer complaints per Child on a Child Protection Plan than 2 of the 4. Durham also had fewer Stage 2 investigations than 3 of the other 4 Local Authorities and is on par with one other authority with a rate of 0.02 Stage 2 investigations per 1, 000 0-19 population.

	<b>Durham</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	
Informal	98	0	0	0	0	
Stage 1	27	48	49	29	133	
Stage 2	2	4	3	1	15	
Stage 3	0	4	0	1	3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>Average</b>
No. of complaints per 1, 000 (0-19 population)	1.10	1.54	2.06	0.68	2.41	1.56
No. of Stage 2 complaints per 1, 000 (0-19 population)	0.02	0.11	0.12	0.02	0.24	0.10
No. of complaints per Looked After Child	0.19	0.16	0.25	0.08	0.39	0.21
No of complaints per child with a child protection plan	0.29	0.22	0.51	0.16	0.38	0.31

- 32 All complaints that are resolved 'informally' are logged and any learning points are noted. The learning actions detailed in Section Eight are from both informally and formally resolved complaints.
- 33 Some examples of complaints which were informally resolved during the reporting year are given in Appendix B.

## Annual Representations Report 2011/12 Services for Children, Young People and their Families

### Formal Complaints 2011/12

- 34 The table below summarises that 40 complaints were taken through a formal complaints process during the reporting year.






	Statutory	Corporate	Totals
Stage 1	27	11	38
Stage 2	2	0	2
Stage 3	0	N/A	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>40</b>

- 35 During the preceding reporting year 2010/11, 35 complaints were actioned formally at Stage 1 or Stage 2 of the appropriate complaints procedure. There has therefore been an increase of 14.3% (from 35 to 40).

### Formal Complaints by Service Area

- 36 Figure 4 below illustrates that the vast majority of formal complaints (75%) were received in relation to SaSS which is not surprising given the large number of front facing contacts made with children, young people and their families by this service area. This compares with 67.6% in 2010/11 and 62.9% in 2009/10.

**Figure 4 – Formal complaints by Service Area**

Service Area	Number 2009/10	Number 2010/11	Number 2011/12	DOT
Safeguarding and Specialist Services	44	23	30	
County Wide Services (formerly Access and Inclusion)	14	3	4	
Extended Services (no longer a service area from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2011)	4	2	-	-
Finance Services	2	0	0	
Achievement Services	4	4	4	
Early Intervention & Partnership Service (formerly Strategic Commissioning)	2	2	2	
<b>Total no. of formal complaints</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>40</b>	

## Formal complaints made by service users or on their behalf

- 37 Figure 5 highlights that, as in previous years, the greatest majority of formal complaints were made by the parents of a child or young person. Many complaints from direct service users (children and young people) are resolved informally at a local level, for example those housed in secure accommodation. This is in line with the good practice guidance for actioning statutory complaints, which suggests that LAs should attempt to resolve complaints quickly and at the point of delivery.

**Figure 5 – Formal complaints made by service users or on their behalf**

Complainant	% 2009/10	% 2010/11	Number 2011/12	% 2011/12
Parent	52.9	52.9	25	<b>62.5</b>
Client (child/young person)	8.6	5.9	4	<b>10</b>
Client (adult)	2.9	8.8	0	-
Relative (Non Parent)	7.1	11.8	6	<b>15</b>
Carer	2.9	-	1	<b>2.5</b>
Other	24.3	20.6	4	<b>10</b>
			40	

- 38 The 4 complaints which were made by children and young people were made via Advocates from the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS), with whom the LA has a contract with to provide free advocacy service to children and young people who are looked after. It is pleasing to note that more clients have accessed the complaints procedure than in previous years. Although this remains at only 10% of the overall figure and action has been taken to ensure accessibility e.g. improving web access and changes to the children and young person's complaints leaflet.

## Formal complaints by theme

- 39 The broad nature of complaints received during the reporting year is illustrated in Figure 6 below.

**Figure 6 - Formal complaints by theme**

Main reason for complaint	% 2009/10	% 2010/11	Number 2011/12	% 2011/12
Poor Service	42.9	29.4	14	<b>35</b>
Staff Attitude or Conduct	17.1	14.7	1	<b>2.5</b>
Staff Attitude and Poor Service	7.1	11.8	6	<b>15</b>
Decision regarding service	21.4	17.7	12	<b>30</b>
Decision regarding service and Staff Conduct	4.3	14.7	3	<b>7.5</b>
Decision regarding service and Poor Service	Not noted	Not noted	3	<b>7.5</b>
Other	7.1	11.8	1	<b>2.5</b>
Total no. of formal complaints			40	<b>100%</b>

- 40 The percentage of complaints received in relation to poor service increased slightly from the preceding year; whilst the percentage relating to the decisions made by the



service increased considerably. It is worth noting that 70% of complaints received were either not upheld or only partially upheld (see Figure 8 overleaf so although service users complained that they had received poor services, in the majority of cases, investigations did not find evidence to support this.

- 41 In the case of statutory complaints, 37.9% (11 out of 29) were about perceived poor service (compared with 27.3% in 2010/11, 42.9% in 2009/10 and 30.6% in 2008/09). Many statutory complaints stem from highly emotive situations, often in cases where parents are unhappy that social care services have become involved in their children's lives; sometimes the children have been removed from their parents care as part of formal child protection proceedings.
- 42 It is pleasing to note that once again the percentage of formal statutory complaints regarding the attitude and conduct of staff has shown a decrease from previous years, at 2.5% (from 14.7% in 2010/11, 17.1% in 2009/10 and 28.6% in 2008/09).

### Formal complaints by outcome

- 43 The information in Figure 7 shows the balance between the number of formal complaints received and investigated compared with the number where it was found that the service had acted inappropriately or could have done more. Please refer to the glossary in Appendix D for full definitions.

**Figure 7 - formal complaints by outcome**

	No. upheld	No. partially upheld	No. not upheld	No. still outstanding*	No. withdrawn	Total no.
Statutory	6	11	9	2	1	29
Corporate	2	1	8	0	0	11
Total	8	12	17	2	1	40
<b>% of total (2011/12)</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>42.5%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>100%</b>
% of total (2010/11)	5.9%	44.1%	38.2%	8.8%	3.0%	
% of total (2009/10)	23.1%	27.7%	46.2%	0	3.1%	

\*outstanding at the time of writing this report (July 2012)

- 44 As Figure 7 shows, 52.5% of all formal complaints received in 2011/12 were completely or partially upheld (justified) compared with 50% in 2010/11. 42.5% were not upheld. For formal statutory complaints, 9 out of 29 (31%) were not upheld; and 8 out of 11 (72.7%) formal corporate complaints were not upheld.

## Performance indicators – Stage 1 complaints

- 45 As in 2010/11, during the reporting year 100% of all Stage 1 complaints received were acknowledged by the Service within the required timescale of 2 working days, which is an improvement on the performance of 2009/10 at 93.8%.
- 46 As Figure 8 below shows, 50% of complaints taken through the formal Stage 1 process were resolved within the target of 20 working days (statutory) and 10 working days (corporate). This performance is worse than that of the preceding years. The system of informing complainants of any expected delay (via written or verbal means) with the reason(s) why has continued during the reporting year.

**Figure 8 - Performance indicators – timescales (Stage 1 complaints)**

	% of total 2009/10	% of total 2010/11	No. 2011/12	% of total 2011/12	DOT
Stage 1 acknowledged in timescale	93.8 %	100%	38	100%	↔
Stage 1 statutory resolved in timescale	60.0%	25%	13	48.2%	↑
Stage 1 corporate resolved in timescale	92%	100%	6	54.5%	↓
<b>Total Stage 1 resolved in timescale</b>	78.3%	51.6%	19	50.0%	↓

- 47 Those complaints which are formally investigated tend to be the most complex ones, often involving a number of elements. Such complaints are investigated by senior managers in addition to their usual caseload, which may result in complaint investigation being de-prioritised behind issues of a more pressing nature involving child safeguarding.
- 48 Reasons for the delay in resolving complaints within timescale are explored on a quarterly basis via the quarterly representations reports and senior managers' performance days. Complainants are kept informed by the investigating manager and/or the RQO about the progress of the complaint.
- 49 It is noted that performance in relation to resolution of corporate Stage 1 complaints has worsened. Reasons for this have been explored. In the case of 3 complaints, the issues were particularly complex and necessitated numerous interviews which delayed matters beyond the 10 working day resolution timescale. In 2 cases there was some delay in allocating the complaint to an appropriate manager for investigation due to restructure and staff absence. This has been brought to the attention of senior managers to prevent recurrence.

## Performance Indicators - Stage 2 complaints

- 50 Where formal complaints are received which are particularly complex, or when complainants have remained dissatisfied with the response at Stage 1 of the formal procedure, complaints are investigated at Stage 2, by a person who was not involved at Stage 1.
- 51 The procedures for statutory and corporate complaints taken to Stage 2 differ slightly in that for corporate Stage 2 complaints, the investigation is undertaken by staff within the LA; the Customer Complaints Unit (CCU) within Neighbourhood Services will allocate an appropriate senior manager to carry out the investigation.
- 52 For statutory complaints, an Independent Officer (IO) is appointed, as well as an Independent Person (IP) who oversees the process to ensure it is carried out appropriately. During the reporting period the LA had a contract with North East Consortium (NEC), part of NYAS, to supply IPs.
- 53 As Figure 9 below shows, both complaints taken to Stage 2 were acknowledged within the target of 2 working days; however neither were resolved in timescale (65 working days for statutory complaints, 20 working days for corporate).

**Figure 9 - Performance indicators – timescales (Stage 2 complaints)**

	No. 2010/11	% of total 2010/11	No. 2011/12	% of total 2011/12	DOT
Stage 2 acknowledged in timescale	3	100%	2	100%	↔
Stage 2 statutory resolved in timescale	0	0%	0	0%	↔
Stage 2 corporate resolved in timescale	0	0%	n/a	n/a	-
<b>Total Stage 2 resolved in timescale</b>	0	0%	0	0%	↔

- 54 Of the 2 stage 2 investigations during the reporting year:
- One was responded to 152 working days after being taken to Stage 2. This means that 152 days (31 weeks) passed between an independent Investigating Officer being appointed, and the final version of her report being completed. This represents 87 days over timescale.
  - One was responded to 178 working days after being taken to Stage 2. This means that 178 days (37.5 weeks) passed between an independent Investigating Officer being appointed, and the final version of her report being completed. This represents 113 days over timescale.

For both complaints, the Investigating Officer (IO) included a chronology within the report detailing the length of time taken to carry out interviews, look at records, write the reports and so forth. As part of the Independent Person (IP) role, the IP had to comment within their reports about reasons for delay and if these could have been avoided; in both cases the delays were considered to be acceptable in view of the complexity of the cases and the complaints. Complainants are kept informed of progress and delays by the IO.

- 55 Since new contract arrangements for Investigating Officers was changed on 1st January 2012, to an approved regional list, timescales for Stage 2 investigations have significantly improved.

## Compliments

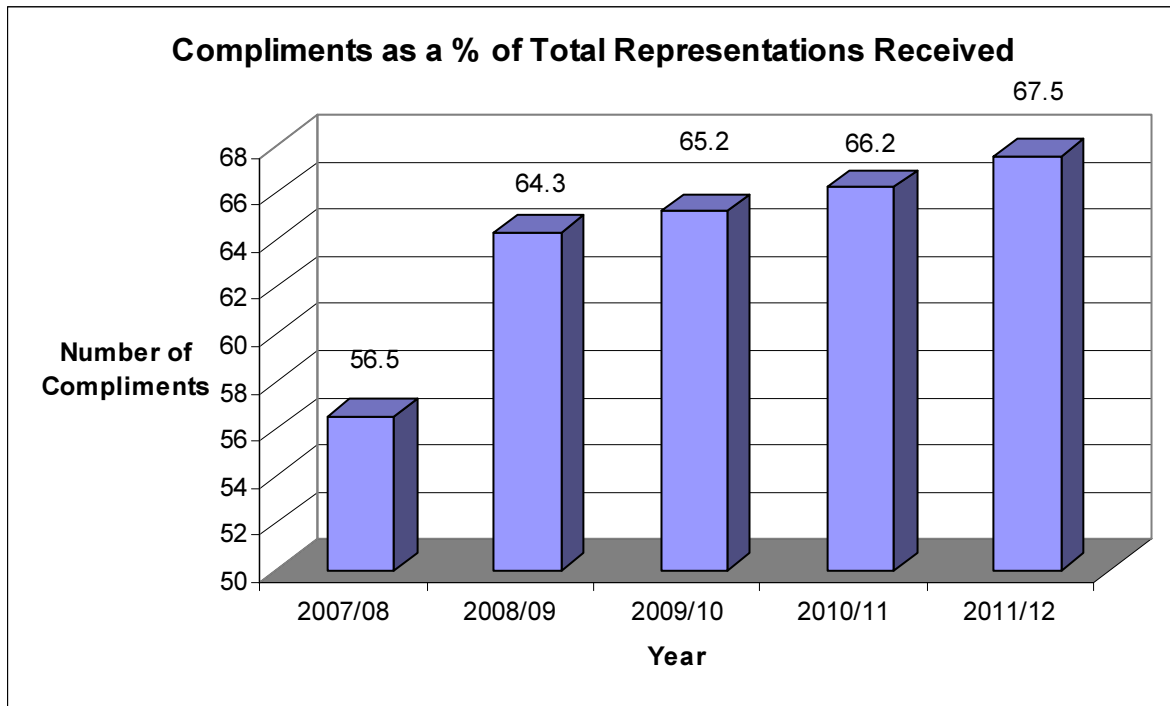
- 56 Paragraph 2.1 and Figure 2 (Section Two) show that during the reporting year there were a total of 446 compliments (compared with 414 in 2010/11, 565 in 2009/10 and 328 in 2008/09) which can be evidenced in the form of letters, e-mails, cards and completed survey forms (customer service questionnaires). There were 207 compliments regarding Statutory Services and 239 regarding other services, as shown in Figure 10 below:

**Figure 10 – Compliments by service area**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Number</b>
SaSS	207
Achievement Services	27
County Wide Services	180
Early Intervention & Partnership Service	30
Finance Services	1
Former Extended Services	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>446</b>

- 57 It is pleasing to note that the number of compliments received has increased from the previous year; and in particular compliments to SaSS about social care services have shown a 144% increase on the previous year. Compliments received by the service as a percentage of all representations has shown a year on year increase, as illustrated in Figure 11 overleaf. In 2011/12, 67.5% of all representations received were in relation to compliments.

**Figure 11 – Year on year increase in compliments**



58 Compliments highlight that service users appreciate the following:

- feeling respected, listened to and supported;
- having decisions explained to them;
- being kept informed;
- professionalism, care and commitment of staff; and
- being able to contact staff easily.

59 Examples of the many compliments received across the service this year are given in Appendix C; they give an insight into the diverse range of services which have been appreciated by staff and service users. Further examples can be given upon request, including hundreds of examples of positive feedback from families about summer breaks for disabled children.

### **Suggestions**

60 During the reporting year, 4 suggestions were received from service users, which were acknowledged and responded to. Examples include:

- One suggestion related to the One Point Service, which consists of 10 main offices or 'Hubs', each of which has responsibility for a number of smaller offices or 'Spokes'. The suggestion was that the Spokes as well as the Hubs should be shown on a map, together with some information to show which Hub each Spoke relates to. The suggestion was welcomed and arrangements made to have the Spokes identified on a map locator.
- A foster carer suggested that carers should be issued with an up-to-date and comprehensive list of LA contacts whom they could telephone in case of emergency or if advice required. The carer was thanked for his useful suggestion and this has since been actioned.

## Comments

- 61 Comments from service users are actively encouraged and welcomed in order to inform service improvements and developments through surveys and other communication channels.
- 62 During 2011/12, there were 64 comments of a negative nature received about social care services, compared with 61 received in 2010/11, 78 in 2009/10 and 100 in 2008/09. Feedback in the form of negative comments is analysed and any themes are included in quarterly reports to senior managers.
- 63 As in previous years, the main themes from the negative comments received in 2011/12 were:
- Social Workers cancelling meetings and/or not returning calls.
  - Families don't understand why they need the intervention of social services.
  - Frequent change of Social Worker and/or family not kept informed that the worker had been changed.
  - Those service users who asked for help felt that they weren't given it/sufficiently/quickly enough.
  - Professionals didn't listen properly, and/or didn't treat parents/carers with enough respect.
- 65 In addition to the above, a large number of enquiries are received from parents who are unhappy about an issue at their child's school, and these are re-routed to the appropriate officer in the School and Governor Support Service (SGSS).

## Annual Representations Report 2011/12 Services to Children, Young People and their Families

### Equality and Diversity

#### Complainants' age and gender profiles

66 During the reporting year, formal complaints were made on behalf of the following service users (age and gender):

**Figure 12 – complaints made in relation to age and gender**

	Female 0-17	Female over 18	Total female	Male 0-17	Male over 18	Total male	Other/ unknown
Statutory	15	0	15	14	0	14	0
Corporate	5	0	5	2	0	2	4
Total	20	0	20	16	0	16	4
% of total (40) 2011/12	50%	0%	<b>50%</b>	40%	0%	<b>40%</b>	<b>10%</b>
% of total (34) 2010/11	44.1%	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>52.9%</b>	<b>35.3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>35.3%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>

67 It should be noted that where complaints are made by parents/carers on behalf of children and young people, if there is more than one child in the family, the complaint details are recorded in the name of the eldest child. The figures and percentages above therefore do not give a full and true picture of the age and gender of children who were involved in making formal complaints.

68 For statutory complaints, specific details about the child or young person are required (full name, date of birth) in order to be able to investigate the complaint; whereas some corporate complaints can be looked into without necessarily knowing the child's details. 2 corporate complaints were received on behalf of an organisation (noted as 'other' in figure 12); one corporate complaint did not specify if the complaint was being made on behalf of a boy or girl, but simply referred to the "child". One corporate complaint was not made on behalf of children/young people but by prospective adopters.

#### Complainants' ethnicity profiles

69 Citizens who make a corporate complaint via the DCC website are asked for equality and diversity (E&D) information; however this information is not yet subsequently recorded on the CRM (Customer Relations Management) system where all service user contacts with the Council are captured. Where complaints are made directly to the Representations and Quality Officer, E&D information is not sought until the end of the

process, when it is included in a satisfaction survey about the complaints process. However complainants may choose not to complete the form or the E&D part.

- 70 Figure 13 below shows that all 29 formal statutory complaints are recorded as being made by or on behalf of children or young people of White British origin. At any one time, around 2% of the caseload of the social care teams for children is children or young people who are not White British (around 50 children and young people). Therefore, numbers of complaints expected are in line with what we would expect to see given the low population figures. The ethnic origin of the individual children who had corporate complaints investigated on their behalf is not known as this information was not shared by the complainants.

**Figure 13 – Formal statutory Stage 1 complaints by ethnic group of service user**

	White British	Any other ethnic group
Female	15	0
Male	14	0
Total	29	0
% of total	100%	0%

### Complaints regarding equality and diversity issues

- 71 During the reporting year no formal complaints were received about services users being unable to access any service due to their age, gender, disability, race or ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation.

### Local Government Ombudsman letter 2011/12

- 72 The Local Government Ombudsman's (LGOs) Annual Review Letter to the Chief Executive of Durham County Council is dated 22 June 2012 and contains the following information about the numbers of complaints received about the County Council during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012:

	Education and Children's services	Total for Council	Education and Children's services Complaints as a % of Total
<b>Total 2011/12</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>18.1%</b>
<b>Total 2010/11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>5.8%</b>
<b>Total 2009/10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>11.4%</b>
<b>Total 2008/09</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35.0%</b>
<b>(Total 2007/08)*</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>(Total 2006/07)*</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>



\*Not directly comparable to subsequent years due to changes made in 2008/09 to the way the LGO operates.

- 73 Of the 28 complaints submitted to the LGO about 'Education & Children's Services':
- Advice was given in 5 cases.
  - 5 were deemed to be 'premature complaints' (the Council had not been given an adequate opportunity to respond).
  - 18 were forwarded to the investigative team as new complaints to the Ombudsman.
- 74 The letter states that the Ombudsman has no concerns about Durham's response times and there are no issues arising from the complaints that were reported about.

# Annual Representations Report 2011/12

## Services for Children, Young People and their Families

### PART THREE – LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

#### Strategic Level - Key Messages

- 75 The annual report for 2008/09 identified two clear themes from complaints and comments received in that year: communication and culture; and in 2009/10 and 2010/11 the major theme was poor communication. As Section Four shows, during 2011/12 the number of complaints about the service increased slightly from the previous year, and although perception of poor service was the main reason for the majority of complaints, 70% were either not or only partially upheld.
- 76 An analysis of complaints and comments received during 2011/12 shows that by 'poor service' complainants mean staff not answering or returning calls (particularly Social Workers) and service users feeling that they were not listened to or treated with respect.
- 77 As in previous years, the majority of citizens who make a complaint 'on behalf of' a child are inherently unhappy with a decision that the LA has made regarding the child(ren), be it about the school they are to attend, the refusal to supply transport, or the intervention of social care services, in some cases to safeguard the child(ren) concerned. From this inherent unhappiness there is a negative perception, resulting in complaints about poor service and staff attitude, the majority of which are not upheld. Complainants still refer to 'social services' in a negative manner and believe them to be working against the wishes of families/carers. Where any intervention services to children are required it can be an emotive area with the potential for a conflict of interest.
- 78 In 2011/12 the same messages continue from the previous year; complainants have illustrated that they feel the service has:
- either intervened unnecessarily in their child's life, or
  - not intervened enough, by failing to offer support and services which the family feel are required; and
  - moved children and young people to other placements when they did not wish to move;
  - failed to give a clear explanation of actions taken, sometimes at the appropriate level of understanding of the child/young person/representative; and
  - for various reasons, failed to answer calls and / or return messages, or keep appointments (without prior cancellation).
- 79 The overarching message from the majority of complainants during the reporting year is one of **not feeling listened to**.
- 80 Whilst some complaints could be avoided if the service was to offer a fuller and more detailed explanation of their role, what they are doing and what they can't do (and why), as mentioned above, some service users would inevitably remain dissatisfied simply because of having to deal with the service at all.

## Operational level - recommended actions from complaints 2011/12

81 Recommended actions from complaints resolved and action taken in 2011/12 include:

Recommendations	Actions Taken
Staff should ensure that they are more helpful regarding telephone enquiries and retain a positive attitude with service users	This was included in team plans which are monitored by each strategic manager. A mystery shopping exercise was followed up by Business Support Services to check on improvement with positive results.
Families should be given clear, open and honest explanations at a level which meets their understanding about what is happening in relation to their children's case, and the reasons for actions.	Where there are concerns about the quality of communication, managers are asked to address this through direct observations and supervision. The numbers of observations carried out and reviews where communication has been addressed have increased significantly in the last few months.
Ensure that information included in assessment reports is accurate and that reports are shared with appropriate persons in a timely manner in order to check and record any discrepancies.	All assessments for child protection must be shared at least 2 days before the conference for this reason. Performance is monitored by the LSCB and its constituent locality groups regularly.
Ensure that meeting notes and minutes are shared with families in an appropriate and timely manner.	Notes are required to be shared within agreed timescales as shown above, performance is monitored and action taken to address where necessary.
Keep families informed when staff are unable to attend appointments, so that service users are able to make alternative arrangements in their lives.	This issue has been raised by Head of Service in 2 of the last 3 practitioner briefings (over 150 staff attend) as part of a slide covering feedback and learning from complaints.
Ensure that there is good joined-up working between agencies working with children and young people with complex needs, to ensure that the most appropriate services are in place.	Services are now fully integrated and co-located and lead professionals are in place. Levels of complaints from parents of disabled children have dropped significantly in the last five years (they were the highest number of complainants previously).
Wherever possible, return service users' calls (otherwise they are disappointed and sustain a poor view of the service).	This issue has been raised by Head of Service in 2 of the last 3 practitioner briefings (over 150 staff attend) as part of a slide covering feedback and learning from complaints.
Staff to be regularly reminded of their roles, duties and responsibilities with respect to children who are being placed for adoption.	Half day training sessions are currently being delivered by a member of adoption panel and adoption Team Manager for all social worker staff to emphasise this.

## Developments relating to Representations

- 82 In the 2010/11 report it was mentioned that there was an expectation that numbers of complaints might increase if services were cut or decreased, but that efforts were being made to minimise cuts to front-line services. This report has shown that complaint numbers increased slightly during the reporting year; however this report does not reflect representations received regarding home to school transport applications (received as a result of savings made by cutting home to school transport) which are subject to an Appeal process rather than a complaints procedure.
- 83 Learning from representations has continued to be an integral part of the representations process. Every complaint received, whether or not upheld, is viewed as an opportunity for learning, and is analysed for any themes or changes that could be made to service delivery.
- 84 Services for children, young people and their families continues to be represented at a multi-service 'Learning from the Customer' complaints group to ensure that representations are captured and dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner, regardless of which Council service they are about. Last year it was reported that the Council's CRM system (which captures corporate representations) would be updated to make it more 'user friendly' for staff to input and extract representations information and data.
- 85 Integrated Teams (One Point) became operational in September 2011. The teams are based in 10 locations (Hubs) across the County, and involve multi-agency professionals and support staff working closely together from the same 'base' to meet the needs of children, young people and families. Complaints received may implicate colleagues from other organisations e.g. Health, therefore a representations procedure which incorporates all partner agencies is being developed.
- 86 The contract for Independent Persons (IPs) for statutory Stage 2 investigations came to an end in March 2012, and there was no contract in place for the supply of independent Investigating Officers (IOs) (provided on a 'spot purchase' basis only). Representatives from children and young people's services met with colleagues from neighbouring authorities to explore future, value for money options for the provision of both of these statutory services. As a result 'Approved Lists' of IOs and IPs have been developed, from which complaints officers and managers can appoint individuals in the knowledge that they have been through a regionally agreed assessment and approval criteria.
- 87 An Ofsted Inspection of Durham's safeguarding and looked after children services (28 November - 13 December 2011) reported very favourably about the complaints process for services for children and young people, noting that "Complaints policies are well developed and disseminated. The council has a robust approach to the collation and evaluation of complaints. Complaints are dealt with swiftly....Lessons learned from complaints have helped to improve services....The complaints and representation procedures meet statutory requirements. They are well developed and used successfully by looked after children and young people...."
- 88 Steps have been taken to provide a greater level of analysis of the information collected from the views of service users. The annual report of service user's views 2011/12 was completed to evaluate and triangulate the findings from service user

surveys, representations and other research conducted across former CYPs during 2011/12. Refinements have been made to the process for collecting the findings from research and this will ensure that there is a holistic understanding of service users' views across the Service and the Children and Families Trust.

- 89 A training package is currently being developed for managers who deal with complaints, to ensure they are kept up-to-date on the process and procedures.

# **Annual Representations Report 2011/12**

## **Services for Children, Young People and their Families**

### **Acknowledgements**

Acknowledgements are made and thanks given to the following contributors to representations during the reporting year:

- All service users who have contributed to our service developments by making representations.
- Staff and managers who have increasingly recognised the importance of addressing concerns responsively and been prepared to learn from the compliments and concerns of service users.
- The National Youth Advocacy Service which provides invaluable support and advice to service users and enables concerns to be clarified and articulated.
- The Systems Development Team who have enabled data to be more accurately recorded and collated.
- Members of the Local Authority's Standards Committee who objectively scrutinise representations and ensure that trends are recognised and acted upon.
- Counterparts in all service areas within DCC and in neighbouring Local Authorities for their advice and support throughout the reporting year.
- The Investigating and Independent Officers who provide external and independent challenge and scrutiny through undertaking Stage 2 investigations.

## Appendix A – Explanation of terms used

Term	Meaning	Notes
<b>Statutory complaint</b>	Complaints from children and young people (or their representative) about <i>social care services</i> are handled under the statutory complaints procedure. Throughout this report, these are referred to as 'statutory representations'.	This type of complaint can be made about Safeguarding and Specialist Services (SaSS). Some complaints about the Independent Reviewing Officers who chair Child Protection Conferences and Looked After Reviews are dealt with via the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) complaint procedure.
<b>Corporate complaint</b>	<i>(Non statutory complaint)</i> . Any other complaint about services for children, young people and their families, which is handled under the Council's corporate complaints procedure. This type of complaint can be about any of the 5 service areas of former CYPS in existence during the period of this report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement Services</li> <li>• County Wide Services</li> <li>• Early Intervention &amp; Partnership Service</li> <li>• Finance Services</li> <li>• Safeguarding and Specialist Services (SaSS)</li> </ul>	Most complaints about SaSS would be taken through the statutory complaints procedure; however a few are actioned via the corporate procedure (for example, a citizen who is not eligible to complain on behalf of a child about the social care services received, but is unhappy with the way he was spoken to by a Social Worker, might make a complaint about the conduct of a member of staff of DCC under the corporate procedure). For matters where there is an Appeal process, a complaint may be made about the process, but not the decision.
<b>Informal complaint</b>	Where a complaint is resolved directly by the team involved, quickly and locally, and in collaboration with the complainant. Please see Section Three for further information.	The complainant will be informed of the result of the complaint; this may be verbally in the case of informal resolution.
<b>Formal complaint</b>	Complaints which are logged as formal complaints may not have been able to be resolved informally, or the complainant may state a wish to make a 'formal complaint' which requires a 3 <sup>rd</sup> party / senior manager to become involved and carry out an investigation into what occurred and how it can be resolved.	When the complaint has been investigated, a formal written response is sent to the complainant.  Formal complaints are taken through different Stages as detailed below.
<b>Stage 1</b>	Formal complaints are usually taken firstly through 'Stage 1' of the appropriate procedure. An investigation is carried out by a senior manager of the team involved in the complaint.	For response timescales, see Figure 1.
<b>Stage 2</b>	If the complaint is particularly complex, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response, the complaint will be taken to 'Stage 2' of the appropriate procedure. The person carrying out the re-investigation or review of the complaint will not have been involved at Stage 1 and will be independent of	In the case of statutory complaints, an Independent Investigating Officer (IO) who does not work for the Council will usually be appointed, accompanied by an Independent Person (IP) whose role is to ensure the Stage 2 investigation is carried out in a fair and timely manner. For corporate Stage 2 investigations, the Council's Customer Complaints Unit

	the team involved in the complaint.	(CCU) allocates an investigating officer.
<b>Comment</b>	Where service users give negative feedback about their experience of services this is recorded as a comment.	Most comments are received via satisfaction surveys sent out about SaSS.
<b>Compliment</b>	Where service users give positive feedback about their experience of services, this is recorded as a compliment.	Compliments are received via a variety of media: satisfaction surveys, letters, e-mails, cards, and via the DCC website
<b>Suggestion</b>	Where service users offer an idea about how to change/improve services, this is recorded as a suggestion.	All suggestions are acknowledged and any changes made as a result are reported to Standards Committee.



## Appendix B – Examples of Complaints

- Parents of disabled children complained that they had been told that they could not use direct payments monies to fund transport to a summer holiday scheme; this decision was subsequently reviewed and overturned.
- A carer complained that an Assessment Report had not been shared with her; an apology was offered (and accepted) and the assessment was shared.
- A father complained about information having been given to his son which he (the father) had thought would be confidential. An explanation was given about the reason and context of sharing the information which the father accepted.
- A child complained via her National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) Advocate about plans to move her placement. The Team Manager met with the child and listened to her views and these were considered alongside professional's reports; the outcome was that it was felt to be in the child's best interests to arrange for a change of placement.
- The partner of a mother of a Safeguarded child complained about the way he felt that the service had dealt with him. A full explanation about the statutory obligations of children's social care services and their actions in regard to the particular case was given.
- A mother complained about numerous Social Workers having been allocated to her children's' cases. The Team Manager met with the complainant and explained why this had happened; mother was satisfied with the explanation given and that there had been no negative impact on the children's cases.
- A young person who is in foster care complained about not being able to have overnight stays or after-school visits to her friends who live in another part of the County. The Team Manager met with the young person and an agreement was reached with her foster carers, to the young person's satisfaction.

## Appendix C – Examples of Compliments

- ...the [adoption] panel were impressed by the quality of the reports and asked me to write and thank you for all of your efforts, I know this was not an easy process and reflects many hours of hard work.
- I just wanted to say a big thank you for working so hard to look after [young person] who at times did not give you very much in return....despite [his] best efforts to sabotage his placement, he didn't manage to....I think [young person] will look back on his time at [children's home] with affection all his life.
- Thank you so much for looking after [young person]...if people like you were not there for boys and girls like [him] I don't know what would become of them....
- Well my time at [children's home] has been very good when I look back...and I have to hold my hands up to staff and thank all of them for helping along my way from prison to now...
- A Head teacher asked me to pass on what a great service is provided now at IRT, how quickly the phones are answered and how good the advice is when she rings...
- ...I would like to commend her standard of social work practice. I have observed [her]....responding respectfully to challenges from individual family members which focussed the whole family on the issues which needed to be addressed....
- Just to say a big thank you to all the staff...they've supported me through my highs and lows.
- To social services – everybody who was involved with myself and [child] throughout the years, your kindness is appreciated very much.

## Appendix D - Glossary of terms and abbreviations and terms used

<b>CCU</b>	<b>Customer Complaints Unit</b>
<b>CLA</b>	<b>Children Looked After</b>
<b>CPP</b>	<b>Child Protection Plan</b>
<b>CRM</b>	<b>Customer Relations Management</b> (management information system for capturing service user contacts)
<b>CS Team</b>	<b>Community Support Team</b>
<b>CYPS</b>	<b>Children and Young People's Services</b>
<b>DCC</b>	<b>Durham County Council</b>
<b>DOT</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>E&amp;D</b>	<b>Equality and Diversity</b>
<b>EDT</b>	<b>Emergency Duty Team</b>
<b>EMTAS</b>	<b>Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service</b>
<b>GP</b>	<b>General Practitioner</b>
<b>GSCC</b>	<b>General Social Care Council</b>
<b>IO</b>	<b>Investigating Officer (statutory complaints Stage 2)</b>
<b>IP</b>	<b>Independent Person (statutory complaints Stage 2)</b>
<b>IRT</b>	<b>Initial Response Team</b>
<b>LA</b>	<b>Local Authority</b>
<b>LGO</b>	<b>Local Government Ombudsman</b>
<b>LSCB</b>	<b>Local Safeguarding Children Board</b>
<b>MP</b>	<b>Member of Parliament</b>
<b>NEC</b>	<b>North East Consortium (part of NYAS)</b>
<b>NYAS</b>	<b>National Youth Advocacy Service</b>
<b>PC</b>	<b>Personal computer</b>
<b>PQRT</b>	<b>Planning, Quality and Research Team</b>
<b>RQO</b>	<b>Representations and Quality Officer</b>
<b>SaSS (MT)</b>	<b>Safeguarding and Specialist Services (Management Team)</b>
<b>SEN</b>	<b>Special Educational Needs</b>
<b>SGSS</b>	<b>School and Governor Support Service</b>
<b>SLT</b>	<b>Strategic Leadership Team</b>
<b>upheld</b>	Where a complaint is ' <b>upheld</b> ', this means that, following investigation, CYPS agrees with the complainant's accusation; or that the complaint was justified.

## Appendix E - Summary of performance (Trends over 5 year period 2007- 2012)

	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010 - 2011	2011-2012	Change since previous year
<b>Total Number of Representations</b>	170	666	866	<b>625</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>+ 36</b>
Number of Formal Complaints	72	77	70	<b>34</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>+ 6</b>
Number of Informal Complaints	-	61	151	<b>114</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>- 7</b>
Number of Compliments	96	428	565	<b>414</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>+ 32</b>
Number of Comments / Suggestions	2	100	80	<b>63</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>+ 5</b>
Formal Complaints as a % of total	42.4%	11.6%	8.1%	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>+ 0.7%</b>
Compliments as a % of total	56.5%	64.3%	65.2%	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>67.5%</b>	<b>+ 1.3%</b>
Comments as a % of total	1.2%	15.0%	9.2%	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>+ 0.2%</b>
<b>Total number of Statutory Representations</b>	89	331	417	<b>261</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>+ 139</b>
Number of Formal Statutory Complaints	61	57	42	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>+ 7</b>
Number of Informal Statutory Complaints	-	26	108	<b>93</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>+ 5</b>
Number of Statutory Compliments	26	148	189	<b>85</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>+ 122</b>
Number of Statutory Comments	2	100	78	<b>61</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>+ 5</b>
Formal Statutory Complaints as a % of total	68.5%	17.2%	10.1%	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>- 1.1%</b>
Statutory Compliments as a % of total	29.2%	44.7%	45.3%	<b>32.6%</b>	<b>51.8%</b>	<b>+ 19.2%</b>
Statutory Comments as a % of total	2.2%	30.2%	18.7%	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>16.5%</b>	<b>- 6.9%</b>
<b>Total number of Corporate Representations</b>	81	335	449	<b>364</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>- 103</b>
Number of Formal Corporate Complaints	11	20	28	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>- 1</b>
Number of Informal Corporate Complaints	-	35	43	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>- 12</b>
Number of Corporate Compliments	70	280	376	<b>329</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>- 90</b>
Number of Corporate Suggestions	0	0	2	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>same</b>
Formal Corporate Complaints as a % of total	13.6%	6.0%	6.2%	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>+ 0.9%</b>
Corporate Compliments as a % of total	86.4%	83.6%	83.7%	<b>90.4%</b>	<b>91.6%</b>	<b>+ 1.2%</b>
Corporate Suggestions as a % of total	0	0	0.4%	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>+ 0.3%</b>
<b>Statutory complaints – Who complained?</b>						
% of male complainants	45.9%	47.4%	30.0%	<b>35.3%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>+ 4.7%</b>
% of female complainants	54.0%	52.6%	70.0%	<b>52.9%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>- 2.9%</b>
% of White British complainants	96.7%	98.3%	97.5%	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>same</b>
Other ethnic origin/unrecorded	3.3%	1.7%	2.5%	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>same</b>
<b>Main Causes of Complaints:</b>						
Conduct or Attitude of Staff	31.3% *	28.6%	17.1%	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>- 12.2%</b>
Poor Service	42.2% *	31.2%	42.9%	<b>29.4%</b>	<b>35.0%</b>	<b>+ 5.6%</b>
Decision regarding services	3.2%*	16.9%	21.4%	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>30.0%</b>	<b>+ 12.3%</b>
<b>Meeting Statutory timescales</b>						
Acknowledgement within 2 working days	86.4%	98.3%	95.0%	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>same</b>
Response to complaint at Stage 1 within 20 working days	57.4%	56.2%	60.0%	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>48.2%</b>	<b>+ 23.2%</b>

If you need this information summarised in another language or format such as Braille, large print, CD or talking tape, please call the number below.

إذا اردت معرفت ملخص هذه المعلومات باللغة العربية اتصل علي الرقم التالي

Arabic

আকারে এই তথ্যটি পেতে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন:

Bengali

假如您需要這份資料的中文摘要，請致電下面的號碼。

Chinese

यदि आप यह जानकारी का संक्षेप हिन्दी में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निचे दिए हुए नम्बर में सम्पर्क करें ।

Hindi

Jezeli potrzebujesz streszczenia tych informacji w jezyku polskim zadzwon prosze na ponizszy numer

Polish

ਜਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਖ਼ਬਰ ਦਾ ਨਿਚੋੜ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਥੱਲੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ।

Punjabi

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات اردو میں درکار ہیں تو اس نمبر پر کال کیجیے۔

Urdu



(0191) 383 3981

**Any comments or queries about this report can be made to:-**

Gill Ward  
Representations and Quality Officer  
Children and Adults Services  
County Hall  
Durham  
DH1 5UJ  
Telephone: (0191) 383 3981  
E-mail: [cypscomplaints@durham.gov.uk](mailto:cypscomplaints@durham.gov.uk)