



Standards Committee
14 June 2010

Children's Schools and Families Statutory Complaint Report 2009-2010

Purpose of the report: That the Standards Committee note the contents of the report detailing complaints activity across Children's Schools and Families Directorate 2009 – 2010.

Introduction:

- 1 Local Authorities with Social Service Responsibilities are required to operate a complaints procedure in line with current regulations. An annual report must be produced detailing complaints activity as detailed in the regulations

The Complaints Process

- 2 Surrey County Council operates a three stage complaints procedure in line with the 2006 Department for Education and Skills guidance *Getting the Best from Complaints (Children and Young People)*.
- 3 These provide local authorities with guidance on operating the Children Act 1989 with an emphasis on resolving problems quickly and effectively and learning from them.
- 4 All Local Authorities with Social Services responsibilities are required identify a designated Complaints Manager who will undertake various duties in relation to the management of complaints. In Surrey, this role is undertaken within the Families Customer Relations Team.
- 5 Access to the Complaints Procedure is available for all "qualifying individuals" as defined in the guidance and complaints can be made verbally or in writing. The Local Authority is required to provide independent advocacy services for all children and young people making or intending to make a complaint. In Surrey during 2009 – 2010 this was provided via a contract with the National Youth Advocacy Service.

Annual Report

- 6 All Local Authorities are required to produce an Annual Report detailing complaints activity including the total numbers of complaints received, the nature and outcome of complaints and actions taken in response.

Conclusions:

- 7 The purpose of this report is to provide members with details of the Families Directorate Annual Complaints Report 2007/2008. This is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Financial and value for money implications

- 8 The Committee is asked to note the financial breakdown for the operational element of the service, as detailed at point 7 of the attached report.

Equalities Implications

- 9 Members to note the equalities information at points 9.16 and 10.6 of the attached report

Risk Management Implications

- 10 Failure to operate the complaints procedure would breach the statutory requirement.

Implications for the Council's Priorities or Community Strategy/Local Area Agreement Targets

- 11 None.

Recommendations:

That the Committee note the contents of the report.

Next steps:

None.

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Sources/background papers: Children's Schools and Families Directorate Statutory Complaints Report.