

Children's Complaints Procedure

Children's Social Care
People Directorate

May 2023

What can I make a complaint about?

You can make a complaint if you are unhappy about any service you receive from Children's Social Care. If you have a problem or cannot get a service you need, or have any suggestion on how we can improve our services, we want to know about it.

How will making a complaint help me?

When you make a complaint, we will:

- try to put things right, where possible
- give you an explanation of why we did something in a certain way, or perhaps give you an apology
- learn from the mistake, as it will help us not to make the same mistake again.

What will you do with my complaint?

Stage One

We will contact the manager of the person who makes you feel unhappy to try and sort out the problem. This can take up to ten working days. We will let you know if it will take longer.

Stage Two

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, we will appoint an Investigating Officer to investigate your complaint. This person is not connected with the service you are complaining about. This usually takes a further 25 days; but it can take longer sometimes.

We will also appoint an Independent Person. This person does not work for the council and will ensure that your complaint is looked at fairly and reasonably.

How do I make a complaint about Children's Social Care

Complaints can be made online on our website at:

[Complaints and compliments | London Borough of Forest](#)



Complaints about schools

The council doesn't investigate complaints about schools.

Please contact the school directly with your complaint.

You can find out about the complaints process for schools. On the Government website at:

[Complain about a school: Types of complaints - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Stage Three

If you feel that the situation has not been sorted out, or you are unhappy with the outcome, you can ask for the case to be looked at by a Review Panel.

The Panel is made up of three independent people. Your complaint should be heard by them within a further 30 working days. This Panel will take a 'fresh look' at your complaint to consider what stands in the way of it being resolved; but they do not re-investigate the complaint.

It will make recommendations to the Strategic Director, People Directorate. You will be told of the decision within 20 working days of the meeting.

Advocacy and support for children

If you are a child or young person and would like someone to help you in making a complaint and support you through the different stages of the procedure, you can contact the POWhER / Barnardos. For more details about what they do, please visit their website at:

[Download.ashx \(pohwer.net\)](#)

There are other services that may be able to provide support and give you the opportunity to have your voice heard and shape decisions that affect you. The Voice and Influence Service can help you with this.

To find out more, please go to:

[Voice and Influence Service | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Other support and advice

You can discuss your concerns about any council service with your local Councillor or Member of Parliament (MP). You can find out who your local Councillor is by asking at your local library or calling Waltham Forest Direct on 020 8496 3000.

Details about Councillors and local MPs can also be found on the council's website [Your local councillors and MPs | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Please note that Councillors and MPs cannot directly intervene in the complaints process and may refer you back to us.

You can contact the Social Care Complaints Team at:

Email
Information.officer@walthamforest.gov.uk

Post
Complaints Team
Waltham Forest
Town Hall
Forest Road
London
E17 4JF

Telephone
020 8496 3000

Full details about the Children's Social Care complaints regulations can be found at:

[Microsoft Word - Complaints Guidance.doc \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

You can go directly to the Local Government Ombudsman if you want to complain about any council services. However, they normally expect complaints to go through the Council's complaints procedure first.

You can contact them at: www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint or by telephone on 0300 061 0614

Confidentiality

We keep information about people who use our services; however, your personal information is only ever given to people who need it.

Under the UK [General Data Protection Regulation 2016](#), you have a right to see the information we keep about you, whether held on computer or on paper. You can find out more details about this on our website at:

[Your data privacy rights | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Safeguarding

Where a complaint involves safeguarding concerns, we may refer the matter to the relevant social work or safeguarding team for them to consider before we accept it as a complaint. We will let you know if this is the case.

Find out more about Safeguarding at:

[Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

How to get in touch with Children's Social Care

You can contact Children's Social Care Service by calling Waltham Forest Direct on 020 8496 3000 and following the options. For more details, please see our website at: [Families, young people and children | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Other sources of help and advice

Child Law Advice

Tel: **0300 330 5480**

<http://childlawadvice.org.uk/>

Coram Voice

Tel: **0808 800 5792**

<http://www.coramvoice.org.uk/>

Childline

Tel: **0800 1111**

www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC – Child Protection Line

Tel: **0800 800 500**

www.nspcc.org.uk

Citizens Advice Waltham Forest

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/waltham-forest/

General Information

For information and advice about children's Social Care services, please see our website at: [Families, young people and children | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)