



TELL US YOUR VIEWS ON OUR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Children's Social Care feedback, compliments
and complaints

together for
children
SUNDERLAND

How to let us know your views

There are a lot of ways to get in touch to tell us your views about the service you receive.

We need you to tell us how you feel about the service you receive.

Together for Children, always aims to provide quality services to all customers.

We like to know when we are getting it right and we want to improve things when we can do better.

Contact us:

Call us on: 0191 561 7997

Email us at: customer.feedback@togetherforchildren.org.uk

Write to us at:

Customer Feedback Team, Together for Children, City Hall,
Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA

Visit our website at:

www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/aboutus/complaints

Come and see us - call us on the above number to arrange a convenient time to visit.

Feedback and compliments

We would like you to let us know when:

- You are pleased with a service or with a member of staff who has helped you
- You want to comment about any part of our service or suggest ways we can do it better

Complaints

We know that things sometimes do go wrong. When they do, we need to know, so that we can put them right.

If you have a complaint, you should first speak with the member of staff that you know best. Most complaints are sorted out this way.

If not, you can speak to the Customer Feedback Team at Together for Children who will try to fix your issues straight away.

How we respond to Children's Social Care complaints

We will always try to resolve your issue as soon as possible after your initial contact. If we are unable to do so, the next step is a Stage One complaint.

We do things a little differently for corporate complaints and they follow a different process.

Just contact the Customer Feedback Team and we will help you with the right process.

Stage One – Local Resolution

Your complaint will be acknowledged, and then you will receive a written response within 10 working days of making your complaint. If your complaint is complicated it may take longer than 10 working days but if this is the case, we will contact you and keep you updated.

We will need you to tell us why you are unhappy and what you would like us to do to put it right.

We would like to resolve your concerns at this stage but if you are not happy with the response you receive at Stage One you can request to go to Stage Two.

You should make this request within 20 days of receiving your Stage One response. Please note, we are not able to investigate complaints after a 12 month time limit has passed.

There may also be some complaints we can't investigate, but when this happens we will explain the reasons to you.

An advocate will be offered to children or young people making a complaint.

Stage Two – Investigation

A Stage Two complaint is investigated by an Investigating Officer independent of the area of service that the complaint is about.

An Independent Person is also appointed from outside of the local authority to ensure that the complaint is investigated fully and fairly and in line with statutory procedures.

The Investigating Officer and Independent Person will meet with you to agree the full remit of their investigation (your statement of complaint).

Once we are sure of what you want us to look into, the investigation will then start. You should receive a letter within 25 working days telling you:

- What was found
- What we have decided to do about it
- Why the decisions were reached

If your complaint is complicated, it may take up to a maximum of 65 working days. We will make every effort to ensure that the investigation is completed as quickly as possible.

Stage Three - Review Panel

You should apply for this within 20 working days of receiving the written outcome to Stage Two.

The Review Panel will not re-investigate the complaint but will look to see if it was properly and fully investigated.

Completion of local complaints process

If you have been through all stages of our complaints procedure and are still unhappy, you can ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to review your complaint.

The Ombudsman investigates complaints in a fair and independent way - it does not take sides. It is a free service.

The Ombudsman expects you to have given us a chance to deal with your complaint, before you contact them. If you have not heard from us within a reasonable time, it may decide to look into your complaint anyway. This is usually up to 12 weeks but can be longer for social care complaints that follow a statutory process.

Contact information

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm (except Public Holidays)



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