



# Comments, Complaints & Compliments

**Let us know what you  
think of our service.**

**Children's Services in Wandsworth**



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# Our commitment

Wandsworth Council's Children's Services Department is responsible for a number of services for children and young people.

These include some aspects of Education, Early Help and Social Care Services. The Statutory Complaints procedure relates to social care services.

The department tries hard to ensure that the services we provide are of the highest standard. Your comments, complaints and compliments help us to improve and develop our services and contacting us is the first step to help us to do this. We value your comments and will ensure that your complaints are listened to and dealt with fairly and openly.

## The Children's Statutory complaints procedure aims to:

- Make it easy for you to talk to someone about your complaints.
- Make sure you get a quick response.
- Appoint independent advocates when necessary.
- Keep you informed of the progress in dealing with your complaint.
- Make sure that you receive a written response and provide feedback on outcomes and service improvements.

# How can you contact us?

## How can you contact us?

If you want to make a comment, complaint or compliment to us about our services, you can contact us by telephone, email, letter or visit us in person.

The complaints team can also help you write your complaint.

**Address**      **Children's Services Department**  
**Complaints Team**  
**FREEPOST RTKU-EGLA-ZZGT**  
**Town Hall**  
**Wandsworth High Street**  
**London**  
**SW18 2PU**

**Email**            **childrenscomplaints@wandsworth.gov.uk**

**Telephone**      **(020) 8871 7648**

## How will your complaint be dealt with?

If you are unhappy about a service or the way you have been treated, raise this with the person concerned or their manager, or contact the complaints team as above. There is a three stage process that aims to deal with problems and complaints quickly, fairly and in a confidential way.

# What to do if you want to make a complaint

## Stage 1

If you are not satisfied with a service or do not agree with a decision, tell the member of staff you are most often in touch with. If you are not able to sort things out with this person, your complaint should be passed to their manager. You can do this by talking to the manager in person, on the phone or by writing to them.

Alternatively contact the complaints team.

You can expect to receive an answer from us within 10 working days. However sometimes we may need longer. If we cannot get back to you with an answer within 10 working days we will make sure you are kept informed.

**If you are not happy with the response at Stage 1 - you can ask us to look again at your complaint.**

## Stage 2

### Formal investigation

If you remain unhappy following receipt of the response at Stage 1, you can take your complaint further by contacting the Complaints team with your reasons within 20 working days of receiving your response. You will need to ask for your complaint to be dealt with at stage 2.

Your complaint may be investigated by a senior officer independent of the line management of the service that your complaint is about. In respect of complaints concerning children and young people, an independent person will be appointed to work with the investigating officer to try to resolve your complaint. The independent person's role is to ensure the any investigation is fair and impartial. If the complainant is a young person, the council will also work with the young person to provide advocacy to help them deal with their complaint.

The timescale for dealing with a Stage 2 complaint is between 25 and 65 working days from receipt of your complaint. The council hopes to resolve your complaint as quickly as possible. The Complaints Team will ensure that all aspects of the complaint are investigated and will keep you updated on the progress of the investigation.

# What to do if you want to make a complaint

## Stage 3

### Independent review panel

If you are not satisfied with the reply you receive in Stage 2, you can request a review of the complaint. You must write to the Complaints Team asking them to arrange a review of your complaint. You must request this in writing within 20 working days of the date shown on the letter of reply to your complaint at Stage 2.

A panel will review your complaint. The panel will be made up of people who are totally independent of the council. You can come and present your case and bring a friend or representative to support you.

The panel will make recommendations to the Director within five working days of the panel meeting. After considering the recommendations of the panel, the Director will write to you within 15 working days with the final decision of the council.

Your complaint is concluded at the end of this stage. If you are not satisfied with the reply you receive at stage 2, you can request a review of the complaint. You must write to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for assistance.

# Help making a complaint

If you are unable to make a complaint on your own behalf you can ask someone to represent you. This may be a relative, a carer or an advocate.

An advocate is someone who speaks up on behalf of someone else and helps them to get the things that they are entitled to. You might also want to seek the support of your local councillor.

### You may also find these organisations useful

#### The Advocacy People

0330 440 9000

Email: [info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk](mailto:info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk)

Text: 80800 starting message with PEOPLE

#### Childline

NATN1111 London

E1 6BR FREEPOST

0800 1111 FREEPHONE

Email: [anon@childline.org.uk](mailto:anon@childline.org.uk)

#### NSPCC

Child Protection helpline

0808 800 5000 FREEPHONE

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

#### Samaritans

Emotional support and advice 24 hours a day

Telephone: 116 123 FREEPHONE

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

# Other ways of pursuing complaints

You have the right to contact your councillor, your MP or the Local Government Ombudsman (an independent, free and confidential service).

The Ombudsman only deals with 'maladministration'. This is when the council does something in the wrong way, does something they should not have done, or fails to do something they should have done.

## For details contact:

Address The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman, PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH

Adviceline 0300 061 0614  
(Monday to Friday, 8.30am-5pm (except public holidays))

Website [lgo.org.uk](http://lgo.org.uk)

This complaints leaflet applies only to children statutory complaints and representations. For complaints about other services, the council's corporate complaints procedure may be used.

If you would like information about this procedure, the complaints team can send you a leaflet or alternatively, you can go to

**[wandsworth.gov.uk/home/contactus](http://wandsworth.gov.uk/home/contactus)**

# Notes

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