

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Children and Young People Services



[www.rotherham.gov.uk](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk)

## HOW TO CONTACT US

If you have a complaint, suggestion or compliment you can contact us in a number of ways:

**Via the online form** on the Council website: [www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints)

**Email:** [complaints@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@rotherham.gov.uk)

**By post:** Using a complaint form or by letter.

No postage is required for posting forms or letters to us, as you may use our freepost address below.

FREEPOST RTCT-XKLS-ZHAZ

The Complaints Manager

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Riverside House

Main Street

Rotherham

S60 1AE

**By telephone:** 01709 382121. The customer service representative handling your call will direct you to the appropriate department.

**By text:** 07860 021 447

**In person:** At one of our Customer Service Centres or any Council reception point.

## YOUR COMPLAINTS

If we have failed to provide a service to you or if you are dissatisfied with the service that you have received then please tell us. In most cases we hope to be able to resolve these with the member of staff you have been dealing with and will use your feedback to help us make improvements.

Where this is not possible we have a formal complaints process to fully consider your complaint.

## THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Who can complain?

Anyone who feels that they have had a poor service from us or from someone providing the service for us and have tried to get the problem solved by speaking to someone in the relevant department.

If you complain to us but feel you can't give us your name, we will not deal with your complaint under the complaints procedure. However, we will ensure steps are taken to deal with the issue.

### What is a complaint?

If we have failed to provide a service to you or if you are dissatisfied with the service that you have received then please tell us. In most cases we hope to be able to resolve these with the member of staff you have been dealing with, and will use your feedback to help us make improvements. Where this is not possible we have a formal complaints process to fully consider your complaint.

Anyone who feels that they have had a poor service from us, or from someone providing the service for us, and have tried to get the problem solved by speaking to someone in the relevant department.

If you complain to us but feel you can't give us your name, we will not deal with your complaint under the complaints procedure. However, we will ensure steps are taken to deal with the issue.

You make a complaint when you are not happy with the standard of service you have had from us. This will affect you or your family and friends and will need a particular response from us.

We are not able to accept some complaints and where this is the case, we will tell you. For example:

- If your complaint relates to something that happened more than 12 months ago, unless there is a reason why you could not complain before
- If your complaint relates to an issue that is being/has been dealt with in Court – such as the content of a report which a social worker has written for Court
- If you ask us for a service – such as a request for a social worker to contact you or you are requesting a copy of an assessment document
- If you ask us for information or an explanation of Council policy or practice – such as a request for information regarding Safeguarding Procedures.

## What happens then?

**Stage 1:** Response from the line manager or service manager. Your complaint will be investigated by a manager from the service which the complaint is about. We will aim to give you a full response to your complaint within 10 working days. However, if your complaint is complicated this may take up to 20 working days.

If you are unhappy with the response to your complaints, you can ask for your complaints to be investigated by an independent person.

**Stage 2:** For Children's Social Care complaints we will appoint someone independent from the Council to investigate your complaint. We will also appoint a separate independent person to oversee the investigation of the complaint. We will aim to give you a full response to your complaint within 25 working days. However, if your complaint is complicated this may take up to 65 working days.

If you are still unhappy with the response you received, you can ask for your complaints to be considered at a Stage 3 Review Panel.

**Stage 3:** Complaints review panel meeting. A review panel will be set up to carry out a review of your complaint. The review panel will consist of three people who are independent from the Council.

If you are not satisfied with how we have handled your complaint then you may wish to complain directly to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

## SOLUTIONS

If your complaint is accepted, the service involved will try to solve the problem by doing the following:

- Apologising to you and explaining what went wrong
- Providing the service you are entitled to receive
- Changing procedures so that the mistake is not repeated.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN

If you are not satisfied with how we have handled your complaint then you may wish to complain directly to the Local Government Ombudsman. Their contact details are below. Please note that the ombudsman will not act until any complaint has been considered under the Council's complaint procedure.

**By post:** PO Box 4771  
Coventry  
CV4 0EH

**By telephone:** 0300 061 0614

**Online form:** <https://complaints.lgo.org.uk/complaint-form/>