

Learning and Development

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

'Providers must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers and must keep a written record of any complaints and their outcome. Ref:3.74

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure

The aim of the Family Centre is to provide services for children, young people, and for parents/carers that are of a high quality and appropriate to the needs of those accessing the services.

In order to support the Family Centre in providing such services, comments, compliments and complaints from children, young people, parents and carers are very welcome.

What is a Compliment, Complaint or Comment

Compliment:

"An expression of admiration or praise"

Complaint:

"An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action, decisions or apparent failings of the Council's provision affecting an individual customer, and which requires a response".

Comments

"A remark, idea, comment or suggestion about the availability, delivery or nature of a service which are not criticisms but which may require a response, and are made by a customer or group of customers. These may be positive comments which would be viewed as compliments, or may be ideas, proposals or wishes put forward about the service being received without having to frame this as a complaint."

A complaint, compliment, and comment may be made in writing or verbally. There is no requirement for the person making any of the above to put these in writing themselves and verbal complaints, compliments, and comments shall not be treated as any less serious than written ones.

The Family Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring all comments, compliments or complaints are recognised, recorded and reported in line with Ofsted guidelines and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Management of Customer Feedback Procedure. Customers who wish to access this procedure will be advised to visit the council's webpage at www.barnsley.gov.uk and scroll down the page to the 'Have Your Say' section or alternatively you can also make a complaint or a compliment by:

- telephoning (01226) 773555 between Monday and Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm
- writing to us at Customer Services Feedback and Improvement Team, PO Box 679, Barnsley, S70 9GG - please mark your envelope TO BE OPENED BY ADDRESSEE ONLY
- sending a text to 07786525880
- contacting 800201226 if you use Typetalk

All customers who wish to make a complaint can expect to be treated fairly and with respect and aware that all concerns will be taken seriously. No one should feel afraid to complain.

How customer compliments, comments and enquiries should be handled.

Compliments, Comments and Enquiries, can be made through the methods available in the Family Centre (Compliments/Comments Tree, Board or Box, Surveys) or to any member of staff on a daily basis.

Compliments may relate to: (although this is not an exhaustive list)

- Service provision
- Going the 'extra mile'
- Staff conduct and performance

Comments may relate to: (although this is not an exhaustive list)

- Suggestions or ideas for alternative ways of working
- General concerns about proposed changes, development to services
- A statement of general opinion about services

In responding to comments and enquiries the Family Centre Manager is expected to respond in a similar format to that used by the person raising the matter unless that person has specifically requested an alternative format, i.e. verbally, in writing, by e-mail, etc. It is expected that all comments and enquiries will be responded to as soon as possible and is agreed with by the person making the comment, however, generally comments and enquiries should take no longer than 10 working days (unless other procedure timescales supersede this).

All compliments, comments and enquiries received should be recorded; along with the response to the customer, any learning that arises and any actions in order to embed and share learning. The record should be made on the Family Centre Dashboard, this information will be collated centrally and sent to the Customer Services Feedback and Improvement Team.

How customer complaints should be handled.

A complaint can be made both verbally and in writing. If a complaint is made to a member of staff, the complaint should be recorded by the Family Centre Manager and shared with the Early Start & Families Strategy and Service Manager; who will inform the Customer Services Feedback and Improvement Team. The Family Centre Manager should also give the customer information about the complaints procedure and advise them on what will happen next.

Early resolution

Some complaints can be resolved instantly or 'on the spot'. It would be expected that the majority of these complaints will be made verbally however; where this is not the case contact must always be made with the customer to advise them of the action

that will be taken. Should a complaint be received and the customer is happy for quick resolution to take place then it is the responsibility of the Family Centre Manager to ensure that resolution is achieved, ideally, no later than 2 working days from receipt of the complaint, unless exceptional circumstances apply and it is with the agreement of the customer however, this extension should not exceed 5 working days. Should resolving the complaint exceed the 2 or at most 5 days timeframe then the customer must be informed of their right to pursue their complaint through the formal procedure and the Family Centre Manager should seek advice from the Customer Services Feedback and Improvement Team for clarification and potential formal investigation of the matter.

During the process of resolving the complaint the Family Centre Manager should identify and record (on the Family Centre Dashboard) any learning that arises from the complaint and the actions required in order to embed this learning. The Family Centre Manager should share this plan with the Early Start & Families Strategy and Service Manager; and identified Lead Officers responsible for the completion of the actions.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved through early resolution the Family Centre Manager should record the complaint, inform the Early Start & Families Strategy and Service Manager; and forward the complaint to the Customer Feedback and Improvement Team who will contact the customer and advise them of the action that will be taken in resolution of their complaint. The Family Centre Manager should keep in contact with the Customer Feedback and Improvement Team to ensure Ofsted timescales are met and they record on the Family Centre Dashboard the outcome of the investigation and implement any learning or actions identified by the team.

Ofsted requirements:

Ofsted requires childcare settings to investigate complaints and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days.

If the complaint is in writing to the Family Centre:-

- The Family Centre will be required to provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.
- A record must be kept for at least 3 years.

Making a Complaint to Ofsted

Alternatively, if you feel the Family Centre has not dealt with the complaint / concern correctly you can contact Ofsted directly online or by phone at the following address:

Ofsted Early Years Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD	Tel: 0300 123 1231 Website: www.gov.uk/complain-about-school (this also includes all types of childcare setting)
---	---