

Children, Family and Education Annual Complaints and Compliments Report 2024/2025

Committee considering report:	Scrutiny Commission
Date of Committee:	11 September 2025
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Heather Codling
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	19 June 2025
Report Author:	Sue O'Brien

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This is the Children's Services Annual Complaints and Compliments Report for 2024-2025.
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to ensure transparency and accountability. It is a summary of the previous year's complaints and compliments. It provides detailed information about the types of complaints and what the service has learnt from them and changes implemented to improve the journey for families and young people.
- 1.3 The report also includes a summary of what actions were completed from the previous report and new actions for the coming year.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 This annual report to inform members around this area and enable confidence in the process of responding as well as learning for the services.
- 2.2 Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to approve and sign off this Annual Report on Children's Services Complaints and Compliments for 2024-2025.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There are no financial implications with this annual report.

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	However, there is a financial consequence from complaints, the LGSCO ask the LA to consider financial remedies at earlier stages in line with their guidance.			
Human Resource:	There are no HR implications with this annual report.			
Legal:	There are no Legal implications with this annual report.			
Risk Management:	There are no Risk Management implications with this annual report.			
Property:	There are no Property implications with this annual report.			
Policy:	Children, Family and Education Complaints policy			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		This is an annual report, there is no proposed decision being asked.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
Environmental Impact:		x		

Health Impact:		x		
ICT Impact:		x		
Digital Services Impact:		x		
Council Strategy Priorities:		x		
Core Business:		x		
Data Impact:		x		
Consultation and Engagement:	Services, Management Team			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 2024-2025 Complaints and Compliments Annual Report. At the end of each financial year, there is a requirement to produce an annual report (Regulation 13(3)) and this report must be made available to the general public.
- 4.2 This report provides an overview of complaints received by Children, family and Education Services between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. This includes Social Care Complaints (statutory complaints) as well as wider Children and Education Services complaints (non-statutory complaints).
- 4.3 This year is the first year that we have combined the report to include whole of Children's Services, previously Children's Social Care was a stand along annual report.
- 4.4 This report explores the themes from the complaints received, as well as volumes, response times and outcomes. This report also covers positive feedback and compliments received.
- 4.5 The report has been designed to show both the quantitative and qualitative information gathered during the complaint process. Highlighting where changes have been made to processes or in the way we consider complaints and who is making them.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 Listening to and learning from complaints is an important part of ensuring that the voices of children, young people and families are always heard, and that we continue to deliver high-quality services that are responsive to feedback.
- 5.2 This report provides an overview of complaints received by Children, family and Education Services between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. This includes Social Care Complaints (statutory complaints) as well as wider Children and Education Services complaints (non-statutory complaints).
- 5.3 This year is the first year that we have combined the report to include all the information.
- 5.4 This report explores the themes from the complaints received, as well as volumes, response times and outcomes. This report also covers positive feedback and compliments received.
- 5.5 We produce this report annually as a statutory requirement for West Berkshire Council.

5.1 Annual Report is at appendix 1

Background

- 5.2 Generally, assessments and services in the following areas can be considered under the statutory complaints' procedure
 - Children in need.
 - Children in Care.
 - Special Guardianship support.
 - Post-adoption support.
- 5.3 The statutory process consists of three stages:
 - **Stage 1:** 10 working days, however this may take 20 working days in complex cases. This will be passed to an appropriate manager in the service that the complaint relates to for a response.
 - **Stage 2:** An independent investigation using an external independent person and investigating Officer. Time frame between 25 – 65 working days
 - **Stage 3:** Review Panel hearing with three independent people on the panel and their decision will be confirmed in writing to you within 28 days of the panel hearing.

6 Other options considered

No other options considered - this is an annual report.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The report highlights the effectiveness of the complaints procedure and provides evidence that complaints are being managed more effectively, with better timeliness and with compassion.
- 7.2 It provides information about the actual monetary cost of complaints.
- 7.3 The report is an opportunity to reflect on the whole service going forward, we will be able to monitor our process and see where we are making significant gains and where we will need to focus our efforts on making improvements.

8 Appendices

Appendix A - Complaints and Compliments Annual Report

Background Papers:

None

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☐ No: ☒

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Item is Urgent Key Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Report is to note only | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Wards affected: All wards

Officer details:

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*(add text)

E-mail:

*(add text)

Document Control

Document Ref:		Date Created:	
Version:		Date Modified:	
Author:			
Owning Service			

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			