

Statistical Overview

72 complaints were raised between September 2021 and February 2022.

14 of these were in relation to children in our care

- 9 were not upheld
- 3 are being investigated
- 2 were upheld
- 1 partially upheld

Of those partially or fully upheld, 2 were open to Safeguarding Care Planning Teams and 1 CLA Services

All complaints received for children in our care, in the past 6-months, were completed within timescales

1 ongoing complaint is overdue (623963)

All 3 upheld/partially upheld complaints were made by parents/guardians

All 3 complaints were resolved at Stage 1

Issues of complaint:

Complaint 1 (upheld)

- High number of moves for a child which caused behavior deteriorating rapidly.
- Carer did not provide appropriate kit/uniform for starting school

Complaint 2 (upheld)

- Connected Carers allowance reduced without agreement

Complaint 3 (Partially upheld)

- Family time not taking place as agreed in Court
- Communication with the allocated worker, no response to calls or emails or invite to CLA review

Stage 2 and 3 Complaints Resolved in the past 6-months

2 Stage 2 complaints have concluded within the past 6-months, relating to children in our care

Complaint 1:

- Concerns around comments made by a Social Worker deemed 'inappropriate' and providing conflicting information.
- Gap in visits taking place
- Delay in rehabilitation

Complaint 2:

- Not providing a copy of minutes from statutory meeting s

- Not sharing information with another service in a timely way, which caused delay in starting an assessment. However, this was partially upheld as other factors played a part in this.

Learning from Complaints

The numbers of complaints in relation to children in our care is low, therefore drawing themes and learning from these alone is not possible. However, when comparing overall themes from complaints 2018-21 and lessons learned, the themes from that report are;

- Poor communication from a social worker;
- Perceived lack of financial support for a child or young person; and
- Accuracy of recorded information about a customer.

Each Month the Children & Families Principal Social Worker chairs a Learning Meeting

The purpose of the Learning Meeting

- To pull together and analyse learning from practice. There will be a focus on learning from complaints, thematic overview of IRO challenge/audit, and audit to excellence findings, Future for Families Deep Dives and any reviews ongoing within the South Tees Safeguarding Partnership, Subject Access Requests and Participation People to represent the voice of children in care. The Organisational Development's business partner for Children's Services will attend to consider what training has taken place.
- To ensure that where there are themes emerging about quality of practice that we can be responsive and target resource (such as training, practice lead interventions and audit) to support social work practice to flourish.
- To assess impact of those interventions and consider whether there is any evidence of the quality of practice improving, month on month, against the priorities where intervention has been targeted.
- The group will identify 1 key priority for each month which will result in targeted Hot Topics session, PSW and Practice Lead support for the month ahead. The recommendation will be sent to Rachel Farnham, Director for approval.

Action undertaken in response to complaints from September 2021 – February 2022:

- Audit undertaken whereby children have made complaints
- Mystery Shopper quality assurance piloted in MACH
- Hot Topics
- Practice Week with a focus on language, communication and identity.
- Participation People now attend and contribute to Learning Meetings ensuring we can respond to issues raised directly from children and young people in our care