

COMPLAINTS POLICY

CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER FOR WALES

Our Complaints Policy

The Children's Commissioner for Wales is committed to providing high quality services. We recognise however, that we may sometimes get things wrong or make mistakes. To deal with this we have the following complaints procedure:

We will deal with your complaint

We do not look on complaints as unwanted. They help us to see where our services, practice or procedures might be improved. So please do let us know where you feel we have made a mistake or done something which you found unsatisfactory or unacceptable. Even if you do not think your particular concern amounts to a 'complaint' we would still like to know about it. You may help us to deal with something we might otherwise overlook.

How to complain:

Step 1: Contacting us

The first step is to talk to a member of the Children's Commissioner for Wales' staff. This can be done quite informally, either face to face or by telephone. You can contact us in English or Welsh. If you want to talk to someone in another language we'll do our best to make that happen.

Usually, the best staff member to talk to will be the person who dealt with the matter you are concerned about, as they will be in the best position to help you quickly and to put things right. If they are not available, or you would prefer to approach someone else, then ask for their manager or the Commissioner.

We will try to resolve the problem straightaway if we can. If we can't do this, for example, because information we need is not readily available, then we will take a record of your concern and arrange the best way and time for getting back to you. This will normally be within five working days or we will make some other arrangement acceptable to you.



Step 2: Taking your complaint further

If you are still unhappy, the next step is to put your complaint in writing to the Commissioner setting out the details, explaining what you think went wrong and what you feel would put things right. If you are unhappy about writing a letter, you can always ask a member of staff to take notes of your complaint. You will be asked if you agree with the notes and be given your own copy for reference.

If you are under eighteen we will check with you whether you want anyone to support you. This is your choice and can be a friend or an advocate or someone you trust.

Once we receive a written complaint, we will arrange for it to be fully investigated. Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within five working days of receiving it and the letter will say when you can expect a full response. This should normally be within 15 working days unless the matter is very complicated (for example, where other organisations need to be contacted or other individuals need to give consent). Where this is the case, we will still let you know what action is being taken and tell you when we expect to provide you with a full response.

Step 3: The next stage

If you are not satisfied with the investigation you can ask the Commissioner to look at your complaint. All materials relating to your complaint and the investigation will be passed to the Commissioner. The Commissioner will let you know within seven working days that your complaint has been received and tell you when to expect a full response.

Taking your complaint outside the organisation

If you are not satisfied with the Children's Commissioner for Wales' decision, you can ask for your complaint to be referred to an independent complaints reviewer. All material relating to your complaint and the Commissioner's decision and any other relevant documents will be passed on to their office. The independent complaints reviewer will let you know within seven working days that she has received your complaint and tell you when to expect a full response from her.

