

Job Description

Senior Complaints Officer (Children's Services)

Role Profile Senior Complaints Officer I
Service/Team Complaints
Reports to Complaints Manager (Children's Services)
Responsible for NA
Number of posts _1
Post number _
Career Grade _ NA

My job improves the quality of life for the people of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole by supporting the development and maintenance of standards across Children's Services. This is achieved by assisting in maintaining an effective complaints and representation service which supports the resolution of complaints and improves the lives of service users. The service also gathers and analyses information from complaints to enable service users and their representatives to influence performance based on their experience.

Job Overview

Work across Children's Services, to ensure compliance with the Statutory Complaints procedure in accordance with the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 and the BCP Council Complaints procedure. This will provide an efficient and effective resolution and processing of complaints, representations and compliments, capturing and disseminating learning from them.

Key Responsibilities

- To assist the Complaints Manager in coaching a team of Complaints Officers (and Business Support where used) to deliver high quality responsive service for complainants and staff dealing with complaints.
- To work in partnership with Corporate Complaints, and Senior Leaders within Children's Services to identify, recommend and develop improvements to the efficiency and continuity of the Children's Complaints Service.
- To assist the Complaints Manager in representing the Complaints Service at Stage 3 Complaint Review Panels.
- To assist the Complaints Manager in providing specialist advice to Corporate and Service Directors on complex cases where reputation and financial risks to the council are high.
- To assist the Complaints Manager in quality assurance checks at Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the Statutory Complaints process and providing challenge to external investigators and Senior Leaders.
- To deputise for the Complaints Manager when needed.

- To assist the Complaints Manager in ensuring training is available to those who need to manage and respond to complaints within the Council for example, Team Managers and Service Managers within Children's.
- To be responsible for the receipt, validation and registration of complaints. Advising customers on a wide range of issues, including those of a more complex nature. Providing advice, assistance and information as appropriate, identifying and resolving problems and judging when to refer or involve others. Resolve queries independently and recommend alternative sources/courses of action without reference to others and assisting with complaint resolution.
- Ensure that complainants and/or representatives and staff are provided with appropriate advice, support and outcome information during the process of the complaint and ensure that service users, their families and carers are able to make complaints and representations in whatever media or language they use.
- Independently make individual decisions on complaints at Stage 1, including taking details of the complaint, creating an acknowledgement letter and summary, and recording the details of the complaint. To support the arrangements and take responsibility for the administration of Stage 2 complaints investigations and Stage 3 complaint review panels, ensuring that timescales are observed and comprehensive summaries of meetings are maintained.
- To support the independent investigation process at Stage 2 and Stage 3 including liaising with managers and staff within Children's Services or outside agencies as appropriate.
- Monitor deadlines, actions and recommendations for complaints at Stage 1, 2 and 3 using a case management system and including arranging meetings with Independent Investigating Officers, liaising with the Ombudsman and clerking the Complaints Panel meetings.
- To be responsible for monitoring, recording, reviewing and providing statistical data to the Complaints Manager on complaints and representations activity and identifying any issues for further investigation.
- To contribute to and support the Complaints Manager in the implementation, establishment and management of effective policies and procedures within Children's Services regarding complaint management.
- To maintain, review and update all information for the public and for internal staff on procedures for Children's Services complaints, including hard copy leaflets, web pages and template letters. To be responsible for maintaining accurate electronic and hard copy records of complaints, data, statistics and files, and to ensure regular archiving is carried out to keep information as up to date as possible.
- To recognise situations that are raised as complaints or representations that might indicate children, young people or adults are at risk and pass concerns to services who can respond.
- Where needed seek specialist advice from a range of Council and external networks to find resolution for complainants.
- Represent the Council at regional events and meetings.
- To contribute to reviews and inspections of Children's Services.
- To work within BCP Council's values and behaviours.

Specific Qualifications and Experience

- Degree Level or equivalent

- Customer Services / Complaint Handling Qualification or equivalent experience Level 3.
- Experience in coaching people.
- Experience of managing competing priorities under time constraints

Personal Qualities & Attributes

- Commitment to child centred practice, natural justice and learning.
- Clear, concise communication style, able to read and analyse complex reports.
- Coaching and supervision skills to work with staff who will deliver the service, including supporting the recruitment process.
- Understanding and ability to support staff in being resilient in an area of work involving significant exposure to challenge, conflict and different emotions.
- Ability to support Children's Services staff and managers with diplomacy, tact, and an ability to influence/ negotiate and explain.
- Confidence in Children's Service practice standards to enable challenge or escalation.
- Ensure externally employed people's practice meets the high expectations of the services and to escalate concerns to the Complaints Manager if these standards are not met.
- Ability to respond objectively to complainants in a way that makes them feel that they are heard and understood, whilst being clear about their rights and the process. Skills to supporting them to clarify their concerns.
- Ability to manage complex and emotive meetings.
- Skills and confidence to present reports at Service and Council meetings.

Job Requirements

- DBS check
- Must be able to travel, using public or other forms of transport where they are viable, or by holding a valid UK driving licence with access to own or pool car.

This job description is not exhaustive and reflects the type and range of tasks, responsibilities and outcomes associated with this post.