



Recipient's name
Address
Address
Town
Postcode

Children, Young People and Education

Children's Complaints Team
Kroner House
Eurogate Business Park
Ashford
TN24 8XU

Phone: 03000 410304

Ask for:

Email: csccomplaints@kent.gov.uk

Date

Ref

Dear

I am writing as an update to your stage 1 complaint regarding the Special Educational Needs service. I should like to offer my apologies for the unacceptable delay in responding to your complaint.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has raised concerns about the timeliness of our complaint responses, and the significant backlog of complaints still requiring a response. The Ombudsman has asked us to write to you, to explain the next steps in terms of responding to your complaint, and your rights of escalation.

I appreciate that it is frustrating to still be waiting for a response to the concerns you raised. We are working to reduce the backlog and have put in place an action plan to ensure all outstanding overdue complaints are responded to as quickly as possible. We anticipate that this will take several months and have agreed to provide the Ombudsman with an update on the backlog and our timeliness with complaint handling within three months. Additional staff have been recruited to manage and respond to complaints, and we are committed to keeping within timescales going forward.

I will be personally reviewing our performance at regular management meetings to ensure that we are responding to customer feedback in a timely manner, and that the issues we are experiencing now will not be repeated in the future.

Once you have received a response from us, you will be able to escalate your complaint to stage 2 should you wish to do so. Following completion of stage

2 you will have the opportunity to escalate it to the Ombudsman for independent review.

Should the Ombudsman decide to review issues made in your complaint to them, they will also consider our handling of your complaint.

Once again, I want to say how sorry I am that you have experienced delays in receiving a response to your concerns. I would like to reassure you that the Council is taking steps to reduce the current backlog and put in place steps to ensure that this will not occur again.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Hammond".

Sarah Hammond

Corporate Director – Children, Young People and Education