

SPSO decision report

Case: 201204796, A Council
Sector: local government
Subject: primary school
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Miss C complained to us because she was dissatisfied with the way the council had investigated her complaints about a teacher at her son's former school. She said that her son had been bullied, and was not satisfied that the school were doing enough to recognise the problem. Miss C had since placed her son in another school. Although the council had said he could return to the original school, she felt that this could not happen without an apology from the teacher, and recognition by the council of their fault in the way they handled the matter. The complaint that we looked at, however, was only about how the council handled the matter, as we are excluded from looking directly into the internal affairs in an educational establishment run by a local authority.

We did not uphold Miss C's complaints. She said that the council's investigation was flawed in failing to answer any of her questions about the way she had been treated by the teacher, but we saw nothing to suggest that procedures were not properly followed, or that there was any omission in the response she was given. Miss C was concerned that the council's investigating officer did not tell her that she was about to leave the council, but the council told us that there was no reason for the member of staff to do so. We agreed that this was the case, and that the investigation was conducted thoroughly. It was completed in a short time scale, and this too had caused Miss C concern, but again we found no suggestion that this had any effect on the quality of the investigation. She also felt that she should have been given an opportunity to discuss the council's findings but we found that they had correctly signposted her to us under their complaints procedure, after they completed their investigation.