

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201302050, A Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** primary school  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained about how the council investigated her complaint about how a school had treated her child (who had been identified as having additional support needs). She said that she felt the investigation was biased and unfair.

Our investigation found that in looking into Mrs C's complaint the council gathered information from only one source, the school's head teacher. They explained that this was because other sources were not available when they investigated the complaint (during the school summer holidays). We concluded, however, that this meant the council did not demonstrate that their investigation was balanced and reasonable. They could not contact people with potentially relevant information during the holidays but, instead of postponing the investigation until all parties could be contacted, they decided to go ahead with it. We took the view that it would have been helpful for them to have obtained evidence from an external support service and teaching staff who had provided ongoing support to Mrs C's child and who had been involved in a review meeting that Mrs C had found unsatisfactory.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the council:

- apologise that they did not carry out a reasonable investigation into the complaints; and
- ensure that information made available for members of the public is fully in line with the content of their complaints handling procedure.
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