

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201302576, The City of Edinburgh Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** communication staff attitude dignity and confidentiality  
**Outcome:** not upheld, action taken by body to remedy; no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C, who is an advocate, complained on behalf of her client (Ms A) about the way staff at a council-run community centre (the centre) communicated with her; that they had allowed photographs to be taken of her children against her wishes; failed to properly investigate an allegation that a staff member had referred in an offensive way to one of her children; and unreasonably failed to allow one of her children to go on a trip.

Ms A complained that staff at the centre did not provide her with information about events in the accessible format she had requested. Our investigation found that the council had acknowledged that there had been some inconsistency in providing information to Ms A in the format she had requested. Action was taken by the council to ensure that all communication was appropriate to Ms A's needs and, as this action had been taken, the council did not uphold Ms A's complaint on this issue. We considered that the action taken by the council had been reasonable and we did not uphold Ms C's complaint about this.

In relation to photographs taken of Ms A's children during a trip, Ms A had completed a form specifically refusing permission for her children to be photographed. The council acknowledged their error and apologised for this. As a result of Ms A's complaint, the council arranged staff training and also arranged for the deletion of the photographs in the presence of Ms A and her advocate. We considered that this was reasonable.

In relation to Ms C's other complaints about allegations of an offensive term being used towards her child, and her child's exclusion from a trip, we found that neither of these complaints could be substantiated with evidence, so we did not uphold these complaints.