

SPSO decision report



Case: 201804706, Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership
Sector: health and social care
Subject: child services and family support
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained about the failure of the partnership to follow their own complaints process. Ms C raised concerns about the service provided by social work to her child on at least two occasions.

We found that the partnership did not recognise that Ms C's concerns were complaints and that the receipt of these complaints should have instigated the documented complaints process. As a result Ms C's concerns were not being formally assessed and responded to under the complaints process. Therefore, there was a delay in Ms C being signposted to our office and we upheld the complaint. However, when the complaint was eventually investigated by the board this was generally handled well.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Ms C for the failure to recognise what a complaint was within the organisation and instigate the complaint process. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- To ensure all members of staff are able to recognise a complaint and are aware of the documented complaints process that requires to be instigated when a complaint is received.