

SPSO decision report

Case: 201806265, East Dunbartonshire Council
Sector: local government
Subject: secondary school
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the secondary school his child (Child A) attended. He said that after his family had told the school of an incident which Child A had witnessed, the school failed to communicate reasonably with him regarding their progress and wellbeing. We found that the evidence showed that following the school being informed of the incident, this was appropriately discussed with Child A, and teachers were reasonably alert to any change in their behaviour or wellbeing. We determined that as there did not appear to be any cause for concern, there was no need for the school to communicate with Mr C. We also noted that Mr C and his family could have discussed any concerns they had with the school and they had appropriate opportunity to do so. We did not uphold this aspect of Mr C's complaint.

Mr C also complained that following Child A's exam results, there was an unreasonable failure to communicate with him. We found that whilst the majority of communication was reasonable and timely, there was a failure to alert Mr C of the exam board's position on the potential to apply in retrospect for 'exceptional circumstances'. On this basis, we upheld this aspect of Mr C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for failing to alert him to the Scottish Qualification Authority's position on exceptional circumstances in a timely manner. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Communication regarding post-results matters should be timely, open, and transparent.