



**BEDFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Comment Compliment Complaint

Children's Social Care



[www.bedford.gov.uk/beheard](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/beheard)

**Bedford Borough Council welcomes feedback from our customers. We will use the feedback you give to improve our services.**

## Comment

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You may wish to share a suggestion or idea about how we can improve our services.

## Compliment

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You may wish to tell us about a service that has been good or a member of staff who has been helpful.

## Complaint

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You may want to complain if the standard of service falls short of what you would expect, or if a member of staff does not do what they said they will.

## Independent advice and advocacy

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An advocate is someone who can help you to speak up for yourself or speak on your behalf, so you can have your views heard. They can attend meetings with you, carry out correspondence and telephone calls for you and third parties, and support you if you want to make a formal complaint.

Barnardo's provide free and confidential advocacy support specifically for children and young people. You can contact them on:

 **0800 917 7947**

(calls are free from a landline but mobile charges will apply)

 **07584 206 572**

 **barnardosyoungpeople@barnardos.org.uk**

POHWER can also provide advocacy support for people in Bedfordshire for free, you can contact them on:

 **0300 456 2362**

 **www.pohwer.net**

## Representation

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You have the right for someone to make a complaint on your behalf. We will ask you to give consent for them to do this.

## The Complaints Process

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There are 3 stages to our complaints procedure and we will aim to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days.

### Stage 1- Local resolution

The Manager of the service complained about will provide a written response within 10 working days or up to 20 working days if complex. If you are unhappy with the response at Stage 1 you can request Stage 2.

### Stage 2 – Investigation

An investigator will be appointed and will aim to provide a report within 25 working days but it can take up to 65 working days if the case is complex. You will then receive a response from a more senior manager based on the findings in this report. If you are unhappy with the response you can request Stage 3.

### Stage 3 – Independent review

An independent review panel will look at how your complaint has been handled. You will be invited to attend. Following the panel's findings the Director will provide you with a written response within 15 working days.

### Meeting with the service

You may prefer to meet with a manager from the service to resolve your complaint. Customer Relations can support a meeting or provide a mediation service upon your request.

## Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

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If you have been through all stages of our complaints procedure and are still unhappy, you can ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to review your complaint.

The Ombudsman investigates complaints in a fair and independent way - it does not take sides. It is a free service.

The Ombudsman expects you to have given us chance to deal with your complaint, before you contact them. If you have not heard from us within a reasonable time, it may decide to look into your complaint anyway. This is usually up to 12 weeks but can be longer for social care complaints that follow a statutory process.

### About the Ombudsman

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is the final stage for complaints about councils and some other organisations providing local public services. It also investigates complaints about all adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies) for people who self-fund their care.

### Contact



[www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)



0300 061 0614



Text 'call back' to 0762 481 1595

## How to contact us and give feedback

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- Complete the form attached to this leaflet.
- Telephone or write to the service area concerned and speak to the manager.
- Telephone Customer Relations on **01234 228597**
- Email Customer Relations at **be.heard@bedford.gov.uk**
- Text Customer Relations on **07795 686459**
- Or visit our website **[www.bedford.gov.uk/beheard](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/beheard)**

## Complaints that involve other organisations

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Where a complaint involves another organisation we will work closely with the other organisation to try and ensure you receive a single coordinated response. We will require your permission before sharing information with another organisation.

## Complaints about schools

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Parents who have a complaint about a school should contact the school concerned for details of their complaints procedures. Generally most complaints can be resolved informally with the child's class teacher, form tutor or Head of Year. If not, parents should write to the Headteacher and if the matter is still not resolved write to the Chair of Governors at the school address.

## Court Issues

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The complaints procedure is not an appeals procedure. Appeals against court orders will need to be addressed to the court. Complaints relating to legal/court proceedings must be made within those proceedings and cannot be dealt with under the complaints procedure. It is unlikely that, complaints relating to matters which will be discussed in court can be investigated whilst court proceedings are ongoing.

## Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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برای اطلاع

Per Informazione

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Informacja

Za Informacije

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01234 228597



be.heard@bedford.gov.uk



**Customer Relations Team**

Bedford Borough Council  
Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street,  
Bedford, MK42 9AP



[www.bedford.gov.uk/beheard](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/beheard)



What would you like to see happen?

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If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else please give their details here. We will need their consent in order to proceed.

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If your complaint relates to an agency outside of the Council, are you happy for us to share your details with them?

Yes       No

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

Please now place this form in an envelope and post it to the address below.

**Customer Relations Team, Bedford Borough Council,  
Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP**

### **GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018**

Under new Data Protection regulations (GDPR) Bedford Borough council needs to inform you of the reasons why we are capturing your data and what we will do with your data. Any personal data collected and/or processed under this policy/procedure will be dealt with in accordance with Data Protection Legislation and the Council's Data Protection Policy. Data is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, only individuals where relevant to this policy/procedure. To find out more information on this follow the link below.

To view the council's current Privacy Notices including one for Customer Feedback at [www.bedford.gov.uk/gdprprivacy](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/gdprprivacy)