

## Children's Social Services

### Summary of complaints received across service areas (2014-15)

#### 1. Childcare Fieldwork

1.1 There are no specific themes arising from the 36 complaints regarding the Service and there have been a range of issues which include:

- i. Social work visits to children/young people not being completed
- ii. Lack of communication and not being kept informed
- iii. Challenges to Court reports
- iv. Inaccuracies or delays with minutes from meetings
- v. Parents believing the Service is taking sides with their former partner
- vi. Professionalism of social work staff and a breakdown in their working relationship

1.2 These complaints broadly culminated in the following outcomes:

- i. Confirming that social visits had indeed been completed within statutory timescales.
- ii. Reminding what arrangements are in place or what was previously agreed.
- iii. Explaining Court reports should be challenged via their Solicitor or explaining why certain pieces of information were not included.
- iv. Amendments made to minutes where appropriate or parents' views appended to them.
- v. Reassuring parents that everyone's views are included and acted upon where appropriate.
- vi. Reiterating the Department's expectation that parents and staff work together in the best interests of the child. Sometimes this involved cases being co-worked.

#### 2. Resources (Fostering and Family and Adolescent Support Team)

2.1 The 8 complaints made included:

- i. Problems experienced by young people in foster placements, e.g. breakdown in relationship with carers, and issues concerning pocket money and personal possessions.
- ii. Foster carers complaining about their experiences with the Service and the problems this has caused.
- iii. Issues relating to contact sessions between parents and their children

2.2 These complaints were resolved by:

- i. Discussing experiences of foster placements at Disruption Meetings following placement breakdowns with a view to learning any lessons.
- ii. Arranging independent oversight into foster carers' experiences which confirmed statutory procedures had been followed.

iii. Offering changes to contact session arrangements.

### 3. Other

#### 3.1 Complaints included:

- i. Appealing a decision made at Child Care Panel. The original decision was overturned and alternative arrangements explored and put into place.
- ii. Challenging the Service's handling of a Part 4 meeting (allegations against professionals). It was confirmed due process had been followed and explained how a decision had been reached.
- iii. Complaints concerning the North Wales Emergency Duty Team were looked into and responded to.

### 4. **Summary of compliments received across service areas (2014-15)**

#### 5.1 Childcare Fieldwork

#### 5.2 14 compliments were received by the section. These included:

- i. The parents and grandparents of a baby whose case was discussed at a Review Conference wanted to thank the Family Intervention Team for their professionalism and honesty. They said that they had "made an unbearable situation bearable." During the conference it was also observed by the chair that social workers provided an excellent piece of research with a positive outcome for the child and her family with safeguards in place.
- ii. Deputy Head Teacher from Hawarden High School expressed sincere thanks to social worker from Duty and Assessment team, for the way in which she dealt with the child protection case. He said: 'Karen demonstrated a sympathetic and caring manner and we were extremely impressed with the way in which she handled the matter.'
- iii. Social worker from Children's Integrated Disability Service, received a compliment from a family who moved from Anglesey to Flintshire. She supported their daughter and introduced them to 'Penderels' family support. The parents said they were extremely pleased with the service she and Children Services were providing for the family.
- iv. During a LAC review a young person stated that he thought his social worker, from Children and Young Adults Support Team was 'doing a great job.' He said he would not have been able to make the progress he had made without her support.

### 6. Resources

#### 6.1 The 17 compliments received by the service included:

- i. A social worker from Family Placement Team received a Thank –You letter from a great grandmother of a boy who had been fostered. She expressed her

gratitude for all the hard work done by Social Services and the foster parents and said that he is now a different boy and that it is remarkable what they had achieved through their love, patience and hard work. She said she was grateful for saving him from growing up with disruptive behaviour in a home full of alcohol and drugs.

- ii. A sessional worker from Family and Adolescent Support Team, received a positive feed-back from a grandmother who praised the support provided to her granddaughter. She said her granddaughter had a great time and she talked about her positive experience for about an hour and a half and she kept telling her what she had been doing during the day. The grandmother also said she appreciated team's flexibility in the support they provide.

## 7. Other

7.1 46 Compliments were received by other teams such as Early Years and Family support, Genesis project and Team Around the Family etc. These included:

- i. 'Flying Start for dads is an outstanding group. It gives dads a chance to talk to each other. I like it as I don't have a lot of confidence due to being brought up in foster care. Parent development workers gave me confidence when I was really low. They spoke with the kindest words which made me feel safe. I want to thank the managers of Flying Start for doing a Dads' group.'
- ii. Novus, Genesis Project & Quest Coordinator received a compliment from a client who she helped set up a new business. He said: 'I have been so busy but I have not forgot what you guys have done for me. Thank you, not only for helping my business achieve funding for the vital lifting equipment but the support you and the team gave me was fantastic.'
- iii. Regional Organiser of national 'Family Links' parenting programmes thanked Early Years Manager for her contribution to a regional event which joined up local authorities to deliver the Family Links Nurturing programmes for families. He thanked her for her support in organising the day. People seemed to get a lot from the day and highlighted many issues, such as the need for a training day for Managers/Commissioners.'