

How to complain

School

To complain to the educational setting, you need to follow their complaints procedure as detailed on their website. If it's not on the website, request it directly from the school office. If you have gone through the whole procedure (including escalation to the Governors/Academy Trust) and feel you still haven't had a suitable response, then you can escalate it further:

You can complain to the [Department for Education \(DfE\)](#) directly if:

- a child is at risk
- a child is missing school
- the school is stopping you from following its complaints procedure

Ofsted cannot respond to or resolve individual complaints, but you can still tell [Ofsted](#) about a problem with a school. They can use the information you provide to decide when to inspect and what areas to focus the inspection on.

If your complaint is about an allegation of abuse at the educational setting you can contact [LADO \(Local Authority Designated Officer\)](#).

Health

Everyone who provides an NHS service must provide their own complaints procedure, this is normally found in waiting rooms or on their website but if you aren't able to find it ask the provider for a copy. You can either complain to the service provider directly or to the body that pays for that NHS service, you can only complain to one, not both. You will need to follow the provider procedure as detailed and the complaint should normally be made within 12 months of the incident.

For further help you can contact the [Patient Advice and Liaison Service \(PALS\)](#) as they can provide you with advice and support and may be able to help you rectify the complaint on an informal level.

If after trying to resolve the complaint on an informal level you've decided to formalise it the [Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service](#) could support you with the procedure you would need to undertake.



Local Authority

If you are unhappy with a service provided by the Local Authority (LA) then you must complain to them directly. You could start by complaining to the Head of Service or Service/ Team Manager, following this if you aren't happy with the response you can complain to the LA 'Compliments and Complaints' service. The complaint should be made within a year of using the service you were dissatisfied with and you can make the complaint verbally, in person or in writing.

There are three stages to the complaints procedure with response times ranging from 15 days to 25 days, with some complicated complaints these response times may be longer. To complain to the LA follow the link below:

[Compliments and complaints - Norfolk County Council](#)

If you are unhappy with the LA's response to your complaint you can take the complaint higher to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO):

[Home - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

You can't complain to the LGSCO if:

- You have left it more than 12 months since knowing about the problem
- The matter has not affected you personally or caused you an injustice
- The issue affects most people in the council's area
- You have, or had, a right to appeal or take legal action and we think it is reasonable for you to have done so. This might be to:
 - a tribunal (such as the Housing Benefit Appeals Service)
 - a government minister (such as a planning appeal)
 - the courts
- It is about personnel matters (such as your employment or disciplinary issues)

