

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
1	<p><b>That Education Leeds revises its complaints procedure to incorporate a specific section for school complaints, including an appropriate third stage review process.</b></p>	<p><b>1 Stop monitoring</b></p>	
	<p><u>April 2011 update</u></p> <p>We have given detailed consideration to the Scrutiny Board's request to examine a possible third stage when schools wish to make a complaint. This has included input from our legal team, the Complaints Service Manager and the Director of Children's Services. We considered what approaches could be used to provide a third stage, the implications of these, any precedent this might set and how it may impact on relations with our partner organisations.</p> <p>Taking all of this into account we continue to feel that introducing a formal third stage is not the best way to proceed. Doing so could set a precedent for other partner organisations that may change how we approach resolving difficulties together in the future. Judicial Review offers a route where it is felt that the Council has acted unlawfully, but we would want to avoid this wherever possible through routes based on maintaining good relations, finding common ground and working together to find a way forward.</p> <p>We do recognise that there may be times when a more objective standpoint can help to resolve an issue where the Council and one of its partners have not been able to, but the partner organisation (in this case the school) does not wish to proceed to Judicial Review. We believe that in future the Council and the partner organisation(s) in question could look to use external mediation more effectively as a way to resolve these types of disputes and the Children's Services Complaints Service has taken note of this and will be more pro-active in future in raising awareness of this as an approach and supporting it to help find a way forward.</p>		

Director's Response (Approved by Executive Board May 2010)

*Education Leeds will work within the context of the Children's Services to ensure that the recommendation is incorporated into the Leeds City Council procedure.*

September 2010 update

*The complaints framework and procedures for Children's services are currently being reviewed under the One Council arrangements as part of the Children's Services Transformation Programme. Children's services will ensure that schools' interests, as stakeholders will be taken account of in that programme.*

December 2010 update

*A further update will be provided by 31 March 2011 once the complaints procedure has been reviewed as part of the transfer of Education Leeds into an integrated Children's Services.*

March 2011 update

*From the start of April, as Education Leeds is incorporated into the Council's Children's Services, a fully integrated Complaints Service will be in place (this is largely the case already).*

*Children's Services will work closely with schools to resolve any issues at the earliest point.*

*The ombudsman has confirmed that they can only take cases from individuals who want to complain about their local authority. So, if an individual from a school, such as a governor, wants to make a complaint about services in connection with a school matter, then they can do so but not on the school's behalf.*

*If, we have not been able to resolve a wider issue with a school, and that school remains dissatisfied after going through stages one and two of the complaint procedure, then therefore their only recourse is to take the council to judicial review.*