



**Brighter  
Futures for  
Children**



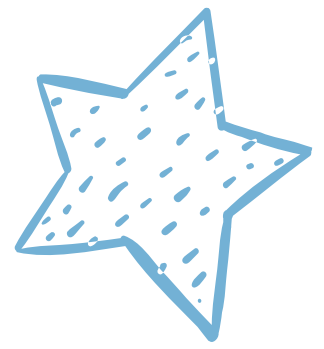
**Whether you are feeling happy or  
unhappy with the help we are giving  
you ...**

**Let us know**



*Brighter Futures for Children wants to get  
things right*

**An information leaflet for children  
and young people wishing to  
comment or complain**



## 1. About you

Are you involved with Brighter Futures for Children because you:

- **live with a foster carer or in other supported accommodation?**
- **care for someone who depends on you?**
- **are being helped or supported by one of our social workers or support workers?**

If you answer **YES** to any of the above, then this leaflet is for you.

It will explain how you can tell us what you think about the service we provide for you. It can be used to tell us where we have done things well, or if you think things have gone wrong.

## 2. I am unhappy. What can I do?

Tell someone you trust. This might be your social worker or support worker, a parent, foster carer, friend, teacher, or someone at your review. We know it can be hard to talk about your worries, but if you tell someone, they can start to make it better.

You might feel that you can't talk to your social worker or carer, or that you have tried to, but things still aren't getting sorted. If this is the case, you can ask to speak to someone else and we'll give you details on how to get in touch.

If you are still not happy with the result, you can speak to the Complaints Manager at Reading Borough Council by emailing Socialcare Complaints ([socialcare.complaints@reading.gov.uk](mailto:socialcare.complaints@reading.gov.uk)) or you can text. Type SPKUP & your message to 81722.

## 3. What will happen next?

### STEP ONE:

- We will talk with you about what you are feeling unhappy about
- We will talk to other people involved
- A manager will write to you – by post or by email – within 10 working days to say if they agree with your complaint and what they are going to do about it.

Most problems are sorted out at this stage but if you aren't happy with what they say, tell the Complaints Manager. If we can't talk it through, then we can take it to **Step Two**.

### STEP TWO:

- We will ask someone who does not work for the company to look into your complaint



### 3. What will happen next?

- Another independent person will also be involved to make sure that the investigation is carried out properly
- These people might want to meet with you to be sure they have understood your complaint
- They will write a report and make suggestions to help sort out your problem. This should take about a month.

**If you are not happy with the answer, you can take your complaint to STEP THREE.**

- Three people (who do not work for the company) will look into your complaint further
- You will be invited to attend a meeting with these people, called a Complaints Review Panel, to talk about your complaint. You can bring someone to support you on your behalf.
- After the meeting, they will tell the company's Executive Director of Children's Services what they think should happen
- If you are still not happy with the result, you can make your complaint to The Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (see page 4).

#### **REMEMBER**

- At any stage of the process, you can bring along someone to help and support your complaint
- We will listen to you and take your complaint seriously
- We will not blame you for making a complaint
- You will not get into trouble for telling us about your problems
- We will ask you the best way to keep in touch with you
- We will talk to all the people involved
- We will try to put things right as quickly as possible.

### 4. Who can help me to complain?

You could ask your social worker, support worker, teacher or a friend to help you. You do not have to do this by yourself.

As well as contacting us, there is an 'Advocacy Service' which helps young people in care to have their voice heard. It's called **Reconstruct** and they will provide an independent person (called an advocate). They can provide someone to visit or meet with you to help you write your complaint and support you while your complaint is being looked at.

#### **Reconstruct details**

**Call** free on 0800 389 1571

**Email** [yourvoice@reconstruct.co.uk](mailto:yourvoice@reconstruct.co.uk)

**Website** (which has a section for children and young people):  
[www.reconstruct.co.uk/children-and-young-peoples-pages/](http://www.reconstruct.co.uk/children-and-young-peoples-pages/)

## 5. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

If you've gone through our complaints procedure and are unhappy with the result or the way your complaint was dealt with, you can ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to look at your case.

**Tel:** 0300 061 0614 to talk to a complaints advisor. Calls to 03 numbers will cost no more than calls to national geographic numbers (starting 01 or 02) from both mobiles and landlines. The telephone lines are open at the following times:

- Mondays 1pm till 4pm
- Tuesdays 10am till 1pm
- Wednesdays 1pm till 4pm
- Thursdays 10am till 1pm
- Fridays 10am till 1pm

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

## 6. You can also let us know you're happy with us!

We love hearing about good experiences as well! It's nice to be able to let the staff who have been working with you know then they've done a good job.

## 7. Other useful contacts

### NSPCC

24-hour free helpline

0808 800 500

[NSPCC website](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

### Childline

24-hour free helpline

0800 1111

[1-2-1 chatline](https://www.childline.gov.uk)

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