

“My job is to listen to you and take you seriously. This is one of the main reasons we were set up. If you’re unsure about anything, just chat to us. And remember, the complaints service is free and confidential.”

Emily Logan

Ombudsman for Children

3 easy ways to tell us about your complaint



1 Freefone us on **1800 20 20 40**

2 Email us at **oco@oco.ie**

3 Write to us at **Ombudsman for Children’s Office, Millennium House, 52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1.**

What happens when we receive a complaint

If you think you may have been treated unfairly, you can make a complaint to the OCO against a range of organisations and services funded by government. This is a free service.

INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

OCO would like to thank all the young people in the Irish Association of Young People in Care who helped us with these leaflets.



ombudsman
for children & young people

Your complaint is taken seriously

What we do when we receive a complaint

If you make a complaint to us against an organisation funded by government (known as 'a public body'), like a school, hospital, the HSE (Health Service Executive), County Council or one that provides a service to children and young people, it's important that you know how we deal with such a complaint. We have to work within certain rules and sometimes that can appear complicated to people who are complaining about something important to them. So, here's what happens:

Sometimes we can't look into a complaint

Irish laws tell us that there are some types of complaints the OCO can investigate and others that we can't. If we can't investigate your complaint, we will let you know and explain clearly so you understand. But just because we can't take it further, doesn't mean that your complaint shouldn't be taken seriously. We will always try to advise you of who might be able to help you.

Sometimes we need to ask you for more information about the complaint before we can make a decision about whether we can look at a complaint or not.

What happens when we can look into a complaint?

We will look into your complaint and see if it is something we can investigate. Usually we write to the organisation complained about and ask them for some information. It's important for you to know that when a complaint is received by the OCO it is treated confidentially. That means it is private and everyone involved including the organisation or service is expected to keep the complaint confidential.

It's our job to be fair

It's important that you – and the organisation or service you're complaining about – remember that the Ombudsman for Children's Office is in the middle. Our job is to be fair and not take sides. We make sure that everyone has a chance to put their case forward. However, it's our job to always work with the best interests of young people as our main concern.

What happens next

After the organisation writes back to us, our Complaints and Investigations team will then study all the information and decide on next steps. At this point there are a few options:

- we can ask for more information;
- we can make some suggestions to the organisation or service and close the case; or
- we will sometimes go to the next stage of the process which is an investigation.

Keeping you informed

It can take a few months before all the important information can be gathered and until the OCO can decide what to do next. We will keep you informed of what's happening. We will discuss with you the best way to contact you.

Of course when the Ombudsman for Children's Office has finished looking at your complaint we will let you and the public body know what we've found and what we are suggesting should happen.

➔ For information on
HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT,
please contact us at
FREEPHONE 1800 20 20 40
or go to our website.

www.oco.ie



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