

### Need more information?

Please get in touch with the Complaints Service Team if you need an advocate or if you would like to discuss a complaint.

Complaints Service Team  
Brent Council  
Brent Civic Centre  
Engineers Way,  
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

020 8937 2444  
complaints.service@brent.gov.uk  
www.brent.gov.uk/complaints

If you can't get in touch with the Complaints Service Team you can also call Brent Customer Services on **020 8937 1234** or drop in at Brent Civic Centre or make a complaint online.

### Other places for support and advice

There are independent charities, organisations and representatives you can contact about advocacy.

Coram Voice  
Freephone 0808 800 5792  
help@coramvoice.org.uk  
www.coramvoice.org.uk

National Youth Advocacy Service  
Freephone 0808 808 1001  
help@nyas.net  
www.nyas.net

You may also wish to contact your ward councillor, MP or the Local Government Ombudsman  
For more information visit  
www.brent.gov.uk/complaints

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Brent

www.brent.gov.uk

Receiving social care?  
Unhappy, concerned or  
annoyed?



Children's Social Care  
A Guide to Complaints and  
Advocacy for Young People

## Unhappy, concerned, annoyed?

You may feel unhappy or concerned about your care service. If there is something on your mind, it's important that you can raise the issue with your social worker or his or her manager or make a complaint. You can do that on your own, or ask for support if you find that difficult. As a young person you have a right to be listened to and for your views to be taken seriously and the council can help you by providing an advocate.

### Who can be your advocate?

An advocate could be someone you already know and trust.

That person could be:

- a teacher, youth worker, personal adviser, your social worker or key worker
- a friend, someone in your family, or an adult that you trust to help
- a volunteer who is trained as an advocate

### Who can have an advocate?

Advocates are for young people aged from 13 to 19 (and in some cases up to 24) who receive social care support.

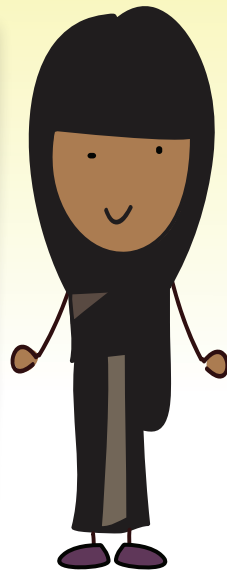
That's if you are:

- looked after
- on a Child Protection Plan
- a care leaver
- disabled or in need
- approaching 18.

Your advocate can also:

- help you write down what is wrong and identify what should happen

- attend a meeting with you
- help you say what you want
- give you advice on your rights and about making choices.



### What is an advocate?

If you would like extra support you can ask for an advocate to speak for you. An advocate will listen to you confidentially and support you to express your views.

They will help you to:

- understand your rights
- attend meetings
- get the service you need
- make informed decisions
- help you raise a concern or make a complaint.

However, if you don't know anybody and you need help to talk about what is wrong or to make a complaint, Brent Council's Complaints Service Team can arrange for you to have an advocate.

If you ask for an advocate they will be independent of the council and will meet you at a place suitable for you.



### What young people say:

"My advocate helped me a lot. Every young person in care should have one."

"My advocate explained my rights to me, "I felt listened to for the first time."

