

SPSO decision report

Case: 201205207, A Council
Sector: local government
Subject: secondary school
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C's child exhibited behaviour that led to a guidance teacher suggesting that the child be assessed for Asperger's syndrome disorder. Meanwhile the school worked on a protocol to manage the child's behaviour in class. Before this could be put in place, however, the child was involved in an incident that led to a referral to an Additional Needs Tribunal. The tribunal said that the council had not made reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act. Mr C then requested a coordinated support plan for his child but this took over eight months to finalise.

Mr C complained to us that in planning his child's education the council did not apply policy and procedures to meet the additional support needs required, and failed to ensure that the school communicated with him and his wife appropriately and adequately. He also complained that they did not ensure that the school maintained adequate record-keeping, and that problems with his child's attendance were not promptly addressed.

We upheld three of Mr C's four complaints. We found that the guideline for providing a support plan is four weeks, and that the council had taken far too long to provide this at a particularly important time in the child's education. We also found that communications were inappropriate and that on three occasions records were inadequate. We did not uphold the complaint about attendance, as we did not find sufficient evidence to do so.

Recommendations

We recommended that the council:

- apologise for the failings identified in our investigation; and
- demonstrate that relevant staff are reminded of the policies, procedures and timescales to be adhered to when a coordinated support plan is requested.