

Joint area review

City of Westminster Children's Services Authority Area

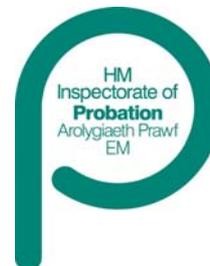
Review of services for children and young people

Audit Commission
Healthcare Commission
HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Probation
Ofsted

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Introduction

1. The most recent Annual Performance Assessment (APA) for the City of Westminster judged the council's children's services as good, and its capacity to improve as outstanding.
2. This report assesses the contribution of local services in ensuring that children and young people:
 - at risk, or requiring safeguarding are effectively cared for
 - who are looked after achieve the best possible outcomes
 - with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve the best possible outcomes.
3. The following investigations were also carried out:
 - the quality of service provided to and the outcomes achieved by children and young people using the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
 - the contribution of local services in supporting young people who misuse substances, including support for their families or carers, and the outcomes they achieve
 - the impact of local services in supporting and challenging secondary schools to increase rates of progress.

Context

4. The City of Westminster is, in many ways, unique. Although one of the smallest unitary authorities in England (8.5 square miles), it is one of the most diverse London boroughs with a vibrant and highly transient community. The total population is 240,000, with about 42,500 (18%) in the 0-19 age group. The overall population is rising, as is the number of children and young people which has increased by almost 2000 since May 2006. Migration from and to other London boroughs and the rest of the United Kingdom is high.
5. Westminster is a city of contrasts where extreme wealth is juxtaposed against extreme poverty. It has complex all-day and all-night economies. Employment rates are high; however, 84% of businesses have fewer than ten employees and unemployment rises to 5.8% in Church Street and 6.2% in Queen's Park. A high percentage of children and young people (37%) are affected by income deprivation. The Black and minority ethnic population is large and diverse, with over 120 languages spoken in Westminster's schools. The number of immigrant families, particularly from Eastern Europe, has risen significantly in recent years. The number of looked after children, currently at

about 270, includes 83 young people who are unaccompanied asylum seekers. There are 100 children on the child protection register.

6. Pre-16 education is provided by:

- 62 private, voluntary and independent early years' settings, 4 maintained nursery schools and 31 primary/infant schools with nurseries
- 12 children's centres
- 40 primary schools
- nine secondary schools, including three Academies, one of which is opening in September 2007
- two special schools
- three pupil referral units.

7. Transport in the centre of London allow young people easy access to a wide range of post-16 education and training providers located outside Westminster. Post-16 education and training is provided by:

- seven sixth forms
- City of Westminster College including about 140 places for Entry to Employment pathways
- Westminster Kingsway College including Young Apprenticeships
- further education and sixth form colleges in other boroughs
- 50 local work-based training providers in addition to national providers.

8. Adult and community learning, including family learning, are provided by the Westminster adult education service and local colleges.

9. Educational and recreational leisure time activities, including youth work, are provided by Westminster City Council.

10. Primary care is provided by Westminster Primary Care Trust (PCT) and acute hospital services are mainly provided by St Mary's NHS Trust and Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trust. Mental health services are provided by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust.

11. Children's social care services are provided through 120 foster carers, one children's residential care home, eight family centres and 10 field social work teams which include a borough wide assessment service, three family support teams, a number of specialist teams for looked-after children, family placements, children with disabilities, St Mary's hospital, children leaving care and the emergency out-of-hours team.

12. There are no young offender institutions in the area.

Main findings

13. The main findings of this joint area review are as follows:

- the council and its partners have addressed very well the issues identified in the 2006 APA
- arrangements for safeguarding children and young people are good, and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is providing clear leadership, with effective commitment and engagement of all partners
- services for looked after children and those to meet the specific needs of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good. There is a high level commitment to ensuring success for all young people
- the services and outcomes for children and young people using CAMHS are outstanding
- support for young people who misuse substances is good, with a very good specialist service that has made a significant difference to the lives and well-being of many young people at risk
- the council and its partners have made the high level of investment necessary to support and challenge its secondary schools and are making good progress in raising attainment, including that of specific groups of children and young people
- effective partnerships are in place, contributing to excellent management of services for children and young people. High levels of financial investment and increased management capacity gives the council excellent capacity to improve further.

Grades

4: outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate; 1: inadequate

	Local services overall
Safeguarding	3
Looked after children	3
Learning difficulties and/or disabilities	3
Service management	4
Capacity to improve	4

Recommendations

For immediate action

The local partnership should:

- ensure that an appropriate way is found to disseminate successfully the findings of this report to children and young people in the area
- ensure that the council's human resources systems meet current guidance on safer recruitment and that the LSCB reviews its capacity to co-ordinate and develop safer recruitment across all partner agencies.

For action over the next six months

- Review the current protocol and practice between housing and social care services of placing vulnerable families outside Westminster City council area.
- Agree and publish clear threshold guidance for access to targeted social care services.
- Further develop the learning and achievement strategy to increase the rate of progress and achievement in secondary schools, including access to educational opportunities post-16 for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Ensure there are effective methods for measuring the impact of drugs and health education on the welfare and well-being of children and young people.

Equality and diversity

14. The commitment to equality for all and respect for diversity and human rights permeate the day-to-day work of staff who actively promote inclusive practices. The impact of this is notable in the improved achievement of primary-aged children. Bangladeshi pupils achieve better at school and, in some secondary schools, the black pupils' achievement project is bearing fruit, with increased engagement and raised self-esteem of young people at risk of underachievement. Consultation with a wide range of different groups has led to service improvement, such as the helpline to address issues of homophobic behaviour, and the introduction of the gay young people group led by the youth service. Despite a good anti-bullying strategy for schools, young people remain concerned about racism in particular. The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership meets the needs of newly-arrived and asylum-seeking families very well, responding to the pressure to meet demands because of the increasing number of arrivals. Planning for children with disabilities and the

development of integrated working is very effective. Children looked after by the council have good access to a wide range of services and councillors take a keen interest in their success. Despite these many strengths, many staff in schools do not disclose their ethnicity and this makes it difficult for the local area to have a clear view of whether the profile of the teaching force reflects its local community.

Safeguarding



15. The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people at risk, or requiring safeguarding, is good.

Children and young people feel safe in school and in their local area and those who are most vulnerable receive prompt and effective services.

16. Children and young people are provided with a safe environment. Very good work is done in seeking the views of children on a range of safeguarding issues. A second city survey was conducted by the council for 2006/07 and involved over 1,500 young people. A very high number report that they feel safe within their families, schools and local communities, although the proportion of young people reporting being victims of crime between 2004 and 2006 is significantly above the average for central London. Bullying remains a concern for many although the majority of young people say that their situation improves when they report it. The council's 2006 anti-bullying strategy for schools encourages young people to report all incidences of bullying, including racist incidents. Consequently, there has been a significant increase in reporting racist incidents and robust arrangements are in place to monitor and take action, with effective involvement of linked police officers.

17. The percentage of children and young people who were killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents is among the lowest in London. There is good road safety education and effective safe crossing and traffic calming arrangements. Arrangements to identify the whereabouts of children and young people are effective and there are established procedures to deal with children missing from school, the community and care placements. The council has been very active in advertising the requirement that the local authority must be informed about children in privately fostered care. However, notification levels are still low, especially given the cosmopolitan nature of the area and its significant transient and ethnically diverse community. The council is therefore moving forward with more steps to ensure the safeguarding of this highly vulnerable and hard-to-reach group of children, such as working even more closely with midwives, health visitors and school staff. Education for young people other than at school is good. Westminster has carried out a detailed analysis of why young people have been withdrawn from school and

acted on its findings, for example by monitoring closely children educated at home and improving further the support for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The great majority of asylum seekers and refugees are placed in schools within six weeks of arriving in Westminster.

18. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well and engagement of parents and carers is effective. Focused activities help parents from ethnic minorities and foster carers to engage with their young people about sexual health. Sexual health and relationships education is well supported through schools. There is an effective teenage pregnancy strategy and rates of teenage conception are among the lowest nationally. Access to screening for sexually transmitted infections is good and wide-scale chlamydia screening, at a range of accessible community venues, is underway. The action taken to address children and young people's mental health needs is outstanding, with very good access to a range of counselling, support and therapeutic services. Hospital staff make an effective contribution to safeguarding children and young people and have begun to engage with collaborative requirements and standards required by the National Services Framework and Every Child Matters.

19. The findings of this review confirm the 2006 APA which judged the council's contribution to ensuring children's safety as good. The rate of repeat referrals of children in need to social care services is good and substantially below that found nationally and in comparator authorities. The proportion of children on the child protection register is above average but all reviews are held on time and all cases are allocated to social workers. Robust monitoring has addressed the issue noted in the 2006 APA concerning the length of time children and young people are held on the child protection register. Performance in the completion of initial and core assessments is very good and consistently above the average of national and comparator authorities. The LSCB has a clear action plan aligned with satisfactory resources and an effective training programme. The work done to reduce domestic abuse is a particularly good example of the LSCB's effectiveness. A very good range of complementary initiatives has involved a preventative domestic abuse programme in schools and the implementation of a checklist tool to assist social workers, midwives and health visitors supporting domestic abuse victims.

20. The action taken to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect is good. The council and its partners are taking a careful incremental approach to integrated working. A pilot site for an integrated children's neighbourhood service in South Westminster is being developed and the well-established Family Support Panels provide an effective vehicle for early intervention and safeguarding. Progress on multi-agency training and use of the Common Assessment Framework is also good. The authority is aware of the need to ensure that thresholds for access to targeted social care services are clearly formalised with all ground level staff particularly as staff turnover is fairly high. Assessment and hospital social care teams handle referrals promptly and manage child protection referrals safely with partners. The quality of analysis in assessments is generally good and the assessment team is seeking to

improve consistency further, particularly in respect of core assessments. There is good adherence to the pan-London safeguarding procedures. Protection plans are well conceived and monitoring and support work for children and families is thorough. However, the practice of housing vulnerable families known to social care services in East London boroughs is unsatisfactory because continuity of support can be disrupted. Casework is managed effectively with prompt allocation between the assessment and other social care teams. Effective practice was demonstrated during the fieldwork undertaken for this review with the Family Support social care teams working very well with partners and showing good links with local schools. There is a broad and effective range of supportive early intervention and safeguarding provision, such as Homestart as well as the National Children's Home family centre provision and CAMHS.

21. In the past year the LSCB has focused its attention on prioritising and improving safer recruitment practice. Random file examination of recently appointed council staff was conducted during this joint area review. This revealed some weaknesses in the recording of compliance with the safer recruitment policy and the council is now developing more robust procedures. More broadly on this issue, in the LSCB there is the question of capacity to ensure effective training, development and compliance across all agencies and settings. In the past year the LSCB has conducted a serious case review. This review has been effective in promoting widespread learning and improving the processes identified to be weak. The LSCB has in place effective monitoring arrangements through its sub groups. Similarly the council has established regular social care audit processes which demonstrate effective impact on practice. The council's new integrated children's system for recording social care service-user information has been piloted on three sites in the past year to support quality assurance and management of information. This new system has yet to clearly demonstrate that it has a positive impact, though plans are in place for its full implementation later this year.

22. Like most London authorities, Westminster faces significant difficulties in retaining social workers. This places pressure on staff and managers and, where turnover is high, erodes the quality of service for children and young people. Staff are supervised and trained very effectively and have well controlled caseloads. The council is about to introduce a new and competitive pay structure to develop consistency in its workforce and effective career pathways.

23. The action taken to reduce anti-social behaviour and offending is good. The youth inclusion and support panels are effective in early identification of young people at risk of offending. A mentoring scheme and family intervention project, multi-agency working and information sharing are well established. The incidence of anti-social behaviour orders is low, and the high use of anti-social behaviour contracts, along with an effective Civic Watch scheme, are reducing further the low levels of youth offending and anti-social behaviour. The number

of first-time entrants into the juvenile justice system is consistently below the average of statistical neighbours.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Effective, committed and well led LSCB.</p> <p>Broad and effective services for early intervention and safeguarding support.</p> <p>Safe and prompt systems for handling child protection and other referrals.</p> <p>Consistent allocation of all registered child protection cases.</p> <p>Good adherence to pan-London safeguarding procedures.</p> <p>Strong focus on improvement practice to address domestic abuse.</p> <p>Very low rates of teenage conception</p> <p>Successful action to reduce anti-social behaviour and youth offending.</p> <p>Outstanding action to address mental health needs.</p>	<p>Robustness of safer recruitment systems and lack of capacity to ensure multi-agency co-ordination and compliance.</p> <p>Housing vulnerable families outside Westminster.</p> <p>Lack of agreed published thresholds for access to targeted social care services.</p>

Looked after children and young people



24. **The contribution of local services to improving the outcomes for looked after children and young people is good.** The progress made since the 2006 APA is good. Health and social care outcomes have been maintained at a good level. Support has been targeted to raise educational achievement, although attendance at school for some young people is still not good enough. The 2006 APA identified the issue of out-of-borough placement because little specialist provision was available locally. Good efforts are being made to address this issue.

25. The number of looked after children, at around 270, is proportionately high when compared with national and comparator averages. Looked after children do well overall because they receive effective health care, they are in stable placements and staff collaborate effectively across agencies to meet their

needs, including at school. A high proportion of looked after children are in education, employment or training, with good support from Connexions. A high number (80%) are entered for at least one GCSE or equivalent, against 67% in similar areas and 62% nationally. Results at age 16 are good and, although still below those of their peers, are above those of similar areas and above the England average for the percentage of young people achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C. Many young people attend school regularly, particularly primary-aged children but, despite some improvement, there are still too many for whom attendance is a concern.

26. Schools provide a good, stable environment for looked after children. Personal Education Plans are targeted well to their needs and regularly reviewed. Designated staff in schools and colleges support young people well, making good use of the advice and support they get from a highly effective Education of Children in Care team. This team co-ordinates support to those educated out of borough. The team also provides a good range of initiatives in and outside school time to enable looked after children to engage in education. Significant numbers of looked after young people move into further and higher education and are well supported to achieve. Although a number of newly looked after young people are placed outside of the borough, with 12 placed more than 20 miles away, all are allocated social workers who visit regularly.

27. Looked after children and care leavers receive good support from health services and there is a high take up of health reviews, immunisations, optician services and dental care. Health needs are effectively monitored by a designated doctor and nurse. The nurse is co-located within the looked after children's services and is highly valued by all partner agencies. For example the nurse provides relevant training and support to foster carers and access to health checks for looked after children at sports centres. This role is currently overstretched and is being redeveloped and strengthened further by the imminent appointment of a second designated nurse. Looked after children have produced a very good DVD "Am I Bovered?" about their experience of health issues. Those involved are very proud of this work, which has raised their self-esteem.

28. Looked after children and their carers have prompt access to very good CAMHS advice, consultation and therapeutic intervention. CAMHS provision is enhanced through co-location of specialist posts within the looked after children's services. This results in good communication and networking with partner agencies, including out-of-borough CAMHS services. Of the current looked after children population, around 20% are actively involved with CAMHS, of which a third receive good direct therapeutic support.

29. The majority of the looked after population live in secure and stable foster placements with good and supportive foster carers who are able to access well-targeted and high quality training, advice and guidance. The council's fostering services received a good rating from the Commission for Social Care Inspection in February 2007. Children's services have identified a number of carers who

require further training, and support is in place for them. High numbers of private and voluntary sector carers are used who receive variable monitoring and support through their contracting agencies. The council is actively developing initiatives to expand the diversity of its foster carers and increase the number of local placements.

30. All looked after children and their carers are allocated qualified social workers, who visit frequently and are well engaged and valued by the young people and their carers. Social workers are committed, well supervised and effectively supported by managers to undertake their roles. They have manageable caseloads and network well with partner agencies. Internal audits by managers have resulted in recent training for assistant team managers to improve consistency in the quality of case records and reports. The one in-borough residential unit, St Christopher's, provides good support to three young people; however, too many are placed out of borough despite the fact that St Christopher's is functioning below its capacity of six places. A further well-targeted residential provision for three young people with the most complex needs is being jointly commissioned in conjunction with Camden, Brent and St Christopher's. The quality of planning for looked after children is generally good. The number of looked after children placed for adoption is very high and they are well supported by an effective adoption team, overseen by a well-managed Adoption and Permanency Panel. The adoption service received a good rating in the March 2007 inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection. The use of Special Guardianship, where children and young people are placed with family or friends, is also actively promoted and supported.

31. Care leavers are very well supported by an effective Westminster Adolescent and Leaving Care team. This team includes a wide range of disciplines and provides good interventions and activities. As a result, young people access diverse advice and guidance, benefit from peer support and develop their personal skills, in particular their self-confidence and self-esteem. All young people have regularly reviewed pathway plans, which include consideration of access to good accommodation and identified opportunities for education, employment and training. Young people greatly value support from the team, although some commented on its stretched resources; for example care leavers have long waits before they can be seen and have to repeat their history and needs because of changes in duty officers.

32. A strong, independent reviewing service ensures timely reviews, with high participation from looked after children, their carers and representatives from a range of relevant agencies. Looked after children are enabled to contribute their views through, for example, their reviews and at an annual looked after children conference. This has resulted in some practical changes, including their own keys to access their foster home and increased access to computers. However, some young people interviewed said that they did not have a regular or systematic way to make their views collectively to influence service development or have their own representative body.

33. The council and partners prioritise the needs of looked after children and young people in the Children and Young People's Plan and has developed an ambitious commissioning strategy. All councillors receive relevant induction training which includes their corporate parenting responsibilities. An enthusiastic and committed lead councillor has promoted the implementation of a good "Pushy Parent" initiative, enabling twenty councillors to oversee how well young people are doing. This initiative is in its early stages and has yet to show impact. Excellent performance information is available to managers, panels and councillors to inform service development and to prompt the audit of areas requiring closer scrutiny.

Major Strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Good access to health support, including CAMHS.</p> <p>Very good work of the Education of children in Care and Westminster Adolescent and Leaving Care teams.</p> <p>High levels of adoption and effective support from the adoption team.</p> <p>Good quality of planning for individual children that consistently ensures their participation.</p> <p>Significant numbers of young people moving into further and higher education with effective support to help them achieve.</p> <p>Strong independent reviewing service.</p> <p>Involvement and commitment of councillors.</p>	<p>Too many looked-after children and young people placed more than 20 miles away.</p> <p>Poor attendance at school for some young people.</p>

Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

34. **The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good.** The 2006 APA identified that considerable improvement had been made in promoting the life chances of this group of children and young people. The findings of this joint area review endorse this view and identify continuing good progress. In practice, the council and its partners are working well together and, as a result, the performance indicators for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good. Professionals working across health, social care and education value the good leadership and management which are centred on the child.

35. An outstanding example of the council's and partners' commitment to the development of integrated working is to be found in the children with disabilities team. The team is multi-disciplinary and includes social workers, health professionals from the child development service, Connexions advisers and welfare rights staff. Co-locating the team with health staff has enabled excellent face-to-face access and better joint working, providing more effective and focused services to families. This is leading to improved outcomes for children, for example packages of care being implemented very quickly, prior to diagnosis.

36. Strong transition planning and effective work by the multi-agency transition group takes place to ensure families are well supported through change. There is a developing awareness of the need to provide a seamless service, although a few parents report feeling vulnerable at transition points, especially during the move from the children with disabilities team to the adult disabilities team. This has greater impact on those who have had children in placements outside of Westminster.

37. The number of disabled children, either supported within their family home or living independently, as a percentage of the total population is high at 18% compared with 6% nationally. However, families' access to respite care presents a mixed picture. There is a wide range of alternatives provided and the number of families in receipt of direct payments has increased, which is enabling Black and minority ethnic families to choose culturally appropriate care packages. There is a drive to recruit more specialist foster carers to provide short-term breaks. However, some parents, social care professionals, voluntary providers and education professionals report that there is not enough overnight respite care. In response to the 2006 APA findings, meeting the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who require CAMHS has been a priority over the last year and good progress has been made in this area.

38. Health professionals in the child development service demonstrate good multi-disciplinary partnership working, implementing creative systems of working to improve outcomes for children through early intervention, early diagnosis and clear nurturing and care pathways. For example, there have been reductions in waiting times for speech, language and physiotherapy services. However, professionals agree that there is room for further improvement because secondary school pupils receive limited speech and language therapy services and maintaining shorter waiting lists may become more difficult as earlier assessment and diagnosis produce an increased number of children who require services.

39. Good progress is being made with the Special Educational Needs/Inclusion strategy, a major aim of which is to develop fully inclusive schools and early years' settings within Westminster in order to increase the number of pupils who attend mainstream schools. The strategy is showing some early success with 83% of newly-statemented pupils now having placements in mainstream

schools against 51% in 2006, and good progress made against the 2009 target aiming to place 87% of young people in mainstream schools.

40. The number of Westminster children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who attend special schools outside of the borough is above the national average, and spending on fees is high. The council is planning to address this situation by increasing the flexibility of existing provision. For example, the re-designation of College Park special school is enabling pupils on the autistic spectrum and those with complex needs to go to school locally. Schools with specialist knowledge of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are beginning to share their professional expertise. Children's services provide a good level of financial support centrally to assist children with special educational needs; delegated funding to schools is comparatively high, which is positive. The policy is 'best placement at best cost', and there is close management control of the budget.

41. The focus on early intervention and prevention is beginning to have an impact, although education professionals report that some pupils have undiagnosed needs on arrival at school and college. More children under the age of five are being supported into mainstream childcare and educational provision, which is of good quality overall, and there is some highly valued, specialist provision such as Rainbow Nursery and the Portman Children's Centre. The pan-Westminster portage service provided by KIDS, supports joint work with other professionals and provides effective signposting for parents.

42. At primary level, children with special educational needs are doing well; their progress from the age of 5 to 11 years is very good. This is due to a holistic approach to the child, close partnership with parents, and good access to support services. Ofsted inspection reports and the 2006 APA found that the quality of provision in special schools and mainstream primary schools with special units was high and this joint area review confirms these findings. A growing number of schools are now using the transfer and transition strategy forms for supporting vulnerable pupils from primary to secondary and this is helping to ensure that secondary schools receive the correct information regarding pupils' additional needs. Primary and special school head teachers report that monitoring, challenge and support from the SEN specialists' team is robust. Between the ages of 11 to 16, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against the targets set for them and their outcomes match those of similar children nationally.

43. Parents and professionals express concerns about the range and availability of educational provision for young people leaving school. These include the low participation of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in work-based learning and increasing difficulties in finding suitable placements for young people on the autistic spectrum and those with complex needs. Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are under-represented in higher education. Many of these issues are pan-London ones and the council is working in partnership with the Learning and

Skills Council and Work-Based Learning Alliance to address them. There is good support from Connexions' personal advisors, who provide information and guidance for young people from the age of 14 years. The number of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are not in education, employment or training has improved and currently stands at 12% of the cohort.

44. Children, young people and parents all have the opportunity to make a positive contribution within Westminster. For example, parents' views are incorporated into the Special Educational Needs/Inclusion policy, as well as the Children with Disabilities strategy and action plan. However, not all parents are convinced that their child is receiving the best support to voice their concerns and time-lines for responses are, at times, too tight. The Youth Service is proactive in ensuring the voice of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is heard and special schools were included in the city survey.

45. Opportunities for some children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to take part in out-of-school activities are more limited. For example, those using local authority buses cannot attend after-school clubs. There is holiday provision for children with the most complex needs, but opportunities for those with moderate learning difficulties are fewer. However, the council is aware of the need to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all and is implementing effectively its inclusive play strategy.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Good progress and improving life chances for young people.</p> <p>Good leadership and management within social care and education, including strong budget control.</p> <p>Outstanding integrated multi-agency working within the children with disabilities team.</p> <p>Good progress on the Special Educational Needs/Inclusion strategy leading to more children and young people accessing mainstream provision in the city.</p> <p>Good opportunities for parents, children and young people to make a positive contribution.</p>	<p>Insufficient range and availability of educational provision for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, consequently, too many not in education, employment or training.</p> <p>Limited opportunities for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to take part in activities outside of the school day.</p>

Other issues identified for further investigation

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

46. **The quality of the services provided and the outcomes achieved by children and young people using the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are excellent.** CAMHS provide outstanding support for universal services and, as a result, children and families have good access to more specialist treatments. Strong service management is delivering effective CAMHS that are tailored to meet the needs of the community. The quality of joined-up work with other health services, education, social care, the youth service and the youth justice system is excellent. Very good outcomes have been achieved in increasing the accessibility of CAMHS for vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups and CAMHS are providing strong support for the council's inclusion agenda.

47. The 2006 APA highlighted good progress on developing comprehensive CAMHS, as described in the Children's National Service Framework. The CAMHS Steering Group has nearly fully achieved comprehensive CAMHS. A new information leaflet, designed to support universal services staff in their work with children and young people experiencing emotional difficulties, has been very well received. Through the multi-agency complex care panel, Westminster has a good grip on all mental health admissions of young people and there have been no clinically inappropriate admissions of young people under the age of 18 to adult mental health wards.

48. The 2006 APA also identified the need for further progress to secure a consistent service for young people with complex needs. Accordingly, new services have been developed for children with learning disabilities and autism, which are delivering quicker responses to referrals and improved multi-agency work. A post of family worker and therapist for children with autistic spectrum disorder and mental health problems has been created jointly with social services and is based in the Children with Disability Team.

49. There is a wide range of very good support for universal services, with CAMHS embedded in many services and settings, such as schools, children's centres, the Youth Offending Team, social work teams, and with good transition to adult mental health services. Colleagues working alongside CAMHS professionals are very positive about the support and consultation that is available to them. A new CAMHS post is being developed to strengthen the interface between CAMHS and the newly commissioned young people's substance misuse service.

50. CAMHS provide an excellent range of input and interventions to improve behaviour and academic performance in schools. CAMHS early intervention workers have delivered training to staff to promote a broader understanding of children's behaviour in school. Through the early intervention workers, children and parents have ready access to additional one-to-one support, school-based

family classes or an intensive multi-family therapeutic programme based at the Family Education Centre. The principle of 'families helping families' is proving effective in working with those families who would otherwise find it difficult to engage with services, and some very good outcomes are being achieved in reducing exclusions from school.

51. A number of multi-agency care pathways have been developed for children with a disability, for young people with autistic spectrum disorder and for children and young people with Down's syndrome. Assessment processes are now streamlined and waiting times have been significantly reduced to excellent levels. There is also regular liaison between the child development service and CAMHS. Very good outcomes are being achieved in securing an early diagnosis, putting in place at the outset the right package of treatment and support for the child and their family and enabling access to mainstream services. Strong collaborative work between agencies enables CAMHS to be brought to families in a seamless and non-stigmatising way.

52. The range of support for parents and carers to enable them to address the emotional and mental health needs of their children extends to the children's centres. CAMHS work alongside health and social care and are involved in the development of resources and of new services, such as the Baby and Me DVD, a resource to be used with parents narrated in Arabic, English and Sylheti, and work on postnatal depression. More specialist CAMHS clinics and appointments take place in the children's centres, which provide a more familiar and comfortable setting.

53. Responsive commissioning by the CAMHS Strategic Partnership has resulted in a range of excellent support for Black and minority ethnic families to access CAMHS. This includes the refugee service and the Asian and Arab family counselling service. There is also an effective service for children arriving in Westminster from war-torn areas who suffer from post traumatic stress disorder. CAMHS have worked closely with Black and minority ethnic groups to ensure that therapists and counsellors reflect the diversity of local communities and to provide support in a range of community languages.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Support for and collaboration with universal services are very good.</p> <p>Very effective emphasis on inclusion, in particular on enabling all children and young people to enjoy school and achieve well.</p> <p>Early diagnosis of children with complex needs.</p>	<p>There are no significant weaknesses.</p>

<p>Sensitive and non-stigmatised specialist CAMHS provision.</p> <p>Accessible services for hard-to-reach families and Black and minority ethnic communities.</p>	
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Support for young people who misuse substances

54. **The contribution of local services in supporting children and young people who misuse substances, and their families and carers, is good.** There are excellent features in the partnership with the voluntary sector and with nearby boroughs, and in the outstanding work of the Hungerford Drug Project. Consequently, the outcomes achieved by this group of vulnerable children and young people are good.

55. The 2006 APA identified the substance misuse service as improved and developing but there was, at the time, very little evidence of impact of its work. In the case of support for families and carers of young people misusing drugs, or who may be users themselves, there was very limited information about services available. Since this assessment there has been significant improvement.

56. Findings from this year's borough-wide City Survey identified low use by secondary school pupils of cannabis, alcohol and tobacco and the prevalence of class A drug misuse by the majority remains very low. The council acknowledges that more comprehensive, robust data are required regarding how substance misuse is affecting children and young people to ensure that the baseline information is a more accurate reflection of activity. A thorough needs' analysis, following a broad consultation exercise with young people by the Drug and Alcohol Action Team, has helped to prioritise resources and match services more closely to local needs. Partnership work across the voluntary and statutory sectors is strong and agencies work effectively together to minimise the risk posed by illegal substances to children and young people and to achieve the best possible outcomes for them. Good focus and direction is provided through the Young People's Substance Misuse Reference group.

57. A newly commissioned substance misuse treatment service is delivered by the Hungerford Drug Project. It provides a high quality and innovative young person-centred service which, while focusing its core business on the most vulnerable young people, also encompasses a broad definition of treatment. Comprising a comparatively small team of full-time workers, it manages excellent coverage through multiple settings and acts as a clearing house for referral pathways into the different levels of treatment. A series of open-access satellite sessions, held regularly at a variety of locations including youth centres, Connexions points, accommodation hostels and schools, are well used by young people and self-referrals have increased. Workers also have a regular presence in key support teams for specific vulnerable groups, such as the Youth

Offending Team, looked after children and leaving care teams, the pupil referral units and the CAMHS team. They deliver specialist work with, for example, young people from Black and minority ethnic groups including unaccompanied asylum seekers and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

58. This high profile presence across the city and the good working relationships across services have ensured that the most vulnerable young people receive quick and effective support. Not all relationships have yet been defined by formal Service Level Agreements and work is ongoing to address this. Young people were highly complimentary about the quality of the treatment and support they received from the Hungerford Drug Project and could talk clearly about the changes to their lives and the progress they were making. They were particularly impressed and surprised at how different services worked together to help them.

59. In addition, the new service has provided a referral pathway for young people requiring a higher level of medical intervention. Provision for acute medical needs is funded by the Drug and Alcohol Action Team and provided through the family therapy service which is part of Central and North West London NHS foundation trust. The family therapy service provides highly specialised and effective therapeutic support and counselling to young people and their families or carers and services are very responsive to young people's needs.

60. The consistency, quality and effectiveness of information, advice and guidance about substance misuse are less developed. Generic delivery, for example in schools and youth settings, is difficult to measure in terms of its impact and overall effectiveness regarding children and young people's increase in knowledge and any subsequent change in their behaviour and attitudes towards drugs. The newly written drug education and prevention guidance, with associated training, is to be launched in all schools in September 2007 and will go some way to ensuring greater consistency. Impact will be evaluated during the first year of delivery. Initiatives to increase awareness of the dangers of addiction to dangerous substances, including alcohol and smoking, continue through the successful Healthy Schools programme and targets have been set through the Drug and Alcohol Action Team to improve outcomes in these areas.

61. Performance management for the new service is robust and contract monitoring arrangements are effective. Very good progress has been achieved in the short period since the treatment service was established in September 2006. All but one of the performance measures had been achieved at rates well above expectation at the time of this inspection. These include a high increase in the number of initial, comprehensive and care plan assessments completed and growth in the numbers of referrals coming through satellite and group work provision. Quarterly monitoring is also undertaken by Government Office for London. Rapid progress has been made in meeting these targets.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Good partnership arrangements at strategic and operational levels.</p> <p>Very good provision and recorded outcomes delivered by the Hungerford Drugs Project and the family therapy service.</p> <p>Prompt substance misuse support and treatment.</p> <p>Good performance management arrangements and tight contract monitoring.</p>	<p>Measures to evaluate the impact of drugs education and prevention across the city.</p>

Support and challenge for secondary schools

62. **The impact of local services in supporting and challenging secondary schools is good.** The 2006 APA identified the level of support for low-performing schools as a key area for improvement for Westminster, with particular focus on high rates of exclusion from secondary schools and low attainment at ages 16 and 19. The council and its partners have made the level of investment, support and corresponding challenges for secondary schools a key priority and are making good progress in tackling these issues.

63. Westminster has made considerable progress since its 2006 APA. Strategies and systems are in place to accelerate the pace of change further through the Building Schools for the Future programme, the closure of a weak school and the collaboration with the colleges and the Academies. Westminster continues to provide significant financial investment to poorer performing schools, with some success in improving behaviour and addressing the under-achievement of specific groups of pupils. Staffing is managed well and specialist consultants provide highly valued long-term support. The authority has created a number of new posts and is developing a learning and achievement strategy to help drive improvements forward. Currently one secondary school is judged by Ofsted to require special measures following its inspection in November 2006. The first monitoring visit to this school in April 2007 identified that the local authority, through its subject specialists, provided some good support for teaching and learning; however, the overall support from the authority was judged to be inadequate because the impact of its strategies had been limited at this stage. Officers recognise that the school requires further intensive support. Medium-term plans are in place to strengthen governance and the leadership team at the school.

64. A detailed target-setting strategy is well used to provide schools with demanding challenges. The authority uses data effectively to set targets, monitor progress and reduce the gaps between high- and low-performing

schools. Schools share a wide range of data, enabling them to identify their own areas of challenge and how to rectify these. Although the authority makes good use of the data it collects, much of it is not in an easily accessible format and requires substantial work by the research and investigation team to complete valuable project work.

65. The rate of achievement in the early years of secondary schooling has seen a significant improvement in mathematics and science, but a fall in English in 2006, although the trend still remains an upward one. The authority is now above its statistical neighbours, in terms of achievement at age 14, in all three core subjects and just below the national average. At GCSE in 2002, just over 33% of Westminster pupils achieved five or more passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics. In 2006, the figure had risen to just over 40%. This is above the statistical neighbours' average although it remains below the national average. The rate of improvement overall continues to be above the national rate. This improvement masks some differences between schools and between groups of young people, with a particularly wide gap between the attainment of boys and girls. These inequalities are being addressed effectively through accurate target setting and a range of relevant projects. Young people from Black and minority ethnic groups make good progress, with achievement rates above the national average.

66. Outcomes at age 19 are improving. The points score at GCE/VCE/AS and A level has shown a significant increase, from 209 in 2004/-05 to 234 in 2005/-06, although it remains below the national average. The council has contributed well to the effective strategic partnerships in place across the borough, helping to broaden and develop a relevant and enriching curriculum, which includes an increased vocational offer at schools and colleges. A diverse range of well co-ordinated off-site programmes is available for young people from the age of 14 in colleges, using well-equipped, industry standard resources. The authority has encouraged greater partnerships across schools, which are now good. As a result, information and resources are effectively shared, schools are aware of the full range of available progression routes for young people and direct them well to suitable pathways. Consequently, the number of young people in employment, education or training is increasing. Community partnerships are also good, for example there is improved access to sporting facilities for minority ethnic groups, such as the Muslim Girls sports club. Informal arrangements work well, for example between schools and public services, including the police.

67. Support to improve behaviour and attendance is good. In 2000-01, Westminster was one of the worst performing authorities for attendance. Its position is now well above the national average and that of its statistical neighbours. The authority has completed substantial project work identifying areas of greatest concern. It has produced a detailed guide assisting the transition of young people from primary to secondary schools and a series of information guides, including a leaflet on absence for medical reasons. The high exclusion rates, identified as an issue in the 2006 APA, have reduced.

Permanent exclusions have reduced by 46% over the last three years. Fixed-term exclusions have also declined and, though rates remain above the national average, they are in line with statistical neighbours. The authority is working well with its partners in health and social care to investigate the relationship between exclusions and external factors such as homelessness, mental health and financial issues. Officers understand the issues faced by schools and liaise energetically with all of them, including seeking the support of all Academies and colleges.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Better results for 14 year olds than in similar areas.</p> <p>Rising trend in results at ages 16 and 19.</p> <p>Good achievement of Black and minority ethnic groups.</p> <p>Good support for behaviour and attendance.</p> <p>Effective target setting to challenge schools and improve secondary achievement.</p> <p>Good partnership arrangements extend and enrich the curriculum.</p>	<p>Impact of the support for the one school in special measures.</p> <p>Wide gender gap in achievement.</p>

Service management



Capacity to improve



68. **The management of services for children and young people is excellent. Capacity to improve further is excellent.** The 2006 APA judged capacity to improve as excellent. The area has made very good progress in addressing issues identified for improvement, for example in reducing teenage pregnancy and improving the number of young offenders in education, employment and training. The area has also strengthened its

management capacity through reconstituting and expanding its strategic partnership group and increasing its investment to support and challenge secondary schools. The council is beginning to see progress in improving attainment rates, particularly for young people aged 14 to 16, and with some under-achieving groups. In addition, the recent restructuring of children's services has increased capacity to respond to needs. This, alongside effective leadership and very good financial capacity, means that the area has excellent capacity to improve further.

69. Ambitions for children and young people are excellent. Challenging and realistic ambitions are shared across the area by partners and staff. Corporately, children and young people are given prominence in the Westminster City Partnership where the ambition to create a better city for children and young people is clearly stated. This is underpinned by a strong focus on improving outcomes for children in Westminster's City Plan where children and young people are a key priority. The development of Academies and the Building Schools for the Future programme are being used very effectively as catalysts for change. Within children's services, the Children and Young People's Plan demonstrates further ambitions to improve outcomes for children.

70. There are robust plans across the partnership to deliver the priorities outlined in the Children and Young People's Plan. Health services have been successful in targeting resources to meet local priorities such as the recruitment of additional speech and language therapists which has reduced waiting times for this service. The Children and Young People's Plan has been informed by a comprehensive needs' analysis. In addition the views of children and young people, gathered from the City Survey, have had a strong impact on formulating the ambitions of the Plan. There is a strong focus on inclusion and tackling disadvantage which has partly been informed by the views, aspirations and concerns of children and young people about a variety of issues, particularly domestic violence, bullying and racism. The survey has been further developed to gauge the views of a more comprehensive and diverse range of young people, such as very young children in the early years of their education and children with disabilities. Findings are used well to assess progress against the Children and Young People's Plan priorities.

71. Prioritisation is excellent. Clear objectives, priorities and related targets are in place across the partnership. These are understood well by managers, staff and partners. Priorities for children and young people have been determined by good analysis of information including data on people using services, the findings from previous APAs, the views of children and young people gathered through school councils and surveys, and the specific outcomes achieved by children and young people. Plans have a strong emphasis on developing more local services through a neighbourhood and locality approach and are building on successful children's centre pilots. Significant attention has been given to inclusion, equality and diversity with a clear focus on meeting the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children and

young people, including looked after children and young people, children with disabilities and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

72. Capacity to deliver priorities is good. There is very good leadership and management at officer and councillor level. The Director of Children's Services and the Lead Councillor for children and young people perform their roles very effectively. The area has adopted a measured approach to developing Children's Trust arrangements and plans to implement arrangements are progressing well.

73. A capable workforce supports the delivery of priorities. Interagency professional development opportunities are very good and highly regarded by staff. They have helped to develop the skills of the workforce. However, there are recruitment and retention difficulties of front-line social care workers and whilst vacancy levels are low, there has been a high reliance on agency staff affecting the continuity of social work support for children. The council is taking action to improve this, for example by increasing retention bonuses and improving career progression for social workers. While there is a workforce strategy in place and workforce information is collected from individual services, comprehensive data from across the area has not yet been coordinated to identify more fully future workforce needs across children's services. This is acknowledged in the workforce strategy as an area for further work.

74. Capacity is enhanced through very good partnership working. At a strategic level, the recently reconstituted and expanded Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership group is now responsible for strategic planning and commissioning of services across the area. At an operational level, the effective co-location of teams such as the children with disabilities team, children's centres and the extended provision in schools, has further improved partnership work. There are good interagency processes, such as the family support panels, which use the Common Assessment Framework to share information and jointly plan services to ensure that the needs of children with complex issues are identified and met. The area has an inclusive approach to involving children and parents in service provision, for example parent forums at children's centres are used well and there is good involvement of looked after children in their reviews.

75. Good use is being made of the voluntary sector to improve capacity and to ensure that targeted provision is in place to meet the diverse needs of the borough. Established commissioning arrangements work well. A significant amount of children's provision is commissioned from the voluntary sector, such as preventative and early intervention work and support for youth services activities. Good support is also provided for specialist services provided by voluntary groups which are tailored to local need such as the Black Caribbean sexual health project and the London Tigers, a Black and Asian Minority Ethnic sports-based organisation, running sporting activities for children and young people on estates. However, whilst there are good partnership arrangements with large, established voluntary sector partners, the engagement of small

voluntary sector providers is inconsistent. Limited support is given to enable small providers to develop services. The area has recognised this and plans to address the issue through its new commissioning framework.

76. Effective commissioning of specialist services such as those for looked after children and children with disabilities ensures that high quality services are provided for these groups of children. The council is at an early stage in implementing its plans to develop joint commissioning arrangements. The newly established Commissioning Unit has been tasked with progressing this work but will initially focus on areas where improvements have been identified, such as early years and early intervention services.

77. Value for money is good. Whilst costs in some areas are higher than neighbouring boroughs, such as the youth service, the quality of service provision is good. There is a strong commitment across the area to improving value for money. Excellent budget monitoring and financial management has ensured that spend across children's services has remained within budget. The council has clear strategies in place to improve value for money in areas of higher expenditure, such as out-of-borough provision and transport costs for children with disabilities, which have resulted in savings being achieved. Placement costs for looked after children are higher than neighbouring boroughs; however, savings have been achieved through the decommissioning of two under-utilised children's homes and reinvesting in specialist foster care. Whilst there are a large number of schools with high surpluses and two schools with deficits, the council is strengthening its financial challenge to schools. Both the council and the PCT have good financial capacity to deliver priorities.

78. Performance management across children's services is excellent. Children's services use the council's corporate performance management framework, which enables managers to regularly track progress and promptly identify areas of individual and service under-performance. Councillors and senior officers receive highly effective monthly summaries of headline performance and expenditure highlighting areas of surplus spend and planned savings. Scrutiny also receives regular and sound reports on performance. The use of task groups, such as the Secondary School task group, has given the scrutiny function a renewed focus on providing challenge on performance. Scrutiny is also exploring ways to increase the involvement of children in performance management in order to supplement existing arrangements, through feedback from school councils, the city survey and looked after children's feedback on services. Across the partnership, performance is monitored well through the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership and there are effective mechanisms for sharing performance information with partners at a strategic level. This enables partners to ensure that priorities are being implemented and outcomes are being met.

79. Benchmarking is used effectively to assess performance and drive improvements through regular comparisons with nearest neighbours. Performance information has been used well to drive improvement in previously

under performing areas such as the youth service and substance misuse service. The school improvement teams use performance information to target areas where attainment was low. This has resulted in a pastoral and academic mentoring scheme for black children and young people.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Challenging and realistic ambitions, with a strong focus on inclusion and tackling disadvantage.</p> <p>Very good mechanisms for consulting with children and young people through the city survey.</p> <p>Effective management and leadership and very good training and development opportunities for staff.</p> <p>Very good partnership working with effective use of the voluntary sector to enhance capacity.</p> <p>Strong budgetary management with effective strategies to secure value for money and excellent performance management.</p>	<p>Lack of comprehensive and coordinated data to inform workforce planning.</p> <p>Inconsistent support and engagement of small voluntary sector providers.</p>

Annex A

MOST RECENTLY PUBLISHED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER

Summary

Areas for judgement	Grade awarded
The contribution of <i>the local authority's children's services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	3
<i>The council's overall capacity to improve its services for children and young people</i>	4

The Westminster City Council provides a service that consistently delivers above the minimum requirements for its children and young people. All services demonstrate that they are improving the well-being of children and young people and there are good outcomes in all five areas of the Every Child Matters agenda. The council has a clear grasp of its strengths and weaknesses and the strategies it needs to make improvements. It has made improvements in most of the areas identified in last year's APA and there has been continued development in many of the services it provides. Within the council's services for children which were assessed, Westminster City Council has an excellent capacity to improve further.

The full annual performance assessment can be found at:

http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports/pdf/?inspectionNumber=65390&providerCategoryID=0&fileName=\\APA\apa_2006_213.pdf

Annex B

CORPORATE ASSESSMENT ACHIEVEMENT - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Outcomes for children and young people in the City of Westminster are good and, for some specific groups, excellent. Children and young people are healthy. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are outstanding and consequently outcomes for children accessing these services are very good. Educational outcomes are good in primary schools and the rate of improvement is above the national rate in secondary schools, with significant successes for specific groups, particularly Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean young people. Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well with effective support to help them move to adult services. Looked after children achieve at a higher level than those in similar boroughs. A high proportion of young people continue their education or training post-16, including an increasing number of young offenders.

2. Service management in Westminster is outstanding. Corporate support for improving children's services further is very good. The council's One City programme aims to make Westminster the best governed city in the world. For children's services, this includes a particular focus on schools and learning. The council and its partners share common objectives for improving the well-being of all children and young people in the area, and priorities are set out clearly in the Children and Young People's Plan. Many new initiatives have been established that demonstrate a commitment to promoting inclusive practice and meeting the diverse needs of the area.

3 The combined work of all local services in securing the health of children and young people has improved further since the already good provision identified in the 2006 APA. New services have been developed for children with learning disabilities and autism with quicker responses to referrals and improved multi-agency work. CAMHS provide outstanding support for universal services and, as a result, children and families have good access to more specialist treatments. Priorities are based on a robust analysis of health needs. There is good multi-agency oversight of progress in the implementation of the substance misuse plan. Young people have been involved to very good effect in a number of innovative events to promote the services available. The council works very effectively with its partners to provide CAMHS services that are innovative and inclusive.

4. The contribution of the council to keeping children and young people safe is good. The Local Safeguarding Children Board reflects good working relationships with partners and a commitment to incorporate learning into practice. Child protection thresholds have been reviewed and training has taken place regarding long-term domestic violence and chronic neglect cases. Child protection planning is closely scrutinised and schools' safeguarding

policies and training needs are audited effectively. The council and its partners work effectively to develop local provision for children with high levels of need.

5. Education services have been significantly reshaped to improve the quality of support and challenge provided to schools, particularly to secondary schools. Schools are enthusiastic about and committed to the successful development of the Building Schools for the Future programme. Current services are improving and are now good. London Challenge resources contribute significantly to what is available to these schools. The council and its partners have ensured significant support for schools in data analysis, assessment and curriculum. This has contributed to the overall good progress of children and young people, in particular those from Black and minority ethnic groups.

6. The impact of all local services in helping children and young people to contribute to society continues to be very effective as identified in the 2006 APA. Further improvements have been made to ensure that all young people have opportunities to be heard and the annual city survey is an effective communication tool. Looked after children and young people contribute very positively to improving services. Much effort is made to ensure that children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities submit their views. An outstanding example of the council's and partners' commitment to the development of integrated working is to be found in the children with disabilities team where joint working provides more focused services to families.

7. Partnerships to improve provision for 14 to 19 year olds are good. Collaboration in Westminster, through the Sixth Form Partnership, is well established and the council works closely with partners to ensure a more inclusive post-16 provision. Vocational learning features prominently in the Building Schools for the Future plans and the local area is well placed to contribute to the London-wide e-prospectus. Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive impartial information and guidance from the Connexions service. Looked after young people are prepared well for transition to adulthood.

8. The capacity of council services to improve is excellent. There is very good leadership and management at officer and councillor level. The Director of Children's Services and the Lead Councillor for children and young people perform their roles very effectively. Performance management across children's services is excellent. Commitment to achieving value for money is strong, with additional resources secured to support improvement in secondary schools. Inter-agency professional development opportunities are very good and highly regarded by staff. Good use is being made of the voluntary sector to improve capacity and to ensure that targeted provision is in place to meet the diverse needs of the borough.

Annex C

SUMMARY OF JOINT AREA REVIEW AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

1. This joint area review was conducted using the arrangements required under Section 20 of the Children Act 2004. It was carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of inspectors from Ofsted, the Healthcare Commission and the Audit Commission. The review was undertaken according to the requirements of the *Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services*.
2. The review was linked to the contemporaneous corporate assessment of the local council by the Audit Commission and these findings plus aspects of the most recent Annual Performance Assessment are represented in the relevant part of the corporate assessment report.
3. This review describes the outcomes achieved by children and young people growing up in The City of Westminster and evaluates the way local services, taken together, contribute to their well-being. Together with the Annual Performance Assessment of Children's Services, joint area reviews focus on the extent to which children and young people are healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and are well prepared to secure economic well-being. This review explores these issues by focussing on children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, children who are looked after and children at risk or requiring safeguarding and a few additional investigations. It evaluates the collective contribution made by all relevant children's services to outcomes for these children and young people.
4. The review took place in two stages consisting of an analysis stage (where recorded evidence was scrutinised) and a two week fieldwork stage (where inspectors met children and young people and those who deliver services for them).