

9 December 2009

Mr Jim Taylor
Executive Director for Services for Children and Young People
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Council Offices, Room 2.5
Wellington Road
Ashton-under-Lyne
Tameside
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Dear Mr Taylor

Children's services annual rating

Ofsted guidance published in May 2009 explained that the annual rating would derive from a new performance profile of the quality of services and outcomes for children and young people in each local area. This profile includes findings from across Ofsted's inspection and regulation of services and settings for which the council has strategic or operational responsibilities, either alone or in partnership with others, together with data from the relevant *Every Child Matters* indicators in the new National Indicator Set (NIS).

In considering the evidence in the profile to determine the children's services rating for 2009 it has become clear that the continuing gaps in the data are significant, particularly those relating to aspects of social care and services for Looked After Children. Ofsted has decided therefore to use 2009 as a transitional year easing into the full application of the new system in 2010. As a consequence, although the performance profile remains central to Ofsted's rating, we have interpreted the performance bands with flexibility and exercised professional judgement with caution.

The annual rating derives from a four point scale:

4	Performs excellently	An organisation that significantly exceeds minimum requirements
3	Performs well	An organisation that exceeds minimum requirements
2	Performs adequately	An organisation that meets only minimum requirements
1	Performs poorly	An organisation that does not meet minimum requirements

Within each level there will be differing standards of provision. For example, a rating of 'performs excellently' does not mean all aspects of provision are perfect. Similarly, a rating of 'performs poorly' does not mean there are no adequate or even good aspects.

Children's services rating 2009

Children's services rating	Performs well (3)
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Children's services in Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council perform well.

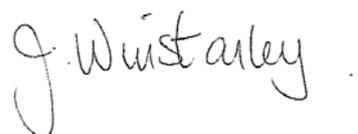
The overall effectiveness of inspected services in Tameside is good. Half of all inspected services and provision is good or better; however, too much school provision remains only satisfactory. Provision for very young children is mixed. A smaller proportion of childcare is good or better than is the case nationally and in similar areas but a larger proportion of nursery provision is good or outstanding. A smaller proportion of primary and secondary schools are good or outstanding than the national average. The local authority's fostering services are good as are the majority of children's homes. The majority of Every Child Matters judgements are in line with or better than similar areas or the national average, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving.

The 2008 joint area review judged safeguarding as adequate. There has been one serious case review which was judged to be inadequate.

Outcomes are good for the majority of children and young people. Performance against a very large majority of indicators, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving, are at least as good as that in similar areas and national figures. At Key Stage 2 some children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds do not achieve as well as the national average or their peers in similar areas. However, this gap has closed at Key Stage 4 and performance is in line with both measures.

The children's services rating is provided for the purpose of section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The rating of local authority children's services will contribute significantly to the managing performance theme of each local authority's Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) organisational assessment and therefore to the score for each local authority overall.

Yours sincerely



Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, CAA