

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
Textphone 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 020 7421 6666
Direct F 020 7421 5633
Juliet.Winstanley@ofsted.gov.uk



8 November 2011

Mr Cliff Turner
Director for Learning and Care (Children's Services)
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Town Hall
St Ives Road
Maidenhead
Berkshire SL6 1RF

Dear Mr Turner

Annual children's services assessment

Ofsted guidance published in April 2011 explains that the annual assessment of children's services is derived from the performance profile of the quality of services for children and young people in each local area. This performance profile includes findings from across Ofsted's inspection and regulation of services and settings for which the local authority has strategic or operational responsibilities, either alone or in partnership with others, together with other published data.

In reaching the assessment of children's services, Ofsted has taken account of inspection outcomes including the arrangements for making sure children are safe and stay safe and performance against similar authorities and/or national measures. More weight has been given to the outcomes of Ofsted's inspections and regulatory visits (Blocks A and B in the performance profile).

The annual assessment 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, an assessment of 'performs excellently' does not mean all aspects of provision are perfect. Similarly, an assessment of 'performs poorly' does not mean there are no adequate or even good aspects. As in 2010, while the performance profile remains central to Ofsted's assessment, meeting or not meeting the minimum requirements alone does not define the grade. The assessment has involved the application of inspector judgement.

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead children's services assessment 2011

Children's services assessment	Performs well (3)
--------------------------------	-------------------

Children's services in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead perform well. This good performance has been sustained from 2010 to 2011. The large majority of services, settings and institutions inspected by Ofsted are good or better and provision helps children and young people learn and stay safe. The strengths and areas for improvement remain much the same as in 2010. While more primary and secondary schools have been judged to be good or outstanding this year, the quality of provision for specialist education has deteriorated overall.

In August 2011, an unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements for children in need and children who may be in need of protection found two strengths, many areas that meet requirements and a number of areas for development. There were no priority actions requiring urgent attention.

Strengths

- The large majority of childminding and childcare provision was good or better in 2010 and remains so.
- For children under five, the very large majority of provision in nurseries and primary schools is good or outstanding. Standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage match similar areas and the national average and continue to improve. Outcomes for children from low-income families are better than the average for their counterparts nationally, however this good performance is not yet sufficient to close the attainment gap between the low-income group and the majority of five-year-olds in the borough.
- The very large majority of primary schools are now good or better. Standards achieved by 11-year-olds at Key Stage 2 are consistently in line with similar areas and the national average and continue to improve.
- The large majority of secondary schools are now good or better. Standards achieved by 16-year-olds at Key Stage 4 are in line with similar areas and the national average and continue to improve. Young people with special educational needs do better than their counterparts elsewhere at this age, as do the small numbers of young people from low-income backgrounds. Persistent school absence is below the average found in similar areas.
- For young people staying on in education and training at the age of 16, seven of the eight school sixth forms are good or better and the other is satisfactory. The general further education college that is based in the borough improved from satisfactory to good this year. Achievement of

level 2 and level 3 qualifications by the age of 19 is consistently above similar areas and the national average and continues to improve.

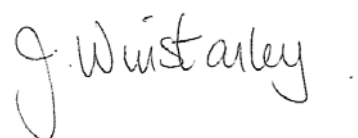
- As in 2010, the local authority fostering service is outstanding and the adoption service is good. There are no children's homes in Windsor and Maidenhead. The very large majority of provision commissioned by the local authority for the looked after children it places elsewhere is good or better. All the private and voluntary fostering and adoption agencies used by the local authority are either good or outstanding.
- The full complement of well trained, experienced and permanently-employed staff in the referral and assessment team for children in need and children who may be in need of protection is ensuring good continuity of support for children, young people and families and improving partnership work. Care planning is sharply focused and well informed.

Areas for further improvement

- The quality of specialist education provision is no longer as good as it was in 2010. Five of the eight special schools and pupil referral units are now only satisfactory and none are outstanding. The residential special school that was inspected this year deteriorated from good to satisfactory.
- While progress has been made since the 2010 inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements for children in need and children who may be in need of protection, the variable quality of chronologies on case files and the need to embed the common assessment framework remain amongst the areas for development.

This children's services assessment is provided in accordance with section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Winstanley".

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, Children's Services Assessment