

9 December 2009

Mrs Marion Davis
Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families
Warwickshire County Council
Saltisford Office Park
Ansell Way
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4UL

Dear Mrs Davis

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)
-----------------------------------	--------------------------

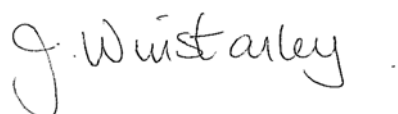
Children's services in Warwickshire County Council perform well.

The overall effectiveness of the large majority of inspected and regulated services and settings in Warwickshire is good. Children receive a good start in their care and education through effective early years provision. However, provision in primary and secondary schools is variable. While very few schools are judged to be inadequate, only half are judged to be good or better; this is below similar areas and that found nationally. Provision in school sixth forms and further education settings is good or better than in similar areas. Judgements for staying safe and enjoying and achieving are broadly in line with similar areas and the national picture.

The quality of education and care provision for children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable is adequate overall. Provision in two thirds of special schools is good or better and that in the pupil referral unit is satisfactory. The local authority fostering service was judged as outstanding in its most recent inspection.

Performance against the very large majority of national indicators, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving is in line or better than in similar areas and nationally. The gap in achievement between those children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable and their peers is in line with similar areas and the gap nationally for children in the early years and at ages 11 and 16, though less positive for those young people over the age of 16.

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.



Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, CAA