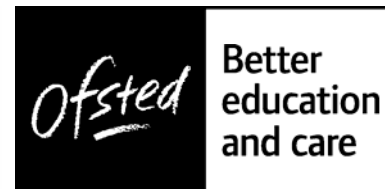


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Making Social Care
Better for People



David Maclean
Director of Education
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1 December 2005

Dear Mr Maclean

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING COUNCIL'S EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES 2005

This letter summarises the findings of the meeting held on 25 July 2005 to assess the performance of the education and social care services within your authority. We are grateful for the information, which you provided to support this process, and for the time made available by you and your colleagues to discuss relevant issues.

Being healthy

Outcomes in this area are good, especially the well established programme of drugs, sex and relationships education in schools, and the good access to, and use of, contraceptive services. Teenage pregnancies are below national averages, although increasing in some areas, and targeted work with teenage parents has been successfully established.

The health of looked after children is successfully promoted and an innovative group of teenage parents, supported by the Looked After Team, have developed a range of outreach work with schools and professionals, as part of the authority's work on the Every Child Matters agenda.

Partnership work with health colleagues has resulted in plans for pooled budgets and targeted joint resources to improve outcomes for Children With Disabilities (CWD). This will involve a substantial review of current services and further needs analysis. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is in need of increased and strengthened resources. For looked after children, there is an effective "fast track" in this service.

Healthy schools programmes are well established in a good number of schools and there are sound plans to extend this. A wide ranging approach includes a choice of healthier meals, substantial training for school meals staff, consultation with, and training of, parents on healthier eating and nutrition, and extensive work to ensure

children have two hours of physical education each week. The designation of two specialist sports colleges is planned to enhance the health opportunities for local children and young people.

Evidence of good working partnerships was demonstrated during a lengthy and complex serious case review that was well conducted by social services. The lessons learned have had a positive impact on practice.

Staying safe

Outcomes in this area are consistently good, as shown in the recent Children's Service Inspection in March 2005. There are strong and robust safeguarding arrangements, which deliver effective services. Good quality audits and quality assurance systems ensure effective performance and children and young people are kept safe.

There is good stability of placements for children and young people provided through effective fostering services. All out-of-borough placements are being reviewed and an expansion of local fostering services is planned. There is a need to target this scheme to expand foster care that more effectively meets the needs of black and minority ethnic (BME) children, who are disproportionately represented in this service. Links have been developed with local faith groups as part of a wider initiative to respond effectively to the diverse and individual needs of children and young people. Further analysis of needs is being undertaken so that resources can be targeted more effectively.

The council has developed substantial expertise in working with Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII), a specific type of child abuse, as a result of improvements identified by the recent serious case review. This has included extensive training for a wide range of multi-disciplinary staff and hosting a national conference. The council is active in monitoring bullying in schools and reporting actions to members. This includes innovative work on the abuse of telephones and emails.

The number of looked after children and children on the child protection register remains high and there is a need to develop a wider range of preventative services. There are three Early Years Centres in the most deprived wards and the North Romford Consortium provides an innovative model from which to base further expansion. A new role of home school liaison worker is proving effective and resources within extended schools are well targeted to extend and improve preventative work.

The recent Children's Service Inspection has shown there is good morale amongst the social care workforce with improved recruitment and retention initiatives, including extensive training and opportunities for career development. This has been noted and commented on positively by looked after children. Management is seen as high profile and supportive by staff and a range of good initiatives are sustaining this positive workforce development.

Enjoying and achieving

Outcomes in this area are well above minimum requirements. The provision and standards achieved in schools are very good in comparison to statistical neighbours with particular strengths in the following areas. Early years' provision made directly by the local authority is very good with effective initiatives in Sure Start and Early Years Centres. The authority has taken active measures to train providers and ensure that there are reduced levels of actions imposed at initial registration. These are too high.

Support for school evaluation has been a key feature of the authority's work. As a result of strong service planning, rigorous alerting systems, precise use of data and challenges to underperforming schools, the few schools that cause concern are making good progress. The primary schools that had produced more erratic results at Key Stage 2 have now benefited from the primary leadership programme and have shown significant improvements. Secondary schools' and sixth-form results are very good and looked after children make better progress in comparison to those in similar London boroughs. Boys also achieve very highly at GCSE.

There is little permanent exclusion and inclusion is actively promoted by innovative schemes in the most deprived wards. Children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) are well supported in mainstream schools. The authority has provided well for pupils at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language when they first arrive in schools. The achievement of black and minority ethnic groups is carefully analysed and the authority has concentrated its interventions on those groups performing at less than average levels. This is a key development for the borough as the demography and range of ethnicity of the area is changing rapidly.

Attendance is well monitored and has improved but still needs some attention at Key Stage 4.

It is clear from the council's detailed, exemplary planning and reporting procedures that Havering is concentrating its efforts and resources very well on the education of the young people who need them most. It is piloting its extended services in the areas of greatest deprivation and monitoring the results carefully.

Making a positive contribution

Outcomes are good, with children and young people encouraged and supported to make a positive contribution. There have been a series of youth service events, developed with input from young people, to improve their involvement. This has resulted in better marketing of information and producing a website, as well as responding to some of their requests, for example, to provide a mobile skateboarding

unit. Schools councils have continued to involve pupils in school development and in prioritising budgets.

Vulnerable groups of children, including travellers, are well supported to make informed choices about their future. The Youth Offending Team (YOT) has contributed to a decline in arrests and recidivism. Children and young people with LDD are well supported to learn and contribute positively; effective transition planning is in place. Services for looked after children are good, with high levels of their involvement in planning care and contributing to reviews and those leaving care have been involved in developing a drop-in centre but more remains to be done in developing the voice of children and young people. Further research is being undertaken and the role of the Children's Rights officer is being enhanced.

Achieving economic well-being

Outcomes in this area are good. There are good transition plans and systems for supporting looked-after children and those with LDD as they become more independent at 16. Progression levels to post-16 education and training are above average.

The high levels of achievement in sixth forms and the rapidly increased and improving vocational pathways ensure that young people in the borough have better opportunities for economic independence in their adult life.

Secondary schools and specialist colleges, working with the local further education college, have doubled the number of places on vocational courses for the 14 to 16 age group from September 2005. This transition has been enhanced by the recent appointment of a 14 to 19 adviser and the setting up of a Havering Partnership Group. A longitudinal study of the aspirations of 14 year-olds has started, with interviews to gauge their commitment to learning. However, the vocational provision in sixth forms needs development.

Resources have been well targeted to strengthen partnerships and services but the low take up of direct payments for children with disabilities and their carers needs to be improved.

Causes of absence from school in Key Stage 4 have been analysed and steps taken to support young carers, those sufferings domestic violence and other disadvantaged groups, including those for whom very early identification of problems may lead to reduced disaffection from education. Patterns of absence are well identified and the schools most affected have increased involvement by their educational welfare officer. They have introduced truancy patrols and are working with targeted individual pupils and their families to reduce absence.

Summary

Strengths	Areas for Improvement
<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health of looked-after children • use of contraceptive services and innovative work on teenage pregnancies • well established and comprehensive healthy eating programmes • working partnerships, especially on Serious Case Review • establishment of pooled budgets with the primary care trust. 	<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthen CAMHS • develop services for children with disabilities • conduct further needs analysis to inform interagency strategies,
<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong and robust safeguarding arrangements • stability of placements and permanency • effective quality assurance and audit tools • improved recruitment and retention. 	<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the range of preventative services • review out-of-borough placements and expand capacity of local fostering • develop services for black and minority ethnic children.
<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high standards • very good progress, particularly by boys • inclusion of young people with LDD in mainstream schools • achievement of looked-after children. 	<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure high quality provision in the early years' settings provided other than by the council.
<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective targeting of youth services • support to vulnerable groups • reduction in arrests and recidivism • involvement of looked after children in planning their care and developing service. 	<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop the voice of children and young people • review the role of the Children's Rights Officer.

<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support and transition planning at 16 for looked after children • above average progression to further education and training post 16 • partnership planning for 14-19 provision. 	<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the take-up of direct payments for children and young people with disabilities and their carers • enhance vocational provision, particularly in sixth forms.
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Service management

The council's monitoring and self assessment are very effective. Its analysis of data, action plans, its rapid response to inspection findings in social care and proactive work on current issues in education are all very positive features. Sound plans have been made to have a new Children's Directorate in place by November 2005. It has moved from awareness raising and consultation to formal commitment to Children's Trust working. A measured and steady pace has developed and a good strategic plan, with due weight given to partners' views, is evident.

Leadership and value for money are excellent in education. The same meticulous approach seen in current business plans is evident in the timescale and strategy documents for implementing the Children Act 2004 in Havering.

Multi-agency working is being strengthened and The North Romford Consortium is being used as a developmental model in all the agreed stages. The council is determined to achieve better outcomes within existing funding and staffing levels, without losing momentum in its current service improvements.

Performance management, the development of the workforce and boosting morale are priorities that are clearly working. The workforce development strategy has led to better recruitment, for example by reinforcing and extending the graduate teachers' scheme. The commitment and leadership of head teachers in Every Child Matters developments and the setting up of a Safeguarding Board from September 2005 have further enhanced the strong working relationships between education, social services and health. Some consultation has taken place with young people and their families and this strand of planning for Children's Services has involved the National Children's Bureau, as well as young teenage mothers working with their peers in schools and reporting to elected members. This high degree of consultation is due to continue on a wider basis.

The pace of improvement in social services has been good. Good progress has been made to establish joint funding between the council and the primary care trust to

provide more effective services to young people with disabilities. It now needs to develop information and communication technology and administrative capacity and to build more effective partnerships with the voluntary sector.

Plans to establish a Children's Trust are well developed. They are carefully considered and appropriate for the resources available and the needs of the children and young people.

The council is clearly moving in the right direction and improving strongly. Its capacity to improve is excellent.

Areas for exploration in the joint area review:

Being healthy

Action is taken to promote children and young people's mental health:

- CAMHS working.

Staying safe

The incidence of child abuse and neglect is minimised:

Agencies collaborate to safeguard children according to the requirements of current government guidance:

- Fostering
- Developing preventative services.

Enjoying and achieving

Children and young people are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and to achieve highly:

Action is taken to ensure that educational provision 5-16 is of good quality:

- Changing demography in the area and underachieving groups.

Making a positive contribution

Children and young people are encouraged to participate in decision making and in supporting the community:

- Consultation with young people.

Achieving economic well-being

Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to achieve economic well-being:

- Impact of Direct Payments on children and young people with LDD and their carers.

Final judgements

Please see your final annual performance assessment judgements attached at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely



FLO HADLEY

Divisional Manager
Office for Standards in Education



JONATHAN PHILLIPS

Director – Quality, Performance and Methods
Commission for Social Care Inspection

cc. Stephen Evans, Chief Executive

cc. Marilyn Richards - Executive Head of Social Services

cc. Ruth Jenkins - Head of Children & Families

APA final judgements 2005: London Borough of Havering Council

Areas for judgement	Final judgements ¹
The contribution of <i>the local authority's social care services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	3
The contribution of <i>local authority's education services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	4
The contribution of <i>the local authority's children's services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	4
The council's overall capacity to improve its services for children and young people	4

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Grade	Service descriptors	Capacity to improve descriptors
4	A service that delivers well above minimum requirements for users	Very good
3	A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users	Good/promising
2	A service that delivers only minimum requirements for users	Adequate
1	A service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users	Inadequate