

9 December 2009

Mr Dave Hill  
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Dear Mr Hill

## 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

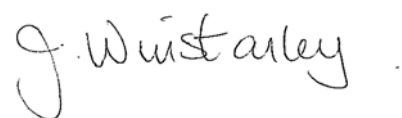
<b>Children's services rating</b>	<b>Performs Adequately (2)</b>
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Children's services in the London Borough of Croydon perform adequately.

Performance across services is mixed. Whilst most nurseries are good or better, day care across childminder and childcare settings is only satisfactory. The area has fewer good or better primary schools than seen on average in similar areas or nationally. The proportion of secondary schools that is good or better is particularly low in comparison, although none is inadequate. School sixth forms are considerably stronger by similar area and national comparison. Performance across services which support children and young people whose situation makes them vulnerable is also mixed. Most special schools are good, although the proportion which is good or better is below national and similar area averages. Four out of five pupil referral units are good which is above comparator averages. Children's homes are good as is the local authority fostering agency; both the adoption agency and private fostering arrangements are satisfactory.

Performance against a large majority of national indicators, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving, is in line with similar areas and the position nationally. However, initial assessments of children and young people's needs are carried out on comparatively few referrals to social care services, although a higher proportion than average in similar areas are completed in a timely fashion. Fewer than average looked after children reviews are completed within the required time scales. Children's achievements at age 5 are better than seen in similar areas although are the same at ages 11 and 16. Rates of permanent exclusion from schools are high by national and similar area standards, and persistent absence in secondary schools is high in comparison with similar areas. A greater proportion of young offenders receive custodial sentences than is the case nationally. Participation of 17-year-olds in education and training is good and more young people than average in comparison to similar areas achieve level 2 or level 3 qualifications by age 19.

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.



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