

Joint area review

City of London Children's Services Authority Area

Review of services for children and young people

Audit Commission
Healthcare Commission
HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Probation
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Introduction

1. The most recent Annual Performance Assessment (APA) for the City of London judged both the council's children's services and its capacity to improve as outstanding.
2. This report assesses the contribution of local services in ensuring that children and young people:
 - at risk or requiring safeguarding are effectively cared for
 - who are looked after achieve the best possible outcomes
 - with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve the best possible outcomes.
3. There were no investigations in the joint area review beyond those outlined in paragraph 2 above.

Context

4. The City of London covers an area of approximately a square mile in the eastern part of central London, north of the River Thames. It is one of the most important financial and business centres in the world. It is home to nearly 6,000 businesses, and over 320,000 workers come into the City every working day. In contrast, there is a small residential population of just over 9,000¹; of which about 1,100 are children and young people aged 0–19. Whilst the City's socio-economic profile overall is relatively advantaged, there are very great differences between local areas. Most young people under 19 live in relatively disadvantaged areas. There are some 450 families with dependent children, about a third of which are lone parent. This is significantly higher than the national average, as is the percentage of primary school pupils entitled to free school meals. Around 43% of residents aged 0–24 come from a background other than white British. This is a much higher proportion than in the City's population overall. The largest minority ethnic group within the 0–24 population is Bangladeshi. There are currently 23 children and young people who are looked after by the local authority. Most are unaccompanied asylum seekers.
5. There is one maintained primary school in the City but no secondary schools, special schools or pupil referral units. The primary school also includes the City's only children's centre. Additional children's centre places are commissioned from the London Borough of Islington. There are about 12 other providers of early years education and day care within the City, with full day care and out-of-school day care comprising the great majority of places. There are no further education or sixth form colleges, no work-based training providers and no Entry to Employment provision within the City. Adult and

¹ ONS 2005 mid-year estimates

community learning, including family learning, is provided by the City Lit, City and Islington College, the Bishopsgate Institute, the City University, Down Memory Lane and the City of London Corporation Adult Community Learning Team.

6. Primary health care services are provided by the City and Hackney Teaching Primary Care Trust (PCT). A number of residents in the east of the City are registered with general practitioners in Tower Hamlets. Acute hospital services are provided by the Homerton University Hospital National Health Service (NHS) Foundation Trust, the Barts and The London NHS Trust and the University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Mental health services are provided by the East London and the City Mental Health NHS Trust.

7. Children's social care services are provided through a single field social work team and by commissioning foster and residential care places from other agencies as and when required. The City does not directly provide such places itself. There are no secure units or young offender institutions in the area.

Main findings

8. The main findings of this joint area review are as follows:

- safeguarding provision is outstanding. Children and young people live in a very safe environment. Any difficulties are identified early and responded to promptly and effectively. Child protection procedures and practices are excellent
- support for looked after children is outstanding. Care, education, health and leisure provision are all very good. Young people's involvement in planning and decision making is excellent
- provision for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. Problems are identified early and effective, well-coordinated support given. All provision is of high quality.
- service management and the capacity to improve are both outstanding. Multi-agency working is very effective. There is very good knowledge of needs, clear priorities are set and action planning is effective. Service delivery is well coordinated and diligently monitored.

Grades

4: outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate; 1: inadequate

	Local services overall
Safeguarding	4
Looked after children	4
Learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4
Service management	4
Capacity to improve	4

Recommendations

For immediate action

The local partnership should:

- ensure that an appropriate way is found to successfully disseminate the findings of this report to children and young people in the area.

Equality and diversity

9. The local strategic partnership addresses equality and diversity issues very effectively. Assessments of need give very good attention to identifying differing needs, for example those associated with ethnic background and gender. Consultation with service users, both at an individual and small group level, is a particular strength within this. Service planning and delivery are sharply focused on meeting the diversity of needs of local residents. Services are flexibly and sensitively delivered in a way which reflects the full range of recipients' needs and aspirations.

Safeguarding

Inadequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outstanding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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10. **The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people at risk or requiring safeguarding is outstanding.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Very effective multi-agency working based on clear understandings of roles and responsibilities and very good arrangements for sharing information.</p> <p>Early identification of developing problems and very effective, multi-agency intervention which addresses child and family needs holistically.</p> <p>Very good quality staff, particularly in the local authority's social care service.</p> <p>Very good management supervision of child protection cases, backed up with excellent independent reviewing officer involvement.</p> <p>The provision of a safe environment for children and young people.</p> <p>An effective approach to addressing domestic violence.</p> <p>Comprehensive Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.</p> <p>Effective action to prevent anti-social behaviour and reduce offending.</p> <p>Good advice and guidance for children and young people on keeping themselves safe and living healthily.</p>	<p>There are no significant weaknesses.</p>

11. Given a city location, children and young people and their families are provided with a very safe environment. They are very positive indeed about the prompt, effective and sensitive response of the police to any concerns. Liaison between the police and other services is excellent and contributes significantly to the low incidence of bullying, racial harassment and domestic violence. The youth service is also particularly effective in helping young people to deal with bullying and harassment. Services to combat domestic violence are a high priority and delivered effectively through a good multi-agency strategy. Comprehensive information and guidance for children and young people on keeping safe is easily accessible through a good range of media and in a range of languages. Procedures for identifying and following up children missing from home, care or education are very effective. Agencies give good support and encouragement to young people to re-engage in education and are tenacious in their follow-up work.

12. Healthy lifestyles are promoted very well. The incidence of teenage pregnancy is low, as are the numbers of young people needing treatment for substance misuse. Although formal auditing of health needs is limited, service providers have a very good knowledge of needs on the ground. This is used to good effect in planning provision. Young people have access to a wide range of good quality information and guidance about healthy living. The delivery of health services is sensitive to diversity of need and has been informed by some very good consultations with young people.

13. Action to prevent anti-social behaviour and to reduce offending by children and young people is very effective. No young people are currently subject to anti-social behaviour orders or acceptable behaviour contracts and the number of young people with whom the Youth Offending Team needs to be involved is very low. Early identification of and intervention with young people at risk of offending is very successful and there is a good overall range of diversionary activities. The youth service makes a particularly effective contribution in such respects.

14. There is a strong shared commitment to early intervention and preventative work with families experiencing difficulties. Service delivery reflects this. Child and family needs are identified early, and well-coordinated and effective packages of support are provided. More and better support is provided in response to relatively low levels of concern than in the great majority of other local authority areas. This means that relatively few problems reach the stage of needing crisis intervention. Much of the support provided to children and families is nothing short of exemplary.

15. Parents and carers have good access to high-quality early years education and child care provision. Financial assistance is provided as necessary to avoid high costs being a barrier for children in need. The delivery of many social care and health services is well integrated with this provision, providing ease of access and well-coordinated packages of support. The Cass Children's Centre is a key focal point for such work.

16. The support provided to parents with mental health needs, including a perinatal mental health service, is very effective. Help with managing difficult family relationships is a particular strength. Mental health services for children and young people are similarly very good. Comprehensive Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are in place. CAMHS link effectively with other services and this means that problems are identified early and effective support provided. This has reduced the need to refer to more specialist and intensive services. When such help is needed it is provided promptly and well. Young people with acute mental health concerns are treated on age-appropriate hospital wards.

17. The City of London participates in the pan-London child protection arrangements. Policies and procedures are of high quality and provide a sound framework for multi-agency working. The City and Hackney Safeguarding

Children Board is working effectively and has appropriate senior representation from all the relevant agencies. The City benefits from involvement in a safeguarding board covering a wider area than its own, as this provides much better insights into emerging issues and good practice than would otherwise be available. A clear focus is maintained on issues specific to the City through a designated sub committee.

18. Multi-agency working to safeguard children is very effective. It is underpinned by clear and agreed expectations of the contribution expected from each service. Communication between agencies working within the City and with other local authorities is very effective. Protocols for sharing information are sound. The development of required electronic information sharing arrangements is on schedule, as is the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework and integrated children's system. Designated staff for child protection are in place across services. All staff have access to a good quality training programme with a strong emphasis on multi-agency working. The take up of this training is good. An area of comparative weakness is the lack of an agreed strategy to identify, monitor and support private fostering arrangements. This is at draft stage only. Nevertheless, there is already reasonable awareness amongst front line staff of the need to refer cases to the local authority's social care team. A formal strategy for identifying and supporting young carers is similarly only in the process of development, although provision on the ground is already good.

19. Thresholds for involving the local authority's social care service in safeguarding concerns are appropriate and well understood by other agencies. Referrals are timely and responded to consistently and promptly. The rate of repeat referrals is very low. The social care service is well resourced, with staff of high calibre. All children in need cases are allocated to qualified social workers. Practice is consistently child focused. Needs are viewed holistically and support is both of high quality and well coordinated. Initial and core assessments are of consistently good quality and compliance with required timescales is excellent. Assessments and plans are well informed by the views of the children and young people concerned and those of their parents/carers.

20. Management supervision and case file auditing are regular and rigorous and provision for continuing professional development is good. Staff are supported and challenged in equal measure. Management oversight is complemented by a very effective independent service for chairing child protection conferences. The complaints procedure for children and young people receiving social care support is independently managed and well known to users. It enjoys the confidence of both children and young people and staff. Most concerns are resolved effectively at the informal stage. No serious case reviews have been needed in the City for several years.

21. Awareness of safe recruitment practice across agencies is good and compliance with vetting requirements within the local authority is satisfactory. Processes for responding to allegations against staff are sound and rigorously applied. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements are good.

Looked after children and young people

Inadequate Adequate Good Outstanding

22. **The contribution of local services in ensuring that children and young people who are looked after achieve the best possible outcomes is outstanding.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Very good individual care plans designed with young people's full involvement.</p> <p>Very good consultation with young people.</p> <p>Stable and supportive care placements.</p> <p>Prompt, sensitive and effective responses to young people's concerns.</p> <p>Good school and college provision and other support for learning.</p> <p>Very good health care provision, including CAMHS.</p> <p>Good corporate parenting provision, including an excellent independent reviewing process.</p> <p>Very effective multi-agency working which is well informed by a good understanding of the individual needs of children and young people.</p>	<p>There are no significant weaknesses.</p>

23. The great majority of children and young people who are looked after by the City are unaccompanied asylum seekers. Most have had very traumatic experiences in their lives. They have arrived in the country alone, with no family or other links with the City, and have been allocated to its care on a rota basis.

On the face of it, this is a most unpromising start. It is of great credit to the City, however, that the young people's experience subsequently is better than in most other areas of the country.

24. Care placements for most of these young people are made through a single provider in Peterborough. Those who are below the age of 16 are placed with foster carers. Most are older and live in semi-independent housing. The latter arrangement enables young people both to come together easily and to benefit from regular contact with staff who have good experience of meeting their needs. The personal care they receive is excellent and there is very frequent face-to-face contact with City of London social workers. Each young person is fully involved in drawing up his/her individual care plan and in regularly reviewing it subsequently. Care plans are of very good quality. Placements take proper account of the young person's background and cultural needs. Placements are usually very stable. Procedures for following up any concerns young people have about the care they receive are robust and enjoy their confidence. Almost all such concerns are successfully resolved informally. When a change in care placement is needed it is usually made in a timely and effective way. Support for foster carers themselves is very good.

25. The young people placed in Peterborough receive good support with their education and make very good progress. All have an appropriate personal education plan which they have helped to draw up. Priority within admission arrangements is used to secure placements in high-quality schools, and at age 16 many attend the very good further education college locally. Particularly good support is provided when they first start attending. Additional tuition is provided where needed, for example with English language skills. Both school and college attendance and educational progress are monitored closely. Any problems are followed up swiftly. One young person has recently moved on to higher education.

26. Any concerns about bullying and racial harassment are dealt with promptly, sensitively and effectively. There is good liaison between care staff and the local police and the latter's response to incidents and concerns is good. Overall, the young people feel that they are listened to and that their concerns are both taken seriously and dealt with effectively. There is good liaison between services on the very limited amount of offending by young people.

27. Very few young people who are residents of the City need to be taken into its care. Very effective early identification of and support for families having difficulties usually makes this unnecessary. Thresholds for taking children into care are appropriate and consistent with those applied nationally. Where adoption is the appropriate way forward this is pursued promptly and successfully. The quality of care planning, care placements, educational provision and responsiveness to concerns is equally good for the young people placed in Peterborough and for those cared for in more local placements. The remaining comments in this section apply to both groups.

28. The City is an effective corporate parent. All looked after children are allocated to a qualified social worker. Monitoring of care placements by social care staff is excellent. Statutory reviews take place when they should and the participation of the children and young people themselves is very good. All reviews are chaired by an independent reviewing officer who provides rigorous challenge to staff and effective support for the young people. There are also regular and frequent meetings between each young person and their allocated social worker and these are supplemented, for those placed in Peterborough, with small group discussions. Looked after children have good access to and awareness of the independent advocacy service. They have good information about both their rights and what they can reasonably expect from services. More formal and substantial consultation is also undertaken on a regular basis and has had a positive impact on the development of provision. There is an appropriate level of face-to-face contact between looked after children and both senior officers and elective members. Performance data is regularly and thoroughly scrutinised. However, formal structures to ensure that there is rigorous and regular scrutiny of all aspects of provision by elected members have only recently been introduced.

29. Health provision for looked after children is very good and is well informed by very effective consultation with the young people themselves. All are registered with a general practitioner, dentist and optician in their local area. All receive timely and good quality annual checks. Where follow-up is needed this is prompt. There is a designated nurse and doctor for looked after children, and health providers receive good advice and guidance on their particular needs and circumstances, as do other support services. This helps to ensure that provision is sensitive to individual needs, including cultural background. Personal, social and health education is good. Where CAMHS are required, support is provided in a timely and effective way. Services work very well together in this as in all other respects.

30. Young people are given good support to develop and maintain friendships, follow religious practices and maintain their cultural identity. They have good access to recreational and voluntary learning activities. Good support is provided for the transition to adult life and for leaving care in particular. This includes good advice about education, training and employment opportunities. Asylum-seeking young people are also well supported in managing the uncertainty surrounding their future as they face the end of their initial permission to stay in the country. This includes assisting them in submitting an application to stay further if that is their wish.

Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Inadequate Adequate Good Outstanding

31. The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>A highly skilled workforce regularly provided with effective challenge and support.</p> <p>Early identification of needs, with prompt and effective preventative support.</p> <p>Timely referral to and responses from specialist services as required.</p> <p>Very effective multi-agency working within assessment, planning and review processes.</p> <p>Well-coordinated, well-resourced and individually tailored packages of high-quality support.</p> <p>Close monitoring and review of provision and progress.</p> <p>Access to an extensive range of both mainstream and specialist recreational and voluntary learning provision.</p> <p>Good opportunities for both children and young people and parents/carers to participate in decision making.</p> <p>Good support for key transitions in the lives of children and young people.</p> <p>Good quality and flexible support for families.</p>	<p>There are no significant weaknesses.</p>

32. Staff in all key services receive good training, guidance and support in identifying young people's difficulties early and in providing support. They are very skilled in doing so. Provision is highly effective in preventing the unnecessary escalation of problems and in enabling continued attendance at mainstream care and educational provision. The Sir John Cass Primary School and Children's Centre is excellent in such respects. Children and young people and their parents are as involved as they can reasonably be in assessing needs and planning provision. Parents also receive good training, guidance and

support and are therefore well equipped to meet their own children's needs. Services work very well together throughout the assessment, planning and review processes. Communication networks are tight and effective. Needs are viewed holistically and service delivery is well coordinated. Provision is comparatively well resourced and of high quality. Good account is nonetheless taken of value for money.

33. Health provision is very good. CAMHS are accessible and fully comprehensive and meet the needs of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities very well. Well-resourced speech and language therapy provision is very successful in improving communication skills. The provision of specialist equipment, for use both within education and care settings and at home, is also very good.

34. Very good measures are taken to safeguard the welfare of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff are highly alert to risk and take swift action to address concerns. Action to prevent bullying and harassment and to tackle it where necessary is very effective. Staff are vigilant, responses to any incidents are robust, and support for victims is good.

35. Educational provision for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent. Whilst effective early identification and preventative work makes the need for statements of special educational need comparatively rare, the assessment process when required is conducted promptly and effectively. Good information and advice is provided to parents to enable them to be fully involved. There is ready access to a good quality parent partnership service. There have been no appeals to the special educational needs tribunal for several years. Thresholds for writing statements of special educational need are appropriate and they are of good quality. Every effort is made to provide good quality, individually tailored support within mainstream settings, resulting in very few children and young people indeed needing to attend special schools. Review processes are regular and thorough. The extension of monitoring on occasion to include provision for young people with special educational needs at School Action Plus in mainstream secondary schools is impressive.

36. The Sir John Cass Primary School and Children's Centre does all it reasonably can to meet disability access requirements and its provision overall for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good. The local authority provides good monitoring, challenge and support for its work in such respects. Children make comparatively good progress and there has been a year-on-year narrowing of the attainment gap, particularly for the lowest achieving children. The local authority's sponsorship of City Academies demands that provision includes high-quality support for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

37. Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very well in accessing voluntary learning and recreational provision. This includes an extensive range of mainstream provision as well specialist after-school and holiday play schemes. The participation of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in youth service provision is very high. The service has very good information about individuals and makes every effort to contact them and involve them in activities.

38. Families are equally well supported overall, although, for a small number, overcrowding within social housing can be a problem. There are no families currently needing adapted transport or housing, but planning and review processes always cover such needs. Respite care provision for families with children and young people under 18, including those with complex needs, is of very good quality. The latter is provided in flexible ways which are well suited to meeting individual family needs. This high-quality provision continues after the transfer to adult social care services. Good steps are also taken to acquaint parents with the availability of direct payments to widen their choice of provision even further. Home-to-school transport provision is appropriate and reliable.

39. There is a good range of opportunities for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to contribute to service planning and review and to participate in key decision making. This includes discussions about the provision made for them as individuals. They participate well in such discussions and the views they express have a significant impact on what is provided. Appropriate steps have been taken to ensure that consultation exercises involving the wider community include specific opportunities for families of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to contribute. Whilst there is currently no representation of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on the core membership of the City Youth Forum, the council does all it can to encourage participation.

40. Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well prepared and supported to make key transitions in their lives. This includes starting and changing schools, moving on into further education or training, and making the transition to adult health and social care services. There is good liaison between agencies and transition planning is timely, effective and of good quality. Plans are regularly reviewed and updated. There is very good provision at the Sir John Cass School for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to develop knowledge and skills to promote future economic well-being. Connexions workers provide good support to young people wishing to continue in education or training post-16 and there is good monitoring of both provision and progress. Both parents and young people receive good advice and support in securing the welfare benefits to which they are entitled.

Service management



Capacity to improve



41. **Both the management of services for children and young people and the capacity to improve further are outstanding.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Providers make very good use of a wide range of intelligence to identify user needs and priorities for service development.</p> <p>Ambitions are challenging and realistic, with a strong focus on inclusion and tackling disadvantage.</p> <p>There is very effective partnership working between providers at all levels, from planning through to service delivery.</p> <p>There is strong leadership at senior level, both from elected members and officers.</p> <p>Both middle managers and front line staff are of high quality, the result of effective recruitment and very good continuing professional development provision.</p> <p>Resourcing levels are good and financial management effective.</p> <p>Providers learn very well from the lessons of experience.</p>	<p>There are no significant weaknesses.</p>

42. There are two key factors underpinning the approach to managing services within the City of London. The first is that the City covers a comparatively small area with a very small resident population. Staff numbers are accordingly low and the need for multi-tasking is high. Whilst this puts particular demands on staff, it offers real advantages in terms of communication between staff and between services. Communication networks are tight and contacts between key participants frequent. The second key factor is that the ratios of elected members and senior officers to residents are comparatively very high. Communication between them is frequent and also very direct, often face to face. Providers within the City make very good use of the potential advantages involved in its small size and deal successfully with any potential downside.

43. The way in which the ambitions of the local strategic partnership for children and young people are identified and expressed is outstanding. They are based on excellent knowledge of the needs of local residents and the degree to which current service provision meets them. This includes the differing needs within the City's very diverse community. A detailed equalities impact assessment informed the drafting of the Children and Young People's Plan. Consultation with residents is extensive and regular, and well designed to identify particular needs and aspirations. In particular, children and young people and families with high levels of need are fully and effectively consulted, both on what they need and how it is delivered. The exchange of information between providers is extensive and effective. Ambitions are based on a very good, shared analysis of all this intelligence and are very clearly stated in planning documents. They are challenging and realistic. The needs of children and young people and families are well represented within the partnership's overall priorities, as is clear from both the community strategy and the current Local Area Agreement. There is also a strong focus on promoting inclusion and tackling disadvantage.

44. The way in which providers translate the partnership's ambitions into more specific priorities for service development is outstanding. The key players involved have a clear and shared understanding of the action agreed, who needs to contribute and when, and what the collective effort is meant to achieve. However, written plans do not always do full justice to the quality of the planning processes involved. Some are limited in the way they specify the intended outcomes and identify key action milestones.

45. Partner agencies are particularly skilled in identifying needs early and providing well-coordinated and effective packages of support. Thresholds for providing support are also comparatively low. This means that relatively few problems reach the stage of needing crisis intervention. At the individual child and family level much of the support provided is nothing short of exemplary. Young people and parents/carers are fully and effectively involved alongside staff in agreeing the provision to be made and in reviewing it subsequently. Needs are viewed very much holistically and service delivery by the different agencies is well coordinated to meet them. The great majority of services are

provided very close to where people live and in a limited number of multi-purpose venues.

46. Joint service commissioning overall is very effective in practical terms, at individual child and family level. Formal joint commissioning arrangements, including budget pooling, are comparatively limited but this is because effective commissioning is largely achieved by other means. The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership already fulfils most of the functions of a Children's Trust and satisfactory progress is being made on establishing more formal trust arrangements. Good progress has been made in developing the Common Assessment Framework and associated lead professional role. Agreement has been reached on the key principles involved and services are on target to deliver implementation by the required deadlines.

47. Providers have outstanding capacity to deliver their ambitions. Leadership at senior level, both from elected members and senior officers, is very good. Ambitions and priorities are unambiguously expressed and based on very good knowledge of user needs and service strengths. They are backed up with resourcing levels which are generous by comparison with many other areas but not profligate. Working relationships between agencies at senior level are good, with a real spirit of cooperation in the interests of service users. The same applies to relationships within agencies, both between senior and middle managers and between managers and front line staff. Challenge and support are provided in a balanced and effective way. A further key characteristic of both the partnership and individual services is the way that lessons are learned from experience. This is a particular strength.

48. Providers have been successful over a number of years in recruiting and retaining high-quality staff, both at middle management and front line levels. This has been supplemented by a substantial investment in their continuing professional development. The joint strategy for the development of the workforce is based on a clear and agreed 'core set' of knowledge and skills. Allied to good quality management supervision and support, this investment in professional development has meant that the potential problems involved in comparatively few staff having to cover relatively wide areas of responsibility have been overcome. One of the particular strengths of the partnership is the way very good use is made of professional networks to improve specialist expertise, as well as to develop and maintain common understandings across services. Where it is more cost effective to buy in specialist expertise than develop it in house this is undertaken successfully. Good steps are also taken to help build the capacity of the voluntary sector to make a contribution in such respects.

49. Performance monitoring and evaluation overall are good, but with a relative weakness in the lack of clear outcome measures and action milestones in some plans. Where this is the case, it means that a very clear platform for subsequent performance monitoring is not established from the outset. Monitoring and evaluation processes involve service users extensively and well.

Elected members also make a substantial contribution, based on their very good knowledge of service delivery on the ground. Information and analysis is reported regularly at both partnership and individual agency level and diligently scrutinised. Providers have a good understanding of where services can be further improved and take prompt and effective follow-up action as necessary. Performance management at casework level and for individual members of staff is excellent.

50. Due regard is given within performance monitoring to both outcomes for service users and cost. An effective balance is drawn between investment in preventative and crisis intervention services. Where this is available, appropriate use is made of comparative data on the costs of service provision elsewhere. Financial management is tight and contract compliance is rigorously monitored. Services provide good overall value for money.

51. Both the 2006 and 2007 APA exercises judged the capacity to improve of the local authority's services for children and young people as outstanding. Based on both the quality of service management processes and the record of sustained improvement over recent years the joint area review's conclusion is that the capacity of the wider local strategic partnership for children and young people is similarly outstanding.

Annex A

MOST RECENTLY PUBLISHED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF LONDON

Summary

The City of London Corporation delivers an outstanding service for children and young people. Collaboration with the local authority's partner agencies is very effective from planning through to service delivery. Services are provided in a flexible and well-integrated way, with a clear and well articulated focus on early identification, intervention and prevention. This is particularly effective for the most vulnerable children and young people, who receive very good support and advice which equips them well to make good progress and manage changes in their lives, such as moving schools or entering employment.

The management of services for children and young people is outstanding and the authority has an excellent capacity to improve. Leadership by elected members and senior officers is very effective. The Director Community and Children's Services provides very good, well informed leadership and has a clear vision of how the authority can improve further. She is well supported by an effective senior management team. Other staff work together very well and use the opportunities afforded by relatively small numbers to ensure effective communication and very good relationships across services

The full annual performance assessment can be found at:

http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports/pdf/?inspectionNumber=268425&providerCategoryID=0&fileName=\\APA\\apa_2007_201.pdf

Annex B

CORPORATE ASSESSMENT ACHIEVEMENT – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Outcomes for children and young people in the City of London are excellent. Still birth, infant mortality and teenage pregnancy rates are all comparatively low. Few young people need treatment for substance misuse. There are no children and young people currently on the child protection register. Children in early years provision and at the one maintained primary school make good progress, as do looked after children of all ages. Young people participating in youth service provision achieve well. Children and young people are confident that their views are listened to and have an impact. No young people are currently subject to anti-social behaviour orders or acceptable behaviour contracts and the number of young people with whom the Youth Offending Team needs to be involved is very low. The number of young people not in employment, education and training has fallen. Success rates in National Vocational Qualifications are well above average.

2. Service management within the City of London's services for children and young people is outstanding. Very good use is made of a wide range of intelligence to identify user needs and priorities for service development. Ambitions are challenging and realistic, with a strong focus on inclusion and tackling disadvantage. There is very effective partnership working between the local authority and its partner agencies at all levels, from planning through to service delivery. There is strong leadership at senior level, both from elected members and officers. Both middle managers and front line staff are of high quality, the result of effective recruitment and very good provision for continuing professional development. Resourcing levels are good and financial management effective. Performance management is good and providers learn very well from the lessons of experience.

3. The work of the local authority and its partners in securing the health of children and young people is outstanding. Very good information about local needs is used to good effect and services are delivered in a way which is sensitive to the diversity within the local community. Advice and guidance for children and young people on living healthily is good. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services are comprehensive and meet individual needs very well. Early identification of needs and effective provision before problems become acute is particularly successful. Health services for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are excellent and their delivery is well coordinated with other provision. Provision for looked after children is also very good.

4. Children and young people appear safe and arrangements to ensure this are outstanding. Partner agencies work very effectively together, with clear understandings of roles and responsibilities and very good information sharing. There is early identification of developing problems and very effective

intervention which addresses child and family needs holistically. The quality of key staff is very good. Very good management supervision of child protection cases is backed up with excellent independent reviewing officer involvement. Services provide a safe environment for children and young people and there is particularly good liaison between the police and other services in dealing with concerns about harassment and bullying. There is an effective approach to dealing with domestic violence, including the provision of support for victims. A relative weakness is that a strategy to meet requirements on private fostering is at draft stage only.

5. The impact of services in helping children and young people to enjoy their education and to achieve well is outstanding. The quality of early years education and day-care provision overall is good. At the City's one maintained primary school, provision is very good throughout. Educational support for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent. Assessment is prompt and provision is both well resourced and of very good quality. Reviews of provision are regular and rigorous. Looked after children attend good quality school and college provision and are well supported generally in making educational progress. There is a wide range of recreational and voluntary learning opportunities, including a good youth service.

6. The impact of all local services in helping children and young people to contribute to society is outstanding. Consultation with children and young people is regular, extensive and well designed. The views they express have a significant impact on what is provided. The involvement of both looked after children and children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in planning and reviewing the particular provision made for them is very good. Action to deter and prevent anti-social behaviour and to reduce offending is very effective. Good opportunities and encouragement are given to children and young people to make a contribution to society through voluntary activity.

7. The impact of all local services in helping children and young people and families to improve their economic well-being is outstanding. Childcare provision is well matched to the needs of most families. Advice, guidance and support for young people in making further education and employment choices are good. The local authority has developed a wide range of partnerships with other agencies and organisations and uses these well to enhance employment opportunities locally. Looked after children are well supported in the transition to adult life and leaving care.

8. The capacity of the council's services to improve is outstanding.

Annex C

SUMMARY OF JOINT AREA REVIEW AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

1. This joint area review was conducted using the arrangements required under Section 20 of the Children Act 2004. It was carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of inspectors from Ofsted, the Healthcare Commission and the Audit Commission. The review was undertaken according to the requirements of the *Framework for the inspection of children's services*.

2. The review was linked to the contemporaneous corporate assessment of the local council by the Audit Commission and these findings, plus aspects of the most recent APA, are represented in the relevant part of the corporate assessment report.

3. This review describes the outcomes achieved by children and young people growing up in the City of London and evaluates the way local services, taken together, contribute to their well-being. Together with the APA of children's services, joint area reviews focus on the extent to which children and young people are healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and are well prepared to secure economic well-being. This review explores these issues by focusing on children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, children who are looked after and children at risk or requiring safeguarding. It evaluates the collective contribution made by all relevant children's services to outcomes for these children and young people.

4. The review took place in two stages consisting of an analysis stage (where recorded evidence was scrutinised) and a two-week fieldwork stage (where inspectors met children and young people and those who deliver services for them).