

Joint area review

Wandsworth 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. 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.
2. The following investigation was also carried out:
 - the contribution of services to the enjoyment and achievement of boys at Key Stage 4.

Context

3. Wandsworth is the largest inner London borough. It has a population of around 280,000, of whom 19% (around 52,000) are aged 0 to 19 years. It is an ethnically diverse area with 22% of the population from minority ethnic groups. This rises to 35% for those under 18 years, and represents 56% of pupils attending school. This increased proportion is due to the large number of pupils attending Wandsworth schools from other boroughs.
4. The borough has significant contrasts between affluent residential suburbs and the high levels of deprivation in parts of Battersea, Tooting and Roehampton. In February 2005, some 1,589 children were identified as in need of support, of whom 329 were looked after by the council. A total of 165 children were on the child protection register. A total of 7,400 children were identified in 2005 as having special educational needs in Wandsworth maintained schools. At the time of 2001 Census, 22% of dependent children were living in workless households and 30% (13,800) of children were living with lone parents.
5. Pre-16 educational provision comprises three nursery schools, 56 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, eight special schools and two pupil referral units.
6. Post-16 education and training is provided by nine sixth forms, one general further education college, one sixth form college and 10 local work-based training providers in addition to national providers.
7. Entry to employment (E2E) provision is delivered by two private training providers. Adult and community learning is commissioned, coordinated and managed by Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning Service through partners such as South Thames College and Putney School of Art and Design.

8. NHS primary care is provided by Wandsworth Primary Care Trust (PCT). Mental health services are mainly provided by South West London and St Georges Mental Health NHS Trust. Children's acute care is provided by St Georges Healthcare NHS Trust.

9. Children's social care placement services are provided through 192 foster carers, five children's homes, three residential special schools, one residential family centres and independent providers.

10. Services to children and young people who are at risk of offending, or who have offended, are provided through the Wandsworth Youth Offending Team.

11. Integrated children's services are well established and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership is consulting on proposals for Children's Trust arrangements for implementation in January 2008.

Main findings

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

- Multi-agency partnership working is very effective in protecting and safeguarding vulnerable children and young people, with strong strategic leadership through a well established Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Effective processes are in place for early identification, referral and assessment resulting in prompt intervention and provision of appropriate support to children and families.
- Looked after children are provided with safe and stable placements and are actively involved in shaping the services they receive. Their health, educational and emotional needs are very well met through strong partnership working which includes their parents and carers. Effective preventative initiatives have contributed to a steady reduction in the numbers of looked after children. Looked after children achieve well academically and high numbers are in education, employment and training. Children leaving care are provided with very good transitional support into adulthood.
- Well established cross-agency protocols, communication and training result in effective early identification of need and prompt support to improve the health, well-being and safety of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The educational achievement of children with a disability in mainstream, and special educational settings, is good or outstanding. All special school provision is also good or outstanding. Excellent recreation and leisure provision is available, together with very good respite and residential care. Strong links with adult services ensure very good transitional planning and continuity of support.

- Provision to target underachievement for boys at Key Stage 4 is good with very good strategic and operational partnership work. Outcomes for boys locally are significantly better than for boys nationally. Innovative projects engage disaffected young people and discourage anti-social behaviour.
- Service management in children's services is good with outstanding capacity of senior officers, staff and elected members. Effective financial and performance management, consultation and close working with partner agencies enable challenging ambitions to be agreed and set within a clearly targeted Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

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	3
Capacity to improve	4

Recommendations

For immediate action

The local partnership should:

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

For action over the next six months

The local partnership should:

- increase the involvement of children, young people, parents and carers in decision making processes, service reviews and service design at strategic levels
- improve the clarity of development of 14-19 diplomas.

For action in the longer term

The local partnership should:

- increase the range of local foster carers for looked after children to enable greater placement choice to enable matching.

Equality and diversity

13. Wandsworth is taking robust action to tackle equality and diversity issues which are reflected prominently in its CYPP and in the Corporate Equality Plan. All departments have developed equality impact assessments and action plans involving external stakeholders with equality leads appointed to identify areas for improvement. Effective support to minority ethnic groups results for example in all ethnic groups achieving high academic results. An example, is the Black Pupils' Achievement Programme for pupils and parents. Progression into employment, education and training for vulnerable groups, for example looked after children and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good.

Safeguarding



14. **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>Well-established LSCB providing highly effective leadership.</p> <p>Strong culture of working in partnership with parents.</p> <p>Highly effective multi-agency practice</p> <p>Highly effective referral and assessment services.</p> <p>Effective arrangements for supporting post adoption, kinship and private fostering placements.</p> <p>Excellent use of Family Group meetings.</p>	<p>Lack of understanding about thresholds for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) across partner agencies.</p>

Effective support provided through children and family centres.	
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15. The Wandsworth LSCB is well established and provides strategic leadership in the transition from a narrower child protection focus towards developing the council's broader safeguarding agenda. Chaired by the council's Chief Executive, there is good multi-agency representation on the board and its sub-groups. Eight sub-groups oversee the implementation of the LSCB's safeguarding action plan and a recent review provides evidence of shared ownership and commitment across agencies leading to significant progress toward achieving the board's objectives.

16. Most children in Wandsworth who responded to a recent national survey reported feeling safe. Parents have access to a range of safety information and the safe parenting handbook is particularly valued as it covers all age groups. Effective parenting courses are provided at integrated children's centres and family centres and keeping safe training is provided directly to children in schools. There is concern amongst older children about bullying, the use of weapons and the impact of gang culture. To address this, the council has an anti-bullying strategy in place and there are a number of locally-based anti-bullying initiatives in schools. The Youth Offending Team has particularly effective initiatives in relation to working with gangs.

17. The council has a strong culture of working in partnership with parents and there is a good range of family support services in the borough with a clear investment in early years prevention. The integrated children's centres provide a wide range of multi-agency services that parents find easy to access. These include individual and group social work, health visiting, child psychology, speech therapy, parenting classes, play development and crèche facilities. Integrated children's centres are in place in each of the three localities in Wandsworth to ensure equality of access. Culturally sensitive, and appropriate, provision is made for parents and children in the integrated children's centres in each locality including provision for the Somali community. Parents benefiting from the skilled work undertaken in the council's three family centres refer to the positive impact on their parenting skills. The centres (one of which is residential) provide intensive support to families some of whom may be subject to court proceedings. The highly skilled assessments provided by the centres are valued by the courts. The assessment, and support, provided to many parents improves their self-esteem and confidence enabling them to continue to care safely for their children.

18. Excellent use is made of family group meetings provided in partnership with Welcare, enabling solutions to be achieved within children's own families. Specialist teams ensure that young carers are well supported and that arrangements for supporting post-adoption, kinship and private fostering placements are effective.

19. Services in Wandsworth are child-centred, with a strong emphasis on assessing need. There is a very good standard of recording in social care teams and use of the Common Assessment Framework is developing well across all settings. Duty arrangements are highly effective with a specialist referral and assessment service undertaking initial and core assessments providing continuity to service users. Assessments are thorough and of good quality and the transfer to other childcare teams is smooth and timely. The council's performance in the completion of initial and core assessments is better than that of comparator authorities and the national average, and risk assessments seen on files were comprehensive. The service is complemented by a specialist diversion team undertaking short-term focused work with young people at risk of losing their home. The team's interventions are achieving considerable success. The arrangements for identifying vulnerable young people and pregnant women at St George's Hospital, followed by a high standard of assessment and pre-birth planning, are particularly effective. Assessment, risk management and staff understanding of safeguarding are less well developed in the Youth Offending Team.

20. Multi-agency partnership working is highly effective particularly for the most vulnerable children, including those children who are the subject of a child protection plan. All agencies have a designated lead officer for safeguarding and multi-agency training is well developed. Communication between professionals is excellent and the number of serious case reviews is low. Systems, protocols and procedures for service delivery are well established and clearly understood by partner agencies. There is excellent compliance with regulation and statutory requirements. The number of children who are the subject of a child protection plan is in line with the national average and all children are allocated to a qualified social worker and receive regular visits. Child protection plans are reviewed regularly at conferences and core groups, which are held on time and are well attended. The attendance of parents at conferences is high, at 87%, and all are chaired by an independent child protection coordinator.

21. Action has been taken to address a concern that too many children remain the subject of a child protection plan for two years and more. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of children in this category over the last year. The number of children re-registered is lower than comparator authorities.

22. Validated statistics on the convening of initial child protection conferences within 15 days of the last strategy discussion indicate that the performance in this area is lower than other boroughs. However, additional evidence provided by the council indicates that within the last year 79% of initial conferences met the 15 day target, which is significantly better.

23. There is an increased awareness across agencies of the impact of domestic violence on children. Membership of the council's Domestic Violence Forum has increased and it has a number of initiatives in place such as the Stay Put/Stay Safe project which enables victims to remain in their own homes.

24. CAMHS are providing an effective, and timely, service to the most vulnerable children in Wandsworth. Children looked after and their foster carers and children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and their parents, are well supported by the service. Those children with lower priority needs are subject to a waiting list for treatment following an assessment. Although the service meets the locally agreed target of 11 weeks, this is too long for some young people and there appears to be a lack of clarity amongst some partner agencies about the thresholds and structure of the specialist service.

25. A clear protocol sets out Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements between the Public Protection Unit and Children's Services Department on the management of offenders who pose a risk to children. The protocol provides guidance to staff across agencies and defines responsibilities.

26. Processes for the safe recruitment of staff are effective with evidence of Criminal Record Bureau checks and other appropriate measures evident on personnel files scrutinised.

Looked after children and young people



27. The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for looked after children and young people is outstanding.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>The number of children looked after is reducing year on year.</p> <p>Looked after children live in safe placements and are well supported.</p> <p>Placement stability is good and the achievement of permanent placements through adoption and special guardianship is excellent</p>	<p>Limited range of in house foster carers making matching difficult at times.</p>

<p>The education and health needs of looked after children are given high priority and excellent services are provided to this group resulting in good overall academic achievement</p> <p>The independent living service provides excellent support to care leavers.</p> <p>The innovative Treatment Foster Care Team is impacting positively on the lives of looked after children.</p>	
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28. Looked after children are a priority for the council whose corporate parenting responsibilities are well executed. Children spoken to during the course of the review confirmed feeling safe in their placements and receiving at least good support. Key outcomes for looked after children are very good and compare very favourably with those of similar authorities. Most looked after children live in foster homes and those in residential settings receive excellent care and support. The quality of social work is good and is supported by effective leadership and management oversight. Senior managers know their children well. Staff report that they feel well supported and their effective work is acknowledged by senior staff and councillors. There is very good multi-agency working which contributes to the effectiveness of the preventative agenda.

29. The number of looked after children has been reducing year-on-year. This has been achieved primarily as a result of the very effective measures put in place to support families in the community. Families are involved in decision making concerning the future of their children. All looked after children are allocated to a qualified social worker and children reported getting a high level of support from them. The number of children adopted is very good; 29 children, representing 14.1% of those children currently looked after by the council. This is better than in similar authorities and the national average. A legal team provides good advice and guidance to workers ensuring that decisions are sound and timely. The proportion of children in residential settings is in line with comparators at 16% of the children currently looked after by the council. Regulatory inspections in the last year rated the quality of residential provision as good.

30. Placement stability of children having three or more placements in one year is very good at 10%; this is better than comparator authorities. However, despite this, the perception of some children is that they have experienced too many moves. Reviews of looked after children were undertaken in a timely way, showing a marked improvement from 59% in 2005/06 to 91% in 2006/07. Independent reviewing officers monitor care plans well and ensure that

statutory timescales are met. The quality of reports for reviews is good or better.

31. Excellent attention is given to the health needs of looked after children. The accessibility, and engagement, of the designated doctor and nurse form the bedrock of the service. They work well with other health professionals to provide a holistic service and encourage young people to adopt healthy lifestyles. A health steering group includes young people as members, and they participate actively in the forum. Completion of health assessments is at 96.7% and developmental checks at 100%, both above national levels. Young people have a choice as to who conducts their assessments. Dental checks have increased to 91% in 2006/07, and good information on healthy living, sexual health and drugs is accessible. The emotional needs of looked after children are well met. Psychologists, based in various projects, provide early and ongoing support, with urgent cases for tier 3 specialist CAMHS receiving a timely service. Where the needs of children placed out-of-borough cannot be met the required service has been commissioned from independent providers.

32. The work of the Children Looked After Education Support Service (CLAESS) is very good in engaging children to attend and enjoy school. Personal Education Plans are regularly completed, school attendance of children is well monitored by the team and prompt intervention is reducing the number of absences. Educational psychologists and an Education Welfare Officer are part of the team and support children in placements; where necessary one-to-one tuition is provided to children at home. All children over the age of seven are provided with a computer. The percentage of looked after children achieving one GCSE is well above the national average. The percentage achieving five GCSEs at grades A*-C, at 14% in 2006, is significantly below the local average for all children in the area but progress is good overall. Performance improved again in 2007 to 22%. This can be explained, however, because the cohort of looked after children is low, with the number with special educational needs higher than the overall pupil population. The attainment of this group of children is celebrated by partners and young people annually.

33. Great effort is put into the recruitment of foster carers to meet the wide range of children's needs and numbers are increasing as staff use imaginative strategies to attract members of the public. Despite this ongoing drive the range of carers is narrow and makes placements difficult at times. A newly created commissioning post is securing better arrangements with independent fostering agencies. Foster carers report being well supported and contribute to service development through their professional association. They confirm that they are provided with good training and have ready access to senior managers. There is a positive relationship with the Wandsworth Foster Care Association, which is increasingly involved in recruiting, training and supporting carers. The most recent fostering report assessed the service as good.

34. The work of the multidisciplinary Treatment Foster Care team is innovative and an excellent pilot project. Its impact has been highly positive in stabilising children within foster homes, providing daily monitoring and 24-hour support to children with high needs who would otherwise be in restrictive or secure environments.

35. Young people who are looked after have been well engaged in a participation project that has developed their confidence and maturity. They have made requests to senior managers about aspects of their care and have been responded to favourably. Being able to effect changes has boosted their morale and they feel they are contributing positively. Looked after children have good access to independent visitors and to advocacy services. The authority has service level agreements with two voluntary agencies to provide individual support. The availability of these services is well known to young people who make good use of them in reviews and in obtaining support in their homes. Training has been given to young people, enabling them to participate in the selection and interviewing of social care staff, including senior managers.

36. The independent living service provides excellent support to care leavers. Transition from looked after children teams are well planned; all young people have pathway plans and are well supported by a multidisciplinary team of workers. The number of care leavers in education, training and employment is very good: in 2006/07 the proportion was 84% and figures for the current academic year are at a similar level. Excellent attention is paid to ensuring that care leavers are housed appropriately. Bed and breakfast provision is not used and links with voluntary agencies and the housing department provide a good element of choice. Care leavers liked their accommodation and felt they were well prepared for their independence. They were achieving well in college, university or employment. Their care experience was seen as positive with some feeling that the support provided, particularly at examination times, was better than they would have received were they not looked after.

37. There has been a 22% reduction in the number of looked after children who have committed first-time offences. Relationships with the Youth Offending Team are improving and funding is used well to develop targeted work around the use of mediation and restorative justice strategies to prevent escalation of poor behaviour in residential homes.

Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Inadequate Adequate Good Outstanding

38. 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>Very effective implementation of strategic planning.</p> <p>Innovative and effective practice in early identification, assessment and support in line with 'Together from the Start'</p> <p>Excellent multi-agency work leading to early assessment including access to CAMHS.</p> <p>The high achievement of children and young people.</p> <p>Very effective development of school-based multi-agency panels.</p> <p>Excellent residential respite care.</p> <p>Thorough arrangements for transition to adult services.</p> <p>Outstanding provision for recreation and leisure.</p> <p>Very good support for parents during statutory assessment and the quality of statements of special educational needs.</p>	

39. The plans and priorities of the council demonstrate an excellent commitment to place children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at the centre of programmes for improvement. The very effective practice identified in the 2006 annual performance assessment has been further improved. Building progressively over the last few years, multi-agency strategy groups have focused on clear priorities in the CYPP resulting in very effective outcomes. Actions are based on thorough analysis of need and are evaluated by impact on children and young people. The council has had the vision to make some difficult decisions in the last few years. For example, the closure of two special schools and restructuring of the remainder were achieved through consultation and minimum disruption to pupils. There has been a sharp reduction in the number of new statements in favour of promoting wider inclusion and the development of very effective provision for children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

40. Multi-agency support leads to very effective early identification of need to improve the health of young children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, early intervention work with hearing impaired children has led to improved integration in settings. Primary aged children with complex needs have regular and very effective nutritional, dental and vision checks. Other initiatives include joint work with paediatricians and other professionals to develop integrated pathways to improve health. This has been an integral part of the priority to develop more responsive approaches to support children and young people with ASD in mainstream schools. Fully integrated CAMHS for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is available throughout the area. The school nursing service has established a specialist practitioner post with a focus on mental and emotional well-being to support the work of schools attended by pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties. Excellent transition arrangements for the provision of services cover generic paediatric services and CAMHS. Paediatric and adults' clinicians work very closely together to ensure continuity of care.

41. Good protocols between agencies support very fruitful information sharing between carers and others working with children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Children with Disabilities team has a very well coordinated system to follow through any issues. Staff receive thorough training on safeguarding issues and team members have specific skills to communicate with children who have complex needs. If appropriate, partner agencies ensure that young people have opportunities to make their views known or make complaints which contribute to influencing the decision making process and service design.

42. Residential care accommodation is excellent and has recently been upgraded. Careful planning allows young people of similar ages and interests to attend respite care together, enhancing their social skills and learning, although there is currently no cover available at short notice if a respite carer cannot provide the planned care.

43. Very effective features of provision are the early assessment strategies found in the work of the Early Years Centre. Here support for families begins at a child's birth and the team approach means that needs are thoroughly investigated to ensure that all appropriate services are provided. Particularly successful is the preventative work under the Earlybird programme for parents of children with ASD.

44. Parents are supported to play a full part in the assessment of needs for children. The parent partnership service guides parents very knowledgeably to understand the process and this has helped to reduce the number of appeals regarding statutory assessment. Statements are of a high quality and produced within the appropriate timescale. Parents of disabled children report feeling very well informed about the progress and welfare of their children. Parents whose children receive short-break respite care are very positive about the provision.

45. School inspection evidence notes that achievement in special schools is good or better. Progress by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in most primary and secondary schools is also judged as good or better. Detailed analysis of school performance shows that achievement is above the national average for pupils at school action, school action plus and those with statements.

46. Multi-agency panels established to meet the needs of children and young people in mainstream schools are exceptionally effective. These are attended by appropriate council officers and well promoted as a model of good practice. The authority provided good support for the federation of two schools for pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties and to reduce exclusions significantly. There is a narrow but sufficient range of provision for the small number of girls with emotional and behavioural difficulties, particularly at Key Stage 3 and this reflects the small cohort.

47. Recreation and leisure provision for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. The appointment of a disability coordinator to manage provision has been particularly effective in developing opportunities. A specialist centre for young people with disabilities, provision in special schools and in a hospital setting has increased participation significantly. Working with a partner organisation, disabled young people have produced a film about living with a disability which will be used in mainstream schools.

48. Children and young people are able to contribute very well to decision making in school councils and in other ways. They also contribute individually regarding transition points in their lives. An ambitious target for children and young people to contribute to their annual reviews has been achieved. Thoughtful formats for their input using DVDs and other communication aids facilitated this. There is a well established and comprehensive multi-agency approach including CAMHS as appropriate for transition to adult services.

49. Most young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities remain in school or college settings when they reach 16. Data for 2006/07 show that only a very small number of young people were not in education, employment or training. Inspection evidence from special schools and the borough's sixth form college note extremely positive judgements on achievement, curriculum and care, guidance and support for 16-19 year olds. A very successful partnership scheme operates, whereby young people are offered the time of a trained 'buddy' who can help individuals with advice and welfare support.

50. There is good advice for young people about leaving home and developing independent lives supported by excellent guidance materials. The take up of Direct Payments for care has increased four-fold following the appointment of staff 'champions'. This improvement was enhanced by very good links with a partner organisation which guides parents in the procedures involved.

Other issues identified for further investigation

The enjoyment and achievement of boys at Key Stage 4

51. **The contribution of local services in improving outcomes for boys at Key Stage 4 is good. There are some outstanding features**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Exceptionally effective interventions to target underachievement.</p> <p>Consistently high and rising GCSE success rates and excellent value added.</p> <p>Very good strategic and operational partnership work.</p> <p>Particularly innovative arts projects to engage disaffected young people and discourage antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>Many creative initiatives to promote sexual and emotional health.</p>	<p>Low GCSE pass rates in English and mathematics in a minority of schools</p> <p>Insufficient clarity about plans for 14 – 19 diplomas</p>

52. Interventions to improve performance are exceptionally effective. Wandsworth uses data and information extremely well to identify and target areas of underachievement. Support from its advisors and subject consultants working with schools shows demonstrable and sharp impact. Highly focused work with school managers, teachers and pupils is developing sustainable approaches particularly in mathematics, English and science. Teachers with promotion potential are developed intelligently and supported as 'trouble shooters' in neighbouring schools, keeping talent in the borough. Regular checks on progress and enhanced monitoring focus tightly on ambitious targets which are largely met.

53. Boys consistently achieve higher than the national average for boys at GCSE. The percentage with five or more passes at grade A*-C has risen steadily and faster than nationally. The gap between boys' and girls' achievement is 5%, half the national average. In schools where achievement was lowest, improvement has been extremely rapid; for instance in three schools, pass rates have risen by more than 10% in a year. However, English and mathematics pass rates are still low in some, and the percentage of boys achieving five or more A*-C grades including English and mathematics remains below the national average in half the borough's schools. Analysis of value added scores in these schools, however, is very good and pupils achieve well above what might be expected based on their previous performance.

54. Boys selected for the eclectic and successful Excellence in Cities programmes extend both their knowledge and aspirations. Well-prioritised action to support minority ethnic groups includes the outstanding Black Pupils' Achievement Programme which provides individual mentoring support and coaching to both pupils and parents. All ethnic groups achieve higher results than their peers in other boroughs. Schemes to support new arrivals have been particularly successful in raising pass rates in low-achieving groups. Target setting is open and ambitious. Progress charts are prominently displayed and pupils are highly motivated to drive their own progress.

55. A large majority continue their education at 16. The number of 16-19 year olds not in education employment or training is the lowest in central London at 5.6%. Progression to further education is good. Fixed-term exclusion rates are still high in some schools but they are reducing significantly. The pupil referral unit works very flexibly to encourage early reintegration, with dual registration and individualised timetabling. Progression into further education from the pupil referral unit is good.

56. Partnership work is very good. A well-established 14-19 partnership works productively to provide an increasingly wide range of vocational choices at Key Stage 4. Pupils in the excellent shared provision at the City Learning Centre achieved 100% success in most BTEC diplomas last year. New courses in catering, construction and engineering at Nightingale Special School are shared with mainstream schools. Mentoring arrangements with a number of high-profile companies are used to develop pupils' enterprise skills. Robust quality assurance has improved college 14-16 provision and a new collaboratively developed quality framework is now being applied across the borough. However, not all partners are clear about the development of specialist diplomas. A diploma in health and social care starts in September 2008 and work is well advanced on another in creative and media, but planning for other subject areas is still at an early stage and it is not yet clear how they will be provided. Partners also recognise the limited availability of good quality work-based learning post-16, but work is in progress to address this.

57. Effective meetings across all services and levels share information efficiently. The nationally recognised school admissions service is highly effective in tracking and sharing information about pupils' whereabouts, particularly through the casual admissions database. The Connexions service is highly integrated with other local services and supports young people well.

58. Innovative projects use the arts particularly well to engage young people and to discourage antisocial behaviour. The arts are very prominent in Wandsworth; for instance hundreds of residents perform annually in the Albert Hall in Wandsworth Goes Gospel. Work on graffiti to counteract negative behaviour was facilitated by a resident artist at the pupil referral unit, and in a film, *Consequences*, by young people at other schools. The almost unique appointment of a youth engagement police officer has focused activity, with a number of well thought out projects building on national good practice. Spark

to Life uses the experience of a former gang member to provide a positive role model, and the junior crime stopper web pilot enables pupils to report crime safely. The lottery funded gun and knife crime project led by South Thames College is carefully mapped to develop media skills in participants. Anti-social behaviour by gangs is perceived by most young people as an urgent area for action. The authority plans to move its youth settings into more central areas to combat this danger and encourage inclusiveness.

59. Creative initiatives promote health. Effective partnership work with organisations including Total Health @Wandsworth, Brook and Men (BAM) and the Family Planning Association provides advice and guidance in a variety of settings. Teenage pregnancy rates have reduced at a sharper rate than national averages although remaining above national and similar area levels. There is increasingly strong coordination between the PCT, Connexions and other agencies to improve information and training for young people, allied to high-profile media campaigns. Well-targeted projects associated with both Chelsea and Fulham football clubs encourage boys to exercise and develop team working and problem-solving skills. Healthy eating is prominently promoted in all schools and youth settings, for instance in breakfast clubs and cooking sessions in the Connexions bases. Anger and stress management training for particularly challenging pupils shows positive outcomes.

Service management



Capacity to improve



60. **The management of services for children and young people is good. There are some outstanding features. Capacity to improve further is outstanding.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Very challenging ambitions.</p> <p>Good use of information.</p> <p>Good consultation with children and young people.</p>	<p>Lack of involvement by children and young people, parents and carers in decision-making at strategic level.</p> <p>Underdeveloped Integrated strategic commissioning.</p>

<p>Strong capacity of senior officers, staff and elected members.</p> <p>Excellent financial management.</p> <p>Very good multi-agency working.</p> <p>Very effective tackling underperformance.</p> <p>Excellent value for money</p> <p>Outcomes in many cases are outstanding.</p>	
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61. The 2006 annual performance assessment judged service management and capacity to improve as excellent. Overall, the partnership is high achieving. In aspects of performance that are a focus for improvement, there is a track record of determined effort resulting in significant improvement. For example, teenage pregnancies are still relatively high but have reduced by 31% since 1998 – a much better rate of improvement than the London and England averages.

62. Ambition is excellent and the council and its partners have given high priority to the development of children's services. This includes the strong leadership given by the council's leader and chief executive during a formative period of partnership development. The CYPP clearly sets out the partners' highly ambitious programme to deliver excellent services and reduce inequality of outcomes among children and young people. The plan includes a breakdown of the resources that will be used to deliver priorities, as well as stated actions to be taken to map and manage resources more effectively. There are good links between this and other plans, including the community strategy and the Local Area Agreement.

63. There is very good and developing understanding of local need and performance. For example, Foundation Stage profile results are used as the basis of locality programmes to tackle the causes of low attainment. Work commenced during summer 2007 to identify the need for preventative services in school clusters and so to inform the commissioning of extended school services.

64. The partnership has consulted well and widely with residents, children and young people, parents and carers to identify priorities. There are some excellent examples of engagement and consultation with children and young people, supported by the partnership's very good children's participation strategy. Children's views about some services have been heard and have resulted in changes. For example, looked after children identified the need to give red files greater priority so that all children in care are provided with a comprehensive record of their history. Children and young people have been

involved in some staff appointments, including senior managers. However, children and carers are not fully involved in the development of services.

65. There are clear strategic aims to target services effectively at need, including re-designing and re-configuring services to improve access and impact. A good example of this is the decommissioning of traditional day care services. The resources released have been refocused to provide high-quality support for parenting through two new family assessment centres and integrated children's centres.

66. Targets for the ambitions are challenging. For example, the youth justice plan includes a stretch target to significantly reduce the number of young people who start offending. Although the period of the target covers 1st April 2007/8 to 31st March 2010, performance in 2006/7 showed a 3% reduction compared to the previous year. Encouragingly the number of Black first-time entrants in to the youth system fell by 3.6%. The recent inspection of the Youth Offending Team identifies issues of management and operational effectiveness within the Youth Offending Teams, which need to be addressed to enable targets to be appropriately met. However the Youth Offending Team overall performs well against its targets.

67. There is good integration of the council's corporate approach both to equalities and to the children and young people planning process. An equalities impact assessment was applied effectively to the CYPP and resulted in an equalities action plan. Significant effort is made to promote community cohesion between young people, including Faith Direct events at which young people are able to explore the outlook of representatives of different faith groups. All ethnic groups, including black and minority ethnic boys achieve higher results than their peers in other boroughs. Schemes to support new arrivals have been particularly successful in raising pass rates in low achieving groups.

68. Prioritisation is good. Needs-based priorities are set out clearly in the CYPP and have been subject to thorough review. Stakeholder consultation has brought the needs of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities further up the agenda. In particular, a review of services for children under five and support for parenting are new priorities. The most vulnerable children are very well prioritised in the work of partnership staff. All looked after children are assigned to a qualified social worker and are given high priority for health services, including CAMHS, and in education. Pioneering treatment foster care is increasing placement stability for some young people with the most complex needs and challenging behaviours.

69. There are many good preventative initiatives at different operational levels to meet a variety of need. These include the newly implemented Targeted Youth Support Team and the more established Children's Fund programme with plans in place to review and re-commission Children's Fund projects as part of the extended schools offer. Prevention is well coordinated in early years,

building on learning derived from local Surestart programmes. However, the partnership's overall approach, including the priority it is accorded, is not explicit within the CYPP or in any other plan or strategy.

70. The partnership's new Children and Young Peoples' Delivery Plan comprehensively sets out the actions to be taken, clearly identifying the agency and officer responsible for each target. Well-devised service plans and team plans are reliably in place to implement the CYPP. A performance-related pay system rewards staff to deliver priorities.

71. The council and its partners have a very strong track record of setting realistic budgets and of successfully obtaining additional resources. Resources are very well linked to medium and long-term financial planning and council priorities. The council has invested significant new funding in leisure facilities to ensure that more people – including children and young people with disabilities – can improve their health through exercise. Plans are in place to deliver significant improvements to play services funded by a grant from the Big Lottery Fund.

72. The council's special educational needs strategy provides a good example of a sustained approach to improvement and the provision is outstanding. The educational psychology service reported a reduction in statutory assessments of 14% last year compared with 2005/06. Resources have been well targeted into new service areas. A dietician post has been established to tackle obesity in schools. CAMHS Tier 4 resources have been redirected to provide support through the primary pupil referral units at Tiers 2 and 3.

73. Capacity is good. The Director of Children's Services and senior officers at the council and its key partners provide strong leadership in taking forward significant and effective change. The lead member is an effective champion of the needs of children and young people across the council.

74. The Children and Young People's Partnership is consulting on proposals for Children's Trust arrangements which are on track for the January 2008 deadline. There are good examples of partnership working at board and service level, including with the voluntary and community sector. Partners have yet to determine how children, young people and carers will be able to contribute fully to decision making within the emerging children's trust arrangements.

75. There are some good jointly commissioned services, for example integrated children's centres and work-based learning programmes for the 14-16 age range. A joint commissioner (jointly funded by the Council and PCT) has been appointed to develop an integrated joint commissioning strategy plan.

76. Social care and education services were successfully integrated as a children's services department in April 2007. There are no formal pooled budgets at present. Special educational need and children with disabilities teams have been integrated. Back office and areas of potential duplication are being reviewed to secure better value for money. Budget management is

effective in preventing significant or unforeseen overspending across children's services. Overall, the council achieves excellent value for money, achieving outcomes for children and young people that are in many cases outstanding.

77. A very good workforce strategy is in place which includes effective schemes to support recruitment and retention in social care.

78. Implementation of the Common Assessment Framework and well-conceived multi-agency planning meetings are well underway and will provide a unified approach to early identification, assessment and planning across the borough. There is consistently good recording of information by social care teams and strong information sharing across agencies and service areas.

79. The PCT has been in financial recovery with consequent shortages of some health staff. The PCT ended last year in surplus and the improved financial position has allowed new plans for recruitment of school nurses and other health staff to go ahead.

80. Good examples of partnership working on the ground include very effective multi-agency responses to the needs of vulnerable children and young people. Children with disabilities have key workers who operate as effective advocates. Respite services are highly valued by parents and carers. Transition to adult services is managed very well.

81. Performance management is excellent. At the council, service performance is reviewed regularly within service areas and reported to senior officers and elected members through the council's comprehensive annual quality and performance reviews. Children and young people and parents and carers contribute to service improvement in some instances but are not yet involved routinely in all service reviews.

82. Through ongoing analysis of performance data, including benchmarking comparisons and a relentless focus on areas of weakness, significant improvements in performance have been achieved. 81.3% of looked after children leaving care achieved at least one GCSE grade A*-G or equivalent in 2006, against the 2008 target of 72%.

83. CYPP outcomes are tracked systematically and reported annually to the Wandsworth Local Strategic Partnership and through a very accessible report for stakeholders, including parents and carers. Overview and scrutiny committees across the council are kept very well informed about developments and performance and make a very significant contribution to performance management and policy development.

84. Based on its track record and developing arrangements, the partnership's capacity to improve further is excellent.

Annex A

MOST RECENTLY PUBLISHED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH

The council consistently delivers excellent services for children and young people. Its contribution is at least good and mostly outstanding in meeting Every Child Matters objectives. Services are having a strong impact on improving life opportunities and narrowing the gap between the achievement and well-being of the most vulnerable and others. Consultation is embedded in practice with good levels of participation helping to maintain the pace of improvement across services.

The full annual performance assessment can be found at:

http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports/pdf/?inspectionNumber=290065&providerCategoryID=0&fileName=\\APA\apa_2007_212.pdf

Annex B: Summary of the Enhanced Youth Inspection Report

Summary of the report

Main findings

The borough values its youth work provision highly and provides a good youth work service. A high level of funding has enabled sufficient youth work to be undertaken. Youth workers successfully engage with many very challenging and vulnerable young people particularly black African Caribbean young men and those young people with disabilities. Most of the work is of high quality and characterised by good relationships. The service makes an impressive contribution to safeguarding children. Managers know most of the strengths and weaknesses of the work they plan and in most areas the service is well led and managed, especially in the way the service works with its partners. Among the challenges senior managers have rightly identified is the need to raise participation. Participation has fallen to a level where it is now only in line with national benchmarks whereas a few years ago it was much higher. Despite best efforts too few young women access the service. Among other challenges is the need to broaden the curriculum offer to young people and to embed accreditation schemes more consistently. While provision is reasonably cost effective staff deployment could be improved. Young people still do not play a sufficiently active role in shaping provision at a local level.

Key aspect inspection grades

Key aspect		Grade
1	Standards of young people's achievement	3
	Quality of youth work practice	3
2	Quality of curriculum and resources	2
3	Leadership and management	3

*Inspectors make judgements based on the following scale
4: excellent / outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate/satisfactory; 1: inadequate*

Strengths

- The service is well funded and has the strong support of elected members.
- Overall the standards of achievement and youth work practice are high.
- The service is well regarded by its main partners and this is having a beneficial impact on young people.
- Safeguarding procedures are clear and are consistently implemented.
- Young people with disabilities are well supported.

Areas for development

- Further increase participation by broadening the curriculum to reach out to those vulnerable groups that are not either accessing or benefiting from current provision
- Involve young people more consistently in shaping programmes of work, especially at the local level by improving the processes by which their views are fed into the needs analysis
- Increase the ways by which young people can gain accreditation and improve confidence among youth workers in the accreditation strategy

Annex C

CORPORATE ASSESSMENT ACHIEVEMENT - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Outcomes for children in the London Borough of Wandsworth area are good with outstanding features for 'Enjoying and Achieving' and are outstanding in 'Being Healthy' 'Staying Safe', 'Making a Positive Contribution' and 'Achieving Economic Wellbeing'. Those most in need of protection benefit from prompt intervention and support. Looked after children are making good progress in health and education outcomes. The range of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service provision is very good with prompt access available. Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make at least good progress at all stages of their compulsory education and the council has the lowest level of young people aged 16-18 not in education, employment or training in London.

2. Service management in children's services is good. There are some outstanding features. The council's capacity to improve is outstanding. Children and young people are an integral part of the vision and ambition for the council. Strong and visible leadership is evident. The portfolio holder for children and young people is actively and effectively engaged. The Children and Young People's Plan and its review clearly set out the highly ambitious, needs-based programme to deliver excellent services and reduce inequality. There are clear strategic aims to target services effectively at need, including re-designing and re-configuring services to improve access and impact. The council and its partners have a very strong track record of setting realistic budgets and of successfully obtaining additional resources to develop and deliver services. Further investment in improving capacity to meet local needs is taking place through the implementation of integrated locality working. The council tackles underperformance effectively.

3. The council's contribution towards improving health outcomes is outstanding. There are some excellent features. Children and young people are generally healthy. Excellent multi-disciplinary work undertaken in children's centres is improving health outcomes. Healthy eating is promoted well in schools. Teenage conception rates remain above the national average, despite having fallen at a sharper rate. Effective action is taken to promote the mental health of children and young people with strong multi-agency planning for CAMHS.

4. Children and young people appear to be safe and the safeguarding arrangements are effective. The Local Safeguarding Children Board is well established and provides strong strategic leadership with good multi-agency representation. Most children say they feel safe. Concern amongst older children about bullying, the use of weapons and gang cultures are being effectively addressed by the council. A wide range of locality based multi-agency family support and prevention services is readily accessible to parents.

Use of the Common Assessment Framework is developing well across all settings. Highly effective referral and assessment provision results in prompt, timely and high-quality assessment and intervention to safeguard children. Multi-agency partnership working is highly effective particularly for the most vulnerable children including those on the child protection register.

5. The impact of all local services in helping children and young people to enjoy their education and to achieve well is good. There are some outstanding features. Parents and carers are very well supported in helping their children to enjoy learning. Pupils make good progress at all stages of their compulsory education. There is a strong commitment to improving outcomes for vulnerable groups in particular black and minority ethnic groups. The attainment and attendance of looked after children has improved significantly. The reorganisation and improvement of provision for children with disabilities is well underway and these pupils continue to achieve very well.

6. There is very good leadership for school improvement and tackling underachievement. Primary attendance has been an area for improvement. Tackling persistent absentees remains a challenge. Permanent exclusions have risen slightly in both primary and secondary schools, particularly from black and minority ethnic groups but fixed term exclusions have reduced significantly. Development of extended schools has been highly effective with joint commissioning arrangements in place for clusters of schools. Good progress has also been made with the Building Schools for the Future Programme. An excellent variety of recreational facilities is available to children and young people with expansion of high-quality play provision.

7. The impact of all local services in helping children and young people to contribute to society is outstanding. An excellent range of services help young people to take responsibility and to develop the confidence and skills necessary in their diverse community. There are effective and inclusive consultation arrangements in place. Looked after children are well served by advocates and have opportunities to train as peer researchers and contribute to the recruitment of new staff. Their participation in reviews is high. Children with disabilities are able to contribute very well to decision making both in school councils and individually regarding transition points in their lives. An ambitious target for children and young people to contribute to their annual reviews has been achieved.

8. The impact of services in helping children and young people achieve economic wellbeing is outstanding. Family learning provision is highly successful. The council has the lowest level of young people aged 16-18 not in education, employment or training in central London. Good quality information, advice, and tracking result in a good take up of courses and jobs by 16 year olds. Good progress has been made in developing a coherent approach to 14-19 education and training through the re-organisation of the 14-19 partnership. Numbers of students taking vocational courses have significantly increased. A high number of care leavers successfully settle into jobs, training or education

and this compares very favourably with the number in similar authorities. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities continue to achieve well.

Annex D

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 annual performance assessment 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 London Borough of Wandsworth evaluates the way local services, taken together, contribute to their well-being. Together with the annual performance assessment 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, children at risk or requiring safeguarding and a few additional investigations. 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).