

9 December 2009

Ms Denise Hyde  
Executive Director for Children's Services  
North Lincolnshire Council  
Pittwood House  
Ashby Road  
Scunthorpe  
North Lincolnshire  
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Dear Ms Hyde

## Children's services annual rating

Ofsted guidance published in May 2009 explained that the annual rating would derive from a new performance profile of the quality of services and outcomes for children and young people in each local area. This profile includes findings from across Ofsted's inspection and regulation of services and settings for which the council has strategic or operational responsibilities, either alone or in partnership with others, together with data from the relevant *Every Child Matters* indicators in the new National Indicator Set (NIS).

In considering the evidence in the profile to determine the children's services rating for 2009 it has become clear that the continuing gaps in the data are significant, particularly those relating to aspects of social care and services for Looked After Children. Ofsted has decided therefore to use 2009 as a transitional year easing into the full application of the new system in 2010. As a consequence, although the performance profile remains central to Ofsted's rating, we have interpreted the performance bands with flexibility and exercised professional judgement with caution.

The annual rating derives from a four point scale:

4	Performs excellently	An organisation that significantly exceeds minimum requirements
3	Performs well	An organisation that exceeds minimum requirements
2	Performs adequately	An organisation that meets only minimum requirements
1	Performs poorly	An organisation that does not meet minimum requirements

Within each level there will be differing standards of provision. For example, a rating of 'performs excellently' does not mean all aspects of provision are perfect. Similarly, a rating of 'performs poorly' does not mean there are no adequate or even good aspects.

## Children's services rating 2009

<b>Children's services rating</b>	<b>Performs well (3)</b>
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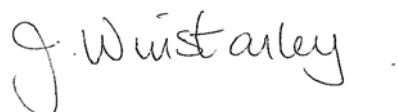
Children's services in North Lincolnshire Council perform well.

The overall effectiveness of the large majority of inspected and regulated services and settings is good or better. Performance in primary schools, special schools, pupil referral units, and the sixth form college is above that found in similar areas and nationally. However, the provision in nursery and secondary schools is not as strong, with too little that is good or better. The overall effectiveness of childminders and childcare providers is below that found nationally and in similar areas. Judgements for staying safe are good or better in the large majority of inspected services and in the very large majority of cases for enjoying and achieving.

Provision in children's homes and the local authority's adoption agency is good. The local authority's fostering agency was recently judged to be satisfactory; this is worse performance than in the previous inspection.

Performance against the very large majority of national indicators, including those for staying safe, is at least in line with that found in similar areas and nationally. For educational achievement it is at least in line with similar areas and national figures in the large majority of cases. There are a number of weaknesses in health outcomes and in achievement at the ages of 11 and 16. At the age of 11 the inequalities gaps in educational achievement for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable have widened and are too big compared to these gaps elsewhere in the country.

The children's services rating is provided for the purpose of section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The rating of local authority children's services will contribute significantly to the managing performance theme of each local authority's Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) organisational assessment and therefore to the score for each local authority overall.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliet Winstanley".

Juliet Winstanley  
Divisional Manager, CAA