

9 December 2009

Mrs Alison O'Sullivan  
Director of Children and Young People  
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Dear Mrs O'Sullivan

## Children's services annual rating

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

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

The annual rating derives from a four point scale:

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

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

## Children's services rating 2009

<b>Children's services rating</b>	<b>Performs adequately (2)</b>
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Children's services in Kirklees Metropolitan Council perform adequately.

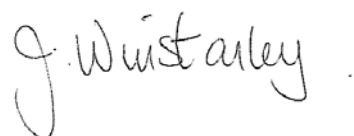
Performance in nursery and primary schools, pupil referral units, school sixth forms and sixth form colleges is above that found in similar areas and that seen nationally. Although no secondary schools are judged to be inadequate, only just over half are judged to be good or better. The overall effectiveness of childcare providers is below that found nationally and in similar areas; that for childminders is above that of similar areas. Judgements for staying safe and enjoying and achieving in inspected services are good or better in the very large majority of cases.

Provision in social care settings, including children's homes and the local authority's fostering and adoption services, is good or better. However, the private fostering arrangements are inadequate. Three serious case reviews have been carried out since December 2008, two of which were conducted adequately and one was good. The most recent of these identified weaknesses in multi-agency child protection, including the work of the local authority's children's services. These findings have contributed significantly towards determining the judgement of performs adequately for the authority's children's services. Two thirds of special schools were judged to be at least good at their last inspection, with the remaining third adequate; both pupil referral units were good.

Performance against the very large majority of indicators, including those for staying safe, is at least in line with similar areas and national figures. The very large majority of indicators for enjoying and achieving are at least in line with similar areas. There are some weaknesses in outcomes for some minority ethnic groups at the ages of both 11 and 16. The number of young people not in education, employment or training is high and rose again in 2008.

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.

Yours sincerely



Juliet Winstanley  
Divisional Manager, CAA