

9 December 2009

Mr Nigel Richardson
Director of Children and Young People's Services
Kingston-upon-Hull City Council
The Guildhall
Alfred Gelder Street
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Dear Mr Richardson

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

Children's services rating	Performs adequately (2)
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Children's services in Kingston-upon-Hull City Council perform adequately.

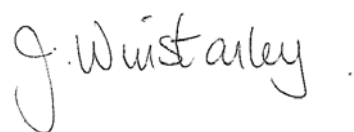
The overall effectiveness of the large majority of inspected services, settings and institutions is good or better. However, nursery provision and special schools are performing below the level found in similar areas and nationally and there is particularly weak performance in secondary schools. Of the 13 secondary schools, none are outstanding, one is judged good, two are inadequate and the remaining 10 are satisfactory. Performance in primary schools, school sixth forms, pupil referral units and sixth form colleges is above that found in similar areas and nationally. The overall effectiveness of childminders is below that found in similar areas and nationally, while for childcare providers it is broadly in line. Judgements for staying safe in inspected services are good or better in the majority of cases and in the very large majority of cases for enjoying and achieving.

The local authority's adoption and fostering services are adequate. Of the seven children's homes, five are good and two adequate. There has been one serious case review and this was judged to have been carried out adequately.

Performance against the large majority of national indicators, including those for staying safe, is at least in line with similar areas and national figures. Outcomes although not as strong for enjoying and achieving, against national figures, are improving. There are particular weaknesses in relation to health inequalities and educational achievement at the ages of 11 and 16. There is also a significant weakness in behaviour in secondary schools. However, the achievement gaps at Key Stage 4 for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable are much better than comparators, and the gap in achievement at the age of 11 in relation to those eligible for free school meals shows a very good trend of improvement and is much narrower than that found elsewhere. The proportion of children in the council's care reaching Level 4 or above in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 is greater than that of similar areas and found nationally.

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