

9 December 2009

Mrs Anne Marie Carrie
Executive Director of Family and Children's Services
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Room 229
Kensington Town Hall
Hornton Street
London W8 7NX

Dear Ms Carrie

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 excellently (4) |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|

Children's services in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea perform excellently.

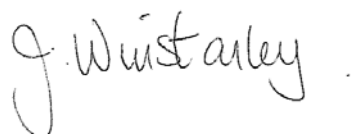
The overall effectiveness of the large majority of inspected services and settings is good or better. All provision from schools is above similar areas and provision found nationally. A very high proportion of primary schools are good or better, although a small number are satisfactory. Three secondary schools are good or better and one is satisfactory. All meet the national floor target and persistent absence is very low. One sixth form school is outstanding and two are good. General further education and tertiary provision is good and the sixth form college is outstanding. Achievement at Key Stages 2 and 4 is well above similar areas and that found nationally and continues to improve. All minority ethnic groups achieve very highly. However, permanent exclusions from school are very high. For children whose circumstances make them vulnerable, one special school is outstanding and the other is good. The pupil referral unit is only satisfactory and shows performance below similar areas and that seen nationally, partly due to a weakness in enjoying and achieving. For children in need, initial and core assessments completed to timescales are well above similar areas and that found nationally.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, achievement is in line with similar areas and that seen nationally. For the youngest children, a higher than average proportion of nurseries are good or better but a small minority are satisfactory, showing performance below similar authorities and that seen nationally. Two thirds of childcare settings are at least good but one third is only satisfactory; nevertheless, performance is above similar areas and that seen nationally. Childminders are a relative weakness. Just under half are only satisfactory, partly because of weaknesses in being healthy and staying safe. For looked after children, fostering and adoption agencies are outstanding. One children's home is outstanding but the other is unsatisfactory, showing performance below similar areas and performance nationally. This has recently been addressed and the children's home is now good. Stability for adopted children is very high, placement length for looked after children is very long and almost all cases are reviewed on time.

Performance against the very large majority of national indicators, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving, is at least in line with similar areas and broadly in line with or better than the national figure. The difference in the performance of children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable and others of the same age is consistently smaller than in similar areas and found nationally. Significant success in closing gaps is most noticeable in the Early Years Foundation Stage, for pupils eligible for free school meals at Key Stages 2 and 4, those with special educational needs at Key Stage 2 and for level 2 and 3 qualifications by the age of 19.

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

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

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, CAA