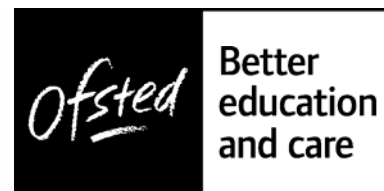


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Making Social Care  
Better for People



Ms Jean Daintith  
Executive Director, Housing and Social Services  
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea  
Kensington Town Hall  
Hornton Street  
London W8 7NX

**1 December 2005**

Dear Ms Daintith

**ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA COUNCIL'S EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S  
SOCIAL CARE SERVICES 2005**

This letter summarises the findings of the meeting held on 6 July 2005 to assess the performance of the education and social care services within your authority. We are grateful for the information that you provided to support this process and for the time made available by yourself and your colleagues to discuss relevant issues.

**Being healthy**

Outcomes in this area are good as there are several important strengths and no areas that require significant improvement. Good progress has been sustained over recent years to improve the health of looked after children (LAC). There are strong partnerships with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and other agencies, which have contributed to improvements in the arrangements of health provision for all children.

The authority has developed effective strategies with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to emphasise health promotion and intervention. For example, a CAMHS nurse works to good effect with the Youth Offending Team to identify mental health problems and substance misuse concerns.

Within its education remit the council is developing appropriately challenging targets in relation to the healthy schools programme. Young people benefit from a strong Connexions service that works as part of the Central London Connexion partnership to provide timely and effective support and guidance on a wide range of health related matters, particularly sexual health. Connexions Personal Advisers are present both in the educational settings and as members of multi-disciplinary teams.

Young carers are well supported especially through a multi-agency steering group that benefits from direct input from young carers. Workers within adult services work successfully with children with disabilities and their representatives to enable a smooth transition to adult service provision. This provision is carefully planned at both a strategic and an individual level. Those who use the service have indicated that it works well.

## **Staying safe**

Outcomes in this area are generally good, and there have been improvements in some areas. The percentage of core and initial assessments completed within the required timeframes has improved. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are effectively promoted within school settings. Schools have designated staff for child protection. The training needs for all staff with a responsibility for child protection are reviewed annually.

Looked after children and young people are involved in their own reviews and are able to express their views about their progress and placements. The authority has made exemplary progress in completing reviews for looked after children so that all are now completed within time limits. The authority has suitable policies in place to ensure the welfare of both young carers and children and young people with disabilities.

However, further monitoring is required of outcomes that relate to looked after children in foster placements or placed for adoption. The percentage of looked after children placed for adoption within twelve months of their best interest decision has decreased, although the overall percentage placed for adoption had increased in the same period. The timeliness of progressing action following best interest decisions should be monitored and any unnecessary delays identified and addressed. Looked after children in foster placements or placed for adoption have also decreased as have the numbers of looked after children adopted.

Although the authority has training plans that will impact to reduce the shortfall, only 93% of looked after children currently had a qualified social worker. Young people without a qualified social worker are mostly from minority ethnic groups and are unaccompanied asylum seeking minors (UASM). They are receiving support that meets diversity issues well, with staff recruited who speak their first language.

Child protection processes work well; although re-registrations based on small numbers appear low, other key parts of the process operate effectively and the outcomes for individual children have been good. Since small numbers are involved, child protection performance requires ongoing routine monitoring to ensure that the best interests of individual children within the small numbers involved, continue to be well served.

## Enjoying and achieving

Outcomes in this area are very good. Most children and young people achieve high standards. Staying on rates are high and value added measures show that most young people make good progress throughout their time in school. Every school in the borough reaches its key targets and there are no schools in formal categories of concern. These high standards have been achieved despite high levels of pupil mobility and the challenge of teaching English to over a quarter of pupils who are in the earliest stages of learning the language when they first come to school.

The overall quality of early years provision is good and contributes significantly to the secure start most children make when they enter school. At the end of Key Stage 1 children's achievements reach the national averages in each of the subjects that are assessed. Differences in attainment in numeracy and literacy are not marked though standards in reading are not as high as in other areas. Both boys and girls make good progress. Children's progress in Key Stage 2 is particularly impressive. Schools are well supported by the authority and there is strong evidence that the National Primary Strategy is having a positive impact on the way subjects are taught. Having raised standards in the core subjects in recent years many schools recognise that it is through broadening and enriching the curriculum that standards will continue to improve.

In Key Stages 3 and 4 standards continue to improve and in 2004 GCSE results were at a record high. At age 16, girls are achieving better than boys by a similar margin to that found nationally. However a significant minority of young people, one in twenty, leave school with no GCSE passes. As the self assessment report acknowledges, the pattern of high achievement extends to most, though not yet all, children of black and minority ethnic heritage.

Within the generally consistent pattern of high attainment the authority is well aware of some under achievement by ethnic minority groups, frequently a problem for particular schools which are affected by mobility in and out of the borough. Although numbers are small, effective systems are in place to address such issues as they arise. Educational outcomes for looked after children show an improving trend and the authority has committed significant resources to ensure progress is sustained.

Pupil attendance at school is satisfactory overall and continues to improve year on year. In primary schools attendance rates are in line with the national average but below most similar authorities. In secondary schools the picture is better with rates above the national average and at least in line with similar authorities. Good progress is being made in reducing unauthorised absences. Support for schools with an above average number of unauthorised absences is effective. Behaviour in schools is typically very good.

Provision of secondary school places is unsatisfactory when viewed from the council's perspective. Each of the secondary schools is heavily over subscribed and at the end of Key Stage 2 some 40% of pupils continue their education out of borough while the borough accepts a similar number of young people from across London.

Partnership working to address common problems is good. Children who need a statement for special educational needs (SEN) are well supported and the management of the statementing process is efficient. Over the last three years the council's provision of youth and community facilities has been restructured and improved. Highly effective Connexions and youth service provision is enabling increasing numbers of young people to take part in constructive and enjoyable activities that lead to accreditation in many instances. Importantly these activities are often attended by some of the boroughs most hard to reach and most vulnerable young people.

### **Making a positive contribution**

Outcomes in this area are also good. Children and young people are given very good support in managing changes in their lives. While the council has a well judged strategy to guide and support all children and young people the support and guidance provided to those most vulnerable to having difficulties managing change in their lives, is impressive. The opportunities provided by Central London Connexions and the local youth service are well used and there are effective strategies in place to help children and young people with disabilities and special educational needs to access provision.

On most matters of importance very good progress is being made towards involving young people. They are widely consulted and many can express their views through a range of fora. These opportunities include child protection conferences, the children and young people's complaints procedure, the youth forum, school councils and the Youth Parliament. Many children are involved in strategic decision making by helping to shape priorities.

The support provided for vulnerable groups is very good and reflects some effective multi agency work. Young people in SEN settings respond impressively.

The rate of youth crime is low in relation to London boroughs but above the national average.

### **Achieving economic well-being**

Outcomes in this area are very good. The quality of education provided for 14-19 year-olds is generally good and those young people from the borough who attend local provision achieve high standards. The proportion of young people progressing to higher education and training is high. The authority has made a strong contribution to shaping the most important priorities for the 14-19 strategy. There is good partnership

working with the local Learning and Skills Council and with schools though efforts to widen participation in education and training among some minority groups have been unsuccessful and many black and minority ethnic young people continue to achieve less well than their peers.

Education, employment and training for looked after children has improved significantly in recent years Strong support is being provided for care leavers which is sensitively integrated with Connexions provision.

## SUMMARY

Strengths	Areas for Improvement
<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improvements have been made and maintained to support the health of looked after children (LAC)</li> <li>partnerships with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and other agencies</li> <li>support for young carers.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no issues.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the number of core and initial assessments completed within the required timeframes has improved</li> <li>there is within education strengths relating to pupils' care, welfare, health and safety.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>only 93.2% of LAC had a qualified social worker – numbers of those without were UASMs</li> <li>looked after children in foster placements or placed for adoption have decreased</li> <li>the numbers of LAC adopted have decreased</li> <li>the plans for looked after children who are fostered or placed for adoption need to be achieved in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>high achievement in all key stages</li> <li>good value added by the end of each key stage</li> <li>no schools in a formal category of concern</li> <li>partnership working in managing SEN statements.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no issues.</li> </ul>

<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involvement of children and young people in shaping provision</li> <li>• support and guidance for the most vulnerable children and young people.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no issues.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of the 14-19 strategy</li> <li>• the high standards achieved by most young people</li> <li>• good partnership working.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no issues.</li> </ul>

## Service management

Strengths outweigh weaknesses in all aspects of service management. The authority has a strong capacity to sustain its performance and to further improve in identified priority areas. There are clear reporting pathways to both scrutiny and elected members committee.

The authority is clear about its strengths and places areas for improvement within the context of outcomes for children and young people. There are strategies in place to set appropriate actions for improvements and service delivery. There is evidence of effective monitoring within the authority itself and with other partners at all levels.

The authority makes a substantial investment in the development of its workforce and there has been action to recruit and retain staff to ensure the correct skill mix for children's services.

Both education and children's social services have demonstrated a capacity to improve by delivering on previously identified improvements needed, either by internal service monitoring and reviews or by external inspection and assessment. However the scope for further delivery of social care improvement will need to be addressed.

Senior managers have led a focused programme of action on performance with front line managers, which have improved monitoring on performance.

## Areas for exploration in the joint area review

### Staying safe

*Action is taken to avoid children and young people having to be looked after:*

- numbers of looked after children in foster placements or placed for adoption have decreased
- the plans for looked after children who are fostered or placed for adoption need to be achieved in a timely manner.

*Looked after children live in safe environments and are protected from abuse and exploitation:*

- the support received from qualified social workers and others for young people looked after who are unaccompanied asylum seeking minors.

### Final judgements

Please see your final annual performance assessment judgements attached at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely



**FLO HADLEY**

Divisional Manager  
Office for Standards in Education



**JONATHAN PHILLIPS**

Director – Quality, Performance and Methods  
Commission for Social Care Inspection

**Cc: Jacky Griffin, Executive Director of Education, Libraries and Arts**

## APA final judgements 2005: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Areas for judgement	Final judgements <sup>1</sup>
The contribution of <b><i>the local authority's social care services</i></b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	3
The contribution of <b><i>local authority's education services</i></b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	4
The contribution of <b><i>the local authority's children's services</i></b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	4
The council's overall capacity to improve its services for children and young people	4

### 1

Grade	Service descriptors	Capacity to improve descriptors
4	A service that delivers well above minimum requirements for users	Very good
3	A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users	Good/promising
2	A service that delivers only minimum requirements for users	Adequate
1	A service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users	Inadequate