

9 December 2009

Mr Steve Benyon
Director of Children's Services
Isle of Wight Council
County Hall
High Street
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 1UD

Dear Mr Benyon

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

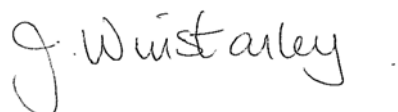
Children's services rating	Performs adequately (2)
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Children's services in Isle of Wight Council perform adequately.

The overall effectiveness of the majority of inspected services and settings is good or better, however performance in education and social care is mixed. Most children get off to a good start in life. A high proportion of childminder, childcare and nursery provision is good or better and is above the average found in similar areas and that found nationally. The performance of the island's schools is mixed. Primary schools are mostly good. While none are inadequate, too many secondary schools are no better than satisfactory. In contrast, special schools and pupil referral units are all good. Post-16 provision is mixed. The General Further Education College is outstanding. Three of the six school sixth forms are only satisfactory and provision overall is not as good as the average found in similar areas and that seen nationally. The fostering and adoption services are satisfactory. The serious case review completed in 2009 was inadequate.

Performance against the large majority of national indicators, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving, is in line with or above similar areas and the national figures. However, the council does not perform well in all areas. Standards are low in primary and secondary schools and not improving fast enough. The difference in outcomes between the majority of children and young people and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable is too wide. Staying safe indicators show areas of weak performance, including the proportion of assessments and reviews completed on time for children in need and those in need of protection.

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