

9 December 2009

Mr Philip Hygate
Director of Children's Services
Council of the Isles of Scilly
Town Hall
St Marys
Isles of Scilly
TR21 0LY

Dear Mr Hygate

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 the Council of the Isles of Scilly perform adequately.

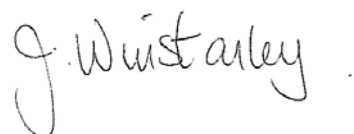
The joint area review in 2007 judged provision to be mainly good, but with the very important exception of safeguarding, which was inadequate. Since then, provision to protect children at serious risk of harm or neglect, has been substantially strengthened from the low 2007 baseline. Two social work posts have been established and professional support purchased from another authority.

The overall effectiveness of a large majority of inspected services and settings, which are mainly childcare providers, is good or better. The single school is outstanding. However, the local authority's adoption agency is only adequate. The very large majority of inspected services and settings make a good or better contribution to keeping children and young people safe and helping them to achieve educationally.

In terms of performance indicators, the large majority of the local authority's figures are at least in line with both the similar area and national averages. The same applies to those indicators in the staying safe and enjoying and achieving groupings, when compared with the similar area average. However, a very large majority of those indicators is at least in line with the national average and pupil performance in tests and exams is a particular strength. For the one indicator for which a figure is available which measures the gap in outcomes for children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable, the gap widened between the current year and the last.

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