

9 December 2009

Mr Andrew Ireland
Group Director for Children and Young People
London Borough of Havering
Town Hall
Main Road
Romford
Essex
RM1 3BD

Dear Mr Ireland

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 well (3)
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Children's services in the London Borough of Havering perform well.

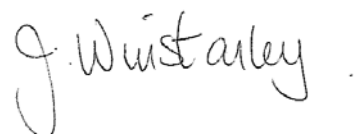
A higher than average proportion of childcare settings, school sixth forms and special schools are good or outstanding and only a small proportion of provision has been judged to be inadequate. Post-16 provision in the borough is outstanding in half of school sixth forms and good in the rest. The sixth form college and the further education college are also good. The proportion of good childminders, nurseries, primary and secondary schools is broadly average.

Specialist provision and services for children and young people whose circumstances make them more vulnerable are mostly good. Local authority fostering and adoption agencies are good, and its private fostering arrangements are adequate. The proportion of good pupil referral units in the borough is broadly average and one is inadequate. Pupil referral units do not do as well as similar areas in making a good contribution to children and young people being healthy, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

Performance against a very large majority of national indicators, including staying safe and enjoying and achieving, is in line with similar areas and the national figures. However, the difference in performance of children and young people whose circumstances make them more vulnerable is too wide. Pupils who come from lower income families achieve very well in comparison to their peers both in the borough and nationally when they are aged 11. This good performance does not continue when they are aged 16, when the achievement gap with their peers is larger than in similar areas and nationally. Pupils who are identified as having special educational needs do not achieve well when they are aged 11 or 16. Consequently, the achievement gap with their peers is much larger than in similar areas and nationally for 11-year-olds, larger than average for 16-year-olds and is not reducing for either group. The achievement of level 2 qualifications by young people from lower income families is similar to the national picture. However, less than average achieve level 3 qualifications and progress to higher education when they are aged 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