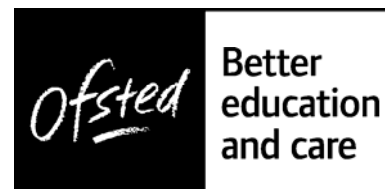


Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

T 08456-404045  
Email: [edhelpline@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:edhelpline@ofsted.gov.uk)



Making Social Care  
Better for People



John Coughlan  
Director of Children's Services  
Hampshire County Council  
The Castle  
Winchester  
SO23 8UG

**1 December 2005**

Dear Mr Coughlan

## **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY 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, which 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. The council is building on its sound record of working collaboratively with key partners and other agencies to promote healthy lifestyles and has good strategies for bringing about further improvement. Teenaged pregnancies are declining and the council overall is ahead of government targets. Nevertheless the county has identified the need to strengthen procedures for identifying vulnerable groups and intervening early to accelerate the rate of reduction in particular geographical areas where progress is slower or where targets are not being met.

The proportion of schools engaged in the Healthy Schools Programme is higher than the national average and schools are making good progress in achieving level three status. Participation in sport is very good in special schools and mostly good or very good in secondary schools. It was unsatisfactory in only one of the ninety nine recently inspected primary schools. The county is implementing a range of strategies to improve participation further, both during and outside school hours, and all schools will have links with specialist sports colleges. As a result of the county's strategy, the proportion of children cycling or walking to school is increasing.

Health needs of looked after children are met effectively by a range of professionals. Improvements in the care of children's health were reported in recent inspections of children's homes managed by the council. The proportion of children looked after by

the council, who have regular health assessments and dental treatment has improved considerably and is now above that of comparator authorities. Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) provide comprehensive support to looked after children requiring help or advice. Most looked after children have good and timely access to a range of support services, including Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHS) when they require help or advice.

Initiatives to enhance the health of minority groups are having an impact. Family group conferences for example, are used effectively to arrange support for young carers to minimise the effect of their caring responsibilities on their physical and emotional development and well being. Traveller education welfare officers and gypsy liaison officers work together to provide advice on health matters. The ethnic minority advisory service provides guidance and training on culturally diverse healthy food.

In partnership with health services, the council has identified the need to improve access to speech and language therapy services. The Hampshire CAHMS Pathfinder Trust continues to improve its services. Numbers of CAHMS workers based in partner agencies across the county has increased slightly, improving access to existing services and supporting the development of new initiatives.

## **Staying safe**

Outcomes in this area are satisfactory. Council staff are trained to identify and manage risks and the council has a range of policies to support staff in providing a safe environment. The implementation of policies is monitored regularly and remedial action is taken should procedures be breached. All recently inspected primary and special schools comply with the statutory requirements of the Local Area Child Protection Committee. Although only one of the eleven recently inspected secondary schools was found not to comply, the county is implementing a comprehensive training programme for all school staff and governors across all school sectors.

Inspections indicate that most schools ensure freedom from bullying, racism and other forms of harassment and the county now provides additional advice and support to help them do so. Overall, the council provides good support to schools to promote safety. Children's homes tackle bullying well and appropriate advice and support is provided to help staff deal with incidences quickly when they occur.

Agencies are collaborating well to safeguard children. Initiatives such as the road safety education programme and the use of family group conferences by both social care and education services are promoting positive outcomes for children and young people. A number of schemes provide support to enable children and young people to live at home and remain safe. These include the joint exceptional needs initiative for children with very severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviours to support intensive interventions at home and at school.

The Area Child Protection Committee functions well and work is underway to set up an effective Safeguarding Board. Case-auditing is used very effectively to improve practice as are serious case reviews.

In response to issues raised in last year's performance assessment, some work has been undertaken to ensure that the needs of the black and minority ethnic people are identified and services developed to meet them. The council recognises that there is further work to be done as was highlighted through a serious case review and a case file auditing exercise.

The care management system has improved and the proportion of assessments (initial and core) and reviews (statutory for looked after children and Child Protection (CP)) completed within timescales has improved. However, as evidenced by the re-referral rate, there is variability in the quality of the assessments with some not reaching an appropriate standard. Performance indicators for CP work are good but the council recognises that there are inequalities in practice relating to CP management such as initial conferences and the quality of some CP practice across the county. Appropriate work is ongoing which addresses these issues.

The council has a good record of placing children in foster places, and the percentage of young people looked after in foster placements or placed for adoption is good. Children's homes are being refurbished and outmoded respite facilities for children with severe disabilities and/or challenging behaviour are being replaced. The council has recognised the need for further robust action to ensure sufficient placement choice and improved placement stability and there has been some improvement during the last twelve months. Choice has been increased through an increase in placements being made under family and friends provision and through kinship care. The number of children placed for adoption has also increased and a pilot scheme involving the employment of specialist foster carers to support ten young people is also about to be implemented. Despite these improvements, lack of choice continues to be an area of concern because it is not always possible to ensure that there is a good match between the needs of the child and the abilities of the carers to meet these, which could impact on the safety of children. The council recognises that in house fostering services are severely limited, such that the ability to match children with the most suitable carer is not routinely possible. The council is also planning to review and strengthen private fostering arrangements.

## **Enjoying and achieving**

Outcomes for children and young people in this area are good. The authority's analysis of school performance and implementation of strategies for improvement is effective. Early years places are not expanding at the same rate as England overall but there is no indication of demand not being met. The overall quality of child care and nursery

education is generally good although a minority of multiple day care types have significant weaknesses with some unsatisfactory teaching. Local development teams follow well established procedure for supporting early years' settings. Achievements at Key Stage 1 are very good and progress between Key Stage 1 and 2 is in line with the national average. Pupils' achievements at Key Stage 3 are in line with similar councils and above the national average. At Key Stage 4, results have continued to improve and are above the national average and slightly above the average for similar councils. Although value added from Key Stage 3 to 4 is greater than that for most comparator councils, the authority has identified that too many children in Hampshire secondary schools do not make the progress they should. The authority is not meeting all its challenging PSA targets. Where the council has provided specifically targeted support to schools, the rate of improvement has been significantly greater than for the remainder of the county. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds in Hampshire schools is low. Although their overall performance matches national trends, a greater proportion of pupils from some of these groups underachieve than from the population at large. The performance of black and minority ethnic pupils is now monitored carefully by individual schools and support is provided centrally by the council where it is required. Pupils' attitudes are generally at least good and schools provide opportunities for enrichment that are at least satisfactory and in the majority of schools good or very good. Support for learning outside the school day is also strong.

There is only one school in special measures and two with serious weaknesses out of 540 schools in the county as a whole. School self-evaluation procedures are used well to identify areas for improvement. Support provided for school improvement is effective and is targeted well to the areas of greatest need. Good use of data is helping schools identify specific groups of underachieving pupils.

Attendance figures have shown an upward trend for the last three years across both primary and secondary phases, in line with the national trend. Unauthorised absences in secondary schools continue to be higher than statistical neighbours. The number of permanent exclusions from primary schools is very small. Permanent exclusions from secondary schools are falling but the proportion remains higher than statistical neighbours. The rate of exclusion of pupils with special educational needs is below that for similar councils. The proportion of excluded pupils who receive alternative tuition for longer than 12 months is the same as the national average but higher than the average for similar areas. Most of these excluded pupils are aged 14-16 however and follow a range of appropriate alternative programmes that include study at local colleges.

The local authority has clear strategies for improvement and for supporting vulnerable groups. Achievements of looked after children generally exceed those in other south eastern authorities and are in line with similar authorities. Attendance of children looked after by the council is not improving but support provided is now more coherent. Permanent exclusions of looked after children are challenged by the council

to ensure that permanent exclusion is only exercised as the option of last choice. The quality of the personal education plans, to which different agencies contribute, continues to be variable with some being unsatisfactory. The effectiveness of personal education plans in improving outcomes for young people is not monitored closely enough.

The authority has revised policies for pupils with special educational needs and is focusing on meeting individual pupil needs without automatically resorting to statements. A slightly higher than average, but reducing, proportion of 5-15 year-olds attend special schools. The standards achieved by pupils in these schools are generally good and often better.

### **Making a positive contribution**

Outcomes in this area are good. There is some strong multi-agency work in relation to youth offending and the national targets for reduction in car crime, burglary of peoples' homes and the reconviction of young offenders have been exceeded. The target for the number of final warnings has been surpassed in South West Hampshire but there are other geographical areas and vulnerable groups such as looked after children where progress has been slower. Strategies and implementation plans such as the restorative justice plan are now being put in place to concentrate effort in areas of greatest need.

The majority of children and young people are given good support in managing changes in their lives, such as moves to new schools and have good access to advice and counselling when needed. Although the proportion of looked after children who contribute to their reviews remains at a satisfactory level and the number of reviews completed within the timescales has increased, some young people are not sufficiently involved in the process. Children and young people with disabilities in residential settings are being helped to contribute to decisions about their lives. However, not all young people have robust personal care plans to which they have contributed on transition to adult services. The authority is strengthening support for vulnerable children and young people. Innovative projects to support children who are looked after are beginning to have an impact, for example schemes to support children who have to move to a new school following a change of care placement. The council has recognised the contribution the youth service is making in its work with 'hard to reach' children and young people and is increasing funding to expand outreach and detached work and collaboration with the youth offending team.

Spiritual, moral and cultural development of children is attended to well or very well by most schools and was unsatisfactory in only one of a hundred and fifteen recently inspected schools. Collaborative working in the areas of theatre and music is encouraging children and young people to develop their skills and abilities and contribute more widely to their local communities. In partnership with other agencies, the council has established a number of projects and initiatives to encourage children

and young people to participate in developing services and supporting the community. A participation officer has been appointed to facilitate communication. Hampshire is in the vanguard in the use of direct payments schemes, which enable some families with disabled children to manage their own services.

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

Outcomes in this area are good. The county is unusual in that sixth form and further education colleges provide the majority of 16-19 education and training. These colleges perform well and some are very high achieving. A range of strategies has been developed which are having an impact on participation in post-16 education and training. Progression rates are good and the proportion of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is low and declining. The proportion of young mothers in education, training or employment is low. The council and its partners are targeting support at underachieving or disaffected young people as well as other groups who are at risk of not progressing to education or training. Care leavers receive good advice and support and the proportion of care leavers in employment, education or training at age 19 has improved considerably and is good. A 14-19 pathfinder project has focused on improving 14-19 education opportunities in rural areas. A clear strategy for 14-19 education and training has been drawn up in partnership with the local Learning and Skills Council following detailed analysis of needs and wide ranging consultation. Its impact can be seen in the joint time tables produced by consortia of schools to broaden 14-16 curriculum opportunities and in the establishment of skill centres in collaboration with colleges to improve access to vocational programmes in specific geographical areas.

### **SUMMARY**

The main strengths and areas for improvement are summarised below and were identified by the authority in the self-evaluation completed prior to the annual performance assessment.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for improvement</b>
<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• looked after children receive a good and improving service</li> <li>• examples of good joint working with partner agencies</li> <li>• school participation in the healthy schools programme</li> <li>• special schools participation in sport.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further improvement in targeting of teenage pregnancy services to most needy areas</li> <li>• development of indicators to measure the impact of initiatives to promote health.</li> </ul>

<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective case auditing</li> <li>• schemes that divert children and young people from stranger fostering and residential placements</li> <li>• support for schools to promote safety.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• timeliness and quality of initial assessment to decrease re-referrals</li> <li>• the timeliness and quality of child protection reviews</li> <li>• use of children (including disabled children) and young people’s contribution to reviews</li> <li>• the range of choice and long term stability provided through the placement strategy.</li> <li>• staff’s awareness and practice in relation to black and minority ethnic issues.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overall achievements at all key stages</li> <li>• quality of learning overall across all sectors</li> <li>• use of data and analysis of school performance</li> <li>• multi-disciplinary strategy to support looked after children in education.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• achievements of targeted groups in specific schools</li> <li>• achievements of some BME children and young people and children looked after by the council</li> <li>• unauthorised absences in secondary schools.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• direct payments</li> <li>• work with young offenders.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further reductions in offending rates in general and in looked after children population</li> <li>• further support for young carers</li> <li>• looked after children contributions to their reviews and life plans.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategies and actions to support looked after children</li> <li>• strategies and actions to support SEN</li> <li>• partnership working with connexions to reduce NEET</li> <li>• strategies to raise economic awareness in schools.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proportion of young mothers in education, training or employment</li> <li>• monitoring the impact of the 14-19 strategy.</li> </ul>

## **Service management**

The council has a history of strong political leadership and is developing a new democratic framework that places greater emphasis on scrutiny and the role of local elected members in representing their local areas to support the implementation of the Children Act 2004.

The council is collaborating well with key partners and relationships with Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), voluntary agencies and District Councils continue to improve. Preparatory work to increase the council's understanding of local needs has been well executed and will facilitate the implementation of local multi-agency working and planning in line with the requirements of the Children Act 2004. Priorities are clearly set in a variety of documents and the overall council strategy includes a number of objectives that are shared with other organisations. These have been developed through effective use of data and needs analysis and they will be the basis of the Children and Young People's Plan. The council has recognised the need to disaggregate data to the local level to promote discussions with schools and other local partners. The work underway will facilitate the mapping of services provided by different partners and should lead to more efficient and effective services. Young people, their families and small local organisations are contributing to the process.

The council recognises that their capacity to implement changes and remain cost effective, whilst bring about improvement where there are recognised weaknesses and hit their local priority targets, faces a number of challenges. A number of strategies have been established to manage the necessary changes. A spend to save initiative has, for example, helped control pressures on the home to school transport budget and the strategy to reduce the number of out of county placements for children with special educational needs has both improved their quality of life and led to on-going savings. Best value principles are employed in service planning throughout the council and within social services there has been a realignment of spend within existing budgets. Use has been made of the freedoms and flexibilities afforded to county councils to put money into front line services where they are required. The children's social care department has experienced difficulties recruiting and retaining staff over the last two years, which has had an effect on the quality of practice in those teams where there were staff shortages. Action taken by the council is having an impact and a net increase of nine qualified social workers over the past twelve months is resulting in improved outcomes. There are, however, still pockets of acute staff shortages which are exacerbated by the council's relatively low establishment in comparison with similar shire authorities. The proportion of unfilled teacher vacancies is in line with similar areas and the council is implementing a range of effective initiatives to attract teachers to the area. The proportion of both primary and secondary schools with schools with more than 25% surplus places is below that of similar authorities. Opportunities for reducing surplus places further and for reorganising schools are being reviewed as part of the strategy for establishing children's centres.



The county has a proven record for effective performance management which is beginning to be used effectively to demonstrate improving outcomes for children and young people. Within social care the implementation of the new IT system is providing managers better and timelier information on which to manage. Data for monitoring and challenging the performance of schools is good.

## **Areas for exploration in the joint area review**

### **Being healthy**

*Healthy life-styles are promoted for children and young people:*

- implementation of strategies to improve children's health by schools and the development of indicators to measure the impact of these
- the impact of the strategies employed to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies in areas where these are high.

### **Staying safe**

*Children and young people are provided with a safe environment:*

- the impact and effectiveness of the council's measures to improve practice in relation to the BME population
- the impact and effectiveness of the council's measures to improve the timeliness and quality of child protection practices.

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

- the impact and effectiveness of the council's measures to improve placement choice and long term stability.

### **Enjoying and achieving**

*Children and young people are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and to achieve highly:*

- impact of strategies to improve the achievement of some BME, looked after children and disadvantaged pupils
- unauthorised absences.

## **Making a positive contribution**

*Children and young people, particularly those from vulnerable groups, are supported in managing changes and responding to challenges in their lives:*

- impact of strategies to support young carers.

*Children and young people who are looked after are helped to make a positive contribution:*

- impact of strategies to reduce offending rates in the looked after children population
- impact and effectiveness of the council's measures to enable children and young people to contribute to their reviews, life plans and the development of services.

## **Achieving economic well-being**

*Action is taken to ensure that 14-19 education and training is planned and delivered in a coordinated way, and to ensure that education and training (14-16) is of a good quality:*

- impact of the 14-19 strategy on equality of access to 14-16 curriculum.

## **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

## APA final judgements 2005: Hampshire County Council

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

---

### 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