

9 December 2009

Ms Jenny Goodall
Director of Community and Children's Services
City of London Corporation
PO BOX 270
Guildhall
London
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Dear Ms Goodall

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 Excellently (4)
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Children's services in the City of London Corporation perform excellently.

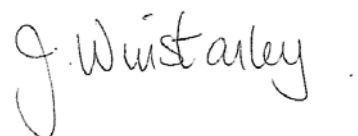
The overall effectiveness of the very large majority of inspected services and settings is good or better. All provision for children before they start school and at school is above similar areas and that found nationally. The City's combined nursery and primary school is outstanding. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 2, achievement is well above similar areas and that seen nationally, although the attainment of Asian pupils is in line with the national average and below similar authorities at age 11. Most childcare is good or better and a very small amount is satisfactory. Two thirds of childminders are good but one third are satisfactory, in part because of a relative weakness in being healthy. Almost all young people are in education, training or employment after the age of 16 and achievement of level 2 and 3 qualifications is well above similar areas and that found nationally.

The joint area review in 2007 judged provision for looked after children and for safeguarding to be outstanding. For looked after children, private fostering arrangements are good but the adoption agency is only satisfactory and shows performance below similar areas and that seen nationally, due in part to adequate provision for staying safe. All looked after children cases are reviewed to timescale. Although care leavers in education, employment or training and in suitable accommodation show significant reduction, numbers are very small. For children in need, all initial and core assessments are completed to timescales, showing performance well above similar areas and that found nationally. Of young people involved in the Youth Justice System, a greater proportion are sentenced to custody than nationally, although the proportion is in line with similar areas. The proportion of young offenders engaged in suitable education, employment or training is greater than in similar areas, although in line with the national average.

Performance against the very large majority of national indicators, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving, is at least in line with similar areas and the large majority are above the national figure. The difference in the performance of children whose circumstances make them vulnerable and others of the same age is much smaller than in similar areas and that found nationally in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for pupils eligible for free school meals at Key Stage 2.

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 "Juliet Winstanley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a period at the end.

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, CAA