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Making Social Care
Better for People



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Dear Ms Goodall

2006 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION

This letter summarises the findings of the 2006 annual performance assessment (APA) process for your local 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.

Summary

Areas for judgement	Grade awarded¹
The contribution of <i>the local authority's children's services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	3
The council's overall <i>capacity to improve</i> its services for children and young people	4
The contribution of <i>the local authority's social care services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	4

1

Grade	Service descriptors	Capacity to improve descriptors
4	A service that delivers well above minimum requirements for users	Excellent / outstanding
3	A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users	Good
2	A service that delivers only minimum requirements for users	Adequate
1	A service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users	Inadequate

The City of London Corporation delivers a good service for children and young people. Well integrated services demonstrate an effective multi-agency, team-based approach which suits the context of the authority very well. The Cass Child and Family Centre provides an appropriate focus for the provision of services for families and young people. Looked after children and care leavers are particularly well provided for and supported. The authority's strategy of early identification and prevention across a number of services is proving particularly effective. The Corporation does not maintain any secondary schools, therefore all students of secondary school age attend schools and academies in neighbouring boroughs. The only maintained primary school is well supported and provides an effective education for pupils who make good progress.

There is a high level of consultation with children and young people and the authority is committed to ensuring the views of young people are taken into account when formulating and reviewing policy and practice. The new management structure has a clear set of priorities, based on an analysis of need and wide consultation and is very well placed to ensure continuing improvement.

Being healthy

The authority makes a very good contribution towards improving the health of children and young adults in the area. The authority has invested in a wide range of multi-agency family support services, including health promotion. Sir John Cass's School is central to the delivery of healthy living outcomes for young children and provides good quality school meals. The Children and Family Centre is effective in connecting young families to appropriate services for advice on health issues. Partnership initiatives provide a wide range of sports opportunities for children and young people. A school-based initiative to monitor health outcomes resulting from these opportunities is especially innovative. All looked after children received annual health and dental checks, with particular support being given to unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people to have access to health and other services effectively. There is evidence of good progress towards a comprehensive mental health service for children, to which referrals are prompt. Collaboration with the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) is well established. Current work to disaggregate health data for the authority reflects the intention to identify local health outcomes more reliably in order to produce a specific City of London health strategy. The authority expects to use the strategy to increase the effectiveness of healthy living interventions for children and young people.

Staying safe

The contribution the authority makes to ensuring the safety of children and young people is very good. The well established Local Safeguarding Board is shared with a neighbouring authority and a wide range of stakeholders participate. Inspection of Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School confirmed that safeguarding arrangements at the school were fully in place with all staff suitably trained. There is an extensive range of joint services to support all families, including those with children in need. Multi-agency initiatives successfully promote awareness of risks to safety to both children

and carers. This includes advice on fire safety, road safety and drugs. The authority's initiatives and activities demonstrate a significant investment in early identification and prevention of risks to children and young people. Relatively high levels of referral and core assessments result in a low level of child protection activity. There were no children on the Child Protection Register, and only two looked after children from City resident families. The majority of looked after children are asylum seeking young people placed together with one provider in Peterborough and are well supported by their allocated social workers. However, further consideration needs to be given to the individual needs of the young asylum seekers. An independent consultation exercise has led to the development of improved support for those suffering loss and trauma. Most reviews of looked after children are timely. Of 21 looked after children, 19 reviews were on time, one was one day late and one two days late. However, in view of the small number of looked after children compliance should be complete. Good use is made of direct payments by carers of children with disabilities and transitions to adult services are well planned. The authority is aware of the need to improve systems for monitoring the impact of a wide range of initiatives especially preventative services.

Enjoying and achieving

The authority makes a good contribution to ensuring children and young people achieve well at school and enjoy their education. The Cass Child and Family Centre, attached to the primary school, provides a range of integrated services which supports children and their families, and enables learners to make particularly good progress. Overall, provision and progress in the Foundation Stage are good. The school gives a high priority to personal development and care arrangements for all its children, which helps them to enjoy their time at school very much.

The recent Ofsted inspection judged standards in Key Stage 1 as average overall. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress and attain standards which are in line with the national average in mathematics, above in English and exceptionally high in science. Because of good teaching and good support, pupils from minority ethnic groups generally make good progress, although in 2005 the small number of Black African pupils made less progress than other groups. Sir John Cass's School has beacon status for support for minority ethnic achievement. The school and authority provides good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. As a result these pupils make good progress. Attendance has risen steadily and is good. Although the authority does not maintain educational provision beyond primary school age the small number of looked after children receive particularly good support. All are in school or college and their attendance is good. There is good communication with Peterborough Regional College and student achievement in higher and further education is good. The authority currently holds limited data on the progress of students of secondary school age. The council is aware of the difficulties inherent in having no secondary school provision, and has a strategic vision to improve its management functions in this respect, particularly in the light of its involvement with the City Academies programme

Making a positive contribution

Performance in this outcome area is very good and children and young people are well prepared for active citizenship. The contribution pupils at Sir John Cass's Primary School make to the community is outstanding. They develop stable, positive relationships and display a high level of social awareness. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is outstanding. The school has an active school council and young people have a number of opportunities within the City to contribute to decision making and play a part as active citizens. The third Youth Democracy event in August 2005 was attended by over 100 children and young people. As part of this event, a council Member and Chief Officers participated in a question and answer session. The recently established City Youth Forum gives young people the opportunity to contribute to the development and review of services and strategies such as the Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP). Vulnerable children and young people have good opportunities to contribute to decisions that affect their lives and are actively involved in managing the changes in their circumstances. A good range of multi agency work ensures effective early identification and intervention to reduce anti-social and offending behaviour, which remains low. There was only one referral to the Young Offenders Team (YOT) in the reporting year 2005 to 2006. As a result, there are currently no young people referred to the YOT and no young people with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) or Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs). The Youth Service is pro-active and provides very good advice, information and guidance to young people including those living just outside the authority's borders.

Achieving economic well-being

The authority makes a good contribution to the economic well-being of children and young people. At Sir John Cass's School, the development of workplace and other skills relevant to promoting pupils' future economic well-being is outstanding. This is because standards and achievement are good and pupils co-operate well and share resources willingly. Young people have access to an improving range of services through Connexions, including additional access points and a Connexions personal advisor to provide information, advice and guidance. The integration of a number of related services for young people has improved communication and early intervention. This has resulted in tailored provision which better meets the needs of young people.

Looked after children and care leavers receive very good support and guidance until the age of 21 in order to promote their economic well-being. Almost all care leavers are in employment, education, or training and the proportion of young City residents classed as not in education, employment or training is below the London East Connexions partnership target.

The council's management of its services for children and young people, including its capacity to improve them further

The City of London Corporation has successfully introduced a new Department of Community and Children's Services. The Director provides strong leadership and has a

clear vision. The authority is clear about the central place of children and young people in the development of plans for the Children’s Service and more widely in the authority as a whole. It makes very good use of partnerships with voluntary, and other, bodies to meet the needs of young people. While the authority has the staff and skills required to enable it to meet its priorities, it acknowledges the need to adopt a more structured approach to the provision of professional development. The authority’s self-assessment provided an accurate picture of its strengths and what it needs to do to improve further. It has the confidence, and resources, to ensure it meets the priorities as set out in its Policy Plan. The authority has an excellent capacity to improve further.

The authority consults widely with stakeholders, including young people, on a range of issues and priorities, including the development of its clearly focused CYPP. Users are generally positive about the support and services available to them.

The City of London Corporation uses resources well to ensure good value for money. The next step is to embed the new departmental structures and identify unit costs for individual services in order to ensure the continuing effective use of resources.

Key strengths and areas for improvement

Key strengths	Key areas for improvement
<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a good range of multi-agency support services • good school meals and innovative practice at Sir John Cass’s Primary School • partnership initiatives to provide a good range of sports opportunities. 	<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the analysis of disaggregated health data to increase the effectiveness of healthy living interventions and measure impact.
<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the effectiveness of the Safeguarding Board and arrangements • joint service support for children and carers • strategies for early identification and prevention • support for young unaccompanied asylum seekers. 	<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the analysis of the impact of preventative services, their co-ordination and value for money.

<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early years provision • standards and achievement at Sir John Cass's School • support for vulnerable groups of pupils and students resulting in good progress • pupils enjoy being in school. 	<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take the opportunity offered by developing relationships with the City of London and other academies to track the progress of students of secondary school age.
<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the contribution children make to the community • provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development • opportunities for children and young people to have a voice in the community • good partnerships that minimise low levels of anti-social behaviour and youth offending. 	<p><i>Making a positive contribution;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none.
<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at Sir John Cass's School the development of children's workplace skills is outstanding • provision of careers advice, personal support and guidance through Connexions and other services • effective support services for looked after children and care leavers. 	<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none.
<p><i>Management of children's services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • successful restructuring of services • partnerships with voluntary and other bodies • consultation with a range of stakeholders including children and young people • the promotion of a clear vision which places children and young people at its heart. 	<p><i>Management of children's services;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuing professional development for staff • measuring the unit costs for individual services in order to ensure good value for money.

Aspects for focus in a future joint area review or the next APA

- How the authority measures the impact of its work across a range of services.
- How well the authority knows about the progress of students of secondary school age.
- How the authority measures unit costs for individual services in order to ensure good value for money.
- The planning, provision and effectiveness of continuing professional development for staff.

We confirm that the children's services grade will provide the score for the children and young people service block in the comprehensive performance assessment (CPA) and will be published to the Audit Commission. The social care judgement is for CSCI information only.

Yours sincerely



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JONATHAN PHILLIPS
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