

Joint area review

**London Borough of Camden Children's Services Authority
Area**

Review of services for children and young people

Audit Commission
Healthcare Commission
HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Probation
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Introduction

1. The most recent Annual Performance Assessment (APA), for Camden judged the council's children's services as excellent, and its capacity to improve as excellent.
2. This report assesses the contribution of local services in ensuring that children and young people:
 - at risk, or requiring safeguarding are effectively cared for
 - who are looked after achieve the best possible outcomes
 - with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve the best possible outcomes.

Context

3. Camden is characterised by extreme contrasts in that exclusive residential districts and business centres sit alongside areas of high deprivation. It is the most polarised inner London borough in terms of wealth and deprivation and the fifteenth most deprived local authority in England. Seventeen percent of the population are under 18 and almost 30% of this age group live in highly disadvantaged areas, the second highest rate in the central London area and over twice the national average. Around 45% of young people aged 0 to 19 come from a background other than White British, with Bangladeshi and Black populations comprising the most disadvantaged groups. Over 110 languages are spoken in schools: 58% of primary school children and 39% of young people in secondary schools are learning English as an additional language.
4. Averaging 8%, the unemployment rate is higher than the London average and 39% of children and young people are in households with no adult employment. Nineteen per cent of families with dependent children are lone parent families. Eligibility for free school meals is well above national averages for primary and secondary schools. Pupil mobility is high. Inward mobility is over 20% in primary schools and 12% in secondary schools. The borough has a substantial refugee population, including one of London's largest Somali populations. The number of refugee children in schools has increased to 23% of primary school pupils and 16% of pupils in secondary schools. There are currently 61 unaccompanied asylum seeking children aged 17 and under, and 103 aged 18 and 19.
5. Camden has 41 primary schools, nine secondary schools, four special schools, two hospital schools, 11 children's centres, four pupil referral units and 35 youth centres/units. In addition, there are over 60 private and voluntary sector providers of nursery and childcare for 0 to 5 year olds. Post-16 education and training is provided by: one main further education college, nine sixth forms and four work-based training providers. Entry to Employment (E2E)

provision is provided by Camden Job Train, TBG Learning and Camden I-Tech, with 209 places in total. Adult and community learning, including family learning, is mainly contracted with Westminster Kingsway College, the Working Men's College, the City Lit, and a range of community centres and school venues, with a small amount delivered by the council.

6. Primary health care services are provided by the Camden Primary Care Trust (PCT). Acute hospital services are provided by the Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust. Mental health services are provided by the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust and Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust.

7. Children's social care services are provided through: 149 registered foster carers, two contracted children's residential care homes, one family centre and nine field social work teams. There are no secure units or young offender institutions in the area.

8. Services to children and young people who are at risk of offending or have offended are provided through the Camden youth offending service.

Main Findings

9. The main findings of this joint area review are as follows:

- Arrangements for safeguarding children and young people are outstanding, owing to excellent prioritisation, an excellent range of preventative services of very high quality, and timely, highly effective multi-agency action that improves outcomes for particularly vulnerable groups. Other factors include excellent inter-agency training, and widespread use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- Support for looked after children is also outstanding as a result of very strong corporate parenting, high aspirations and very good involvement of children and young people in planning and decision making to target services to their needs. Highly effective multi-agency action maximises their life chances through very good provision for care, health and leisure, good provision for education and very good support for care leavers that enables them to move into adulthood effectively.
- Provision for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and aspects of support for their families are very good. Good early intervention and prevention supports young children with complex needs in particular. Very effective inter-agency work promotes social inclusion well, provides for health needs very well and secures overall good educational attainment.

Weaknesses lie in the slow progress to broaden opportunities for learning at Key Stage 4 and in the inconsistent quality of statements of special educational need.

- Good features in the satisfactory provision for youth work indicates good progress following a difficult period when significant changes at senior level destabilised the service, and the range and reach of the Youth Offending service (YOS) have expanded considerably. An action plan to support the move towards integrated youth services is not yet in place.
- Service management and the capacity to improve are both outstanding. Strong political and corporate commitment, highly productive partnerships, including with other authorities, and leadership of a very high calibre drive improvement. Ambitions are very challenging, needs are known very well, and prioritisation, including for prevention, diversity and equality is excellent, as is action planning. Preventative multi-agency working is very effective in minimising the need for statutory provision. Very strong performance management consistently strengthens the delivery of services. A relative weakness is the uncertainty among small and medium voluntary and community providers about the transition to new commissioning arrangements.

Grades

4: outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate; 1: inadequate

	Local services overall
Safeguarding	4
Looked after children	4
Learning difficulties and/or disabilities	3
Service management	4
Capacity to improve	4

Recommendations

For immediate action

The local partnership should:

- ensure that an appropriate way is found for the successful dissemination of the findings of this report to children and young people in the area

- embed new programmes to broaden opportunities for learning for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at Key Stage 4
- ensure that the quality of statements of special educational need is consistent
- develop and implement an action plan to support the move towards integrated youth services.

Equality and diversity

10. Equality and diversity issues permeate the strategic and day-to-day work of the authority and its partners very strongly. Excellent prioritisation extends to minority, vulnerable and hard to reach groups including refugee and asylum seeking children. Provision relating to gender, ability and disability is addressed very well overall following effective assessment of need. Consultation with service users as individuals and in groups, and work with voluntary and community organisations are a particular strength. Tackling racism, addressing bullying and crime prevention are high priorities. Service planning and delivery are sharply focused on diversity of need and identify ambitious outcomes. A very good range of excellent quality, highly accessible and often innovative services are very successful in meeting these diverse needs, as well as the aspirations of service users. Monitoring to this end is rigorous and effective, often resulting in realignment of resources or a reconfiguration of services. There is widespread evidence of significant success in securing improved outcomes for children and young people who are at risk, requiring safeguarding, looked after or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding



11. **The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people at risk, or requiring safeguarding, is outstanding.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>The priority and sustained focus given to safeguarding.</p> <p>Well established and independently chaired Local Safeguarding Children's Board that provides highly effective leadership.</p>	<p>Few referrals of private fostering arrangements from other professionals.</p>

<p>Excellent range of very high quality preventative services from agencies in the statutory and non-statutory sectors.</p> <p>Excellent multi-agency and partnership work resulting in highly successful outcomes.</p> <p>Excellent children in need and child protection services with low numbers remaining on the child protection register for extended periods and a low level of re-registration.</p> <p>Outstanding Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) providing a comprehensive service with a single point of access.</p> <p>Well resourced and excellently managed duty and assessment service with inclusive thresholds and low re-referral rates.</p> <p>A comprehensive range of excellent and well attended inter-agency safeguarding training courses.</p> <p>The Common Assessment Framework used actively by partner agencies and impacting positively on practice.</p>	
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12. Safeguarding is a key and sustained priority embedded in the culture of Camden. Children and families are provided with a safe environment through highly effective multi-agency preventative action. Excellent information and guidance to families enables them to recognise and avoid dangers. A very good safer schools partnership has reduced the number of incidents reported to the police by pupils going to and from school. The comprehensive anti-bullying strategy is showing positive impact and victims of bullying or crime are well supported. Good measures are in place to combat racism. Children and young people are informed very well about key risks to their safety and how to deal with them. Vulnerable parents have access to services that support them effectively in continuing to care for their children.

13. Findings from this inspection concur with the 2007 APA that judged the council's services as making an excellent contribution to improving mental health outcomes for children and young people. There is easy access for vulnerable children to high quality comprehensive child health surveillance services. The authority has outstanding comprehensive CAMHS, including providers with national and international profiles. These provide 24-hour,

seven-day cover and operate very well at all four tiers, with targeted services for vulnerable groups, excellent access for non-specialist cases and outreach work. The innovative Multi-Agency Liaison Team (MALT), has significantly improved mental health outcomes for young people, especially looked after children. Case files show timely intervention and effective work with vulnerable and disabled young people, and prompt treatment for substance misuse.

14. Excellent inter-agency work prevents anti-social behaviour and the police, the youth and Connexions service (YCS) and the YOS, work exceptionally well together on community safety and on the prevention of crime. Youth Inclusion Support Panels have an outstanding range of strategies to reduce anti-social behaviour and are highly successful in doing so. Work with families of young people with the most entrenched behaviours has been particularly effective. The YOS has a good range of support packages, including specialist foster placements that help to reduce the potential for re-offending of young people on bail.

15. Very good strategic planning and financial management have produced an excellent range of very high quality preventative services. Safeguarding awareness is very high in all agencies and assessment of risk is excellent, as is multi-agency work. Front-line workers across all agencies understand their respective roles fully and discharge these effectively. Work is intelligent, proactive and needs-led, for example, innovative action with particular minority communities to prevent cultural abuse. The reconfiguration of social care services enables effective early intervention and has strengthened services for children in need.

16. The duty and assessment service, including the out-of-hours service, is very well resourced, very well led and very well managed. Interventions are timely, effective and consistent, with efficient signposting to relevant services. Excellent links with other agencies include staff from four voluntary organisations working in the teams. Excellent work prevents vulnerable young people aged 16 to 21 becoming homeless. A multi-agency strategy for young carers has resulted in a re-commissioned and improved service, valued by users. However, not all schools are sufficiently aware of the needs of this group of young people and how to support them in managing their caring responsibilities.

17. The CAF is impacting positively on practice and is used actively by partner agencies. Inter-agency referrals have increased significantly and good practice standards and quality monitoring are in place. Thresholds to social care services are agreed, understood fully by other agencies and audited regularly. As planned, the lowering of thresholds has improved access to services. The referral rate has risen to above that of similar authorities and repeat referrals are lower - a testament to the high quality of assessment. Initial and core assessments are of a good quality and increasingly completed within timescales, having risen from a low of 65% in 2006-07, noted by the 2007 APA, to 80% in September 2007. This dip was caused by the introduction of a new electronic recording system and database, which now provides a secure system

for recording interventions and an excellent tool for the supervision, management and evaluation of practice.

18. The child protection service is very effective, with high rates of initial child protection conferences and low re-registration. All children on the child protection register have had an allocated and qualified social worker for the last four years and all cases are regularly reviewed. Records are clear, accurate, comprehensive, up-to-date, and involve families and young people very well. No child has been on the child protection register for more than two years. A clear multi-agency strategy and strong partnerships result in very good collective early interventions, excellent preventative work and correspondingly good outcomes.

19. Camden's Safeguarding Children's Board is well established. It has an independent chair and provides an effective strategic lead on safeguarding. Excellent multi-agency guidance and training on safeguarding is widely available to a broad range of professionals, providers and others. Serious case reviews are undertaken in line with national requirements and findings inform service planning, practice and management very well.

20. Excellent multi-agency policy, procedures and training support effective working with families and children who experience domestic violence. A well supported Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference secures excellent early identification of domestic violence and effective action to protect vulnerable families. This has resulted in a fall in the number of repeat domestic violence referrals since its inception in March 2007. An innovative family support project within the voluntary sector provides expert specialist therapeutic support for children and families who have experienced or witnessed domestic violence.

21. Highly effective systems track children to ensure they are safeguarded. The council is a trailblazer for work with young runaways and children at risk of sexual abuse. Procedures for removing pupils from school rolls are exceptionally robust. Arrangements for ensuring vulnerable and excluded pupils remain in learning are secure and show effective work with schools and families; these have been highlighted as good practice in London. Children and young people educated at home are carefully monitored. Safeguarding arrangements for children receiving education other than at school are robust and address the needs of vulnerable young people well. The complaints service actively encourages young people to use its facility for independent advocacy.

22. Social care services and the YOS have strong and effective links into the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements that manage offenders who pose a risk to children. An effective protocol and innovative projects with voluntary sector providers identify early threat of sexual exploitation, raise awareness in children and young people very well and provide them with strategies to minimise risk.

23. The recently revised and strengthened safeguarding dimension of the authority's recruitment policy and practice is fully compliant with statute and best practice. Criminal Records Bureau and other checks are systematically undertaken and closely monitored. A highly accessible leaflet in draft advises young people very well on what they should expect from private fostering. The council's response to regulatory inspection in 2006 strengthened the effectiveness of the private fostering service but despite diligent work in communities and with a range of agencies, of 18 young people referred only two were from agencies other than social care.

Looked after children and young people

Inadequate ☐Adequate ☐Good ☐Outstanding ☒

X

24. **The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for looked after children and young people is outstanding.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Very strong corporate parenting with high aspirations for young people.</p> <p>Very good consultation with, and involvement of, young people.</p> <p>Highly effective multi-agency preventative action informed by a very good understanding of individual needs.</p> <p>Excellent healthcare provision, including for mental health, good provision for learning and very good participation in a wide range of leisure activities.</p> <p>Stable and supportive care placements.</p> <p>Very good independent reviewing process.</p> <p>Very good support for care leavers that enables them to move into adulthood effectively.</p>	

25. Looked after children are prioritised by the council. Corporate parenting responsibilities are executed very well, including through an innovative Education Guardian Scheme to support achievement and educational attainment, and the appointment of a children's champion to ensure a consistent service. The life chances of looked after children and those leaving care are improved by a very good range of services which are available irrespective of where, and in what provision, the child is placed. Strategic and operational planning are effective, systems for assuring high quality provision are robust and services are systematically reviewed to secure outstanding quality. As a consequence, young people's needs are very well known and met very well. Providers and carers endorse this view.

26. Outstanding multi-agency working contributes to the authority's effective preventative agenda for looked after children. This is supported by excellent training and clear accountability. Action taken to avoid children and young people having to be looked after is very effective. Numbers have reduced significantly over the past three years to below those in similar authorities, although they remain above the national average. Very good progress has also been made in reducing numbers of young people entering the care system at aged 13+, from 51 to 34 in the past year. Here, the authority has been particularly successful in achieving a lower percentage from Black and minority ethnic groups than in similar authorities and nationally. Success has been achieved primarily through lowered thresholds for referral and particularly effective preventative measures, such as those of the Family Group Conference service, Sure Start and Children's Centres' teams, the Families in Focus projects, the Team Around the Child initiative and the social work duty and assessment teams. The pilot school-based social work project offers schools a quick and efficient route to referral and assessment. Homeless Household Support services and the Homeless Health Visitor team offer an impressive service, with excellent support and preventative care for children. MALT provides a very good prevention service for families involved in court proceedings.

27. The decision to look after a child is taken only when there are no appropriate alternatives. At 16%, residential placements are just below those of similar authorities, at 19%, and just above the national figure of 14.9%. Figures for kinship care, at 15%, are above comparable authorities and national figures. Assessments are subject to independent scrutiny and approval to ensure that full and proper safeguards are in place. The number of looked after children adopted has fallen in the past year, in part due to delays in court processes. Special Guardianship has been used effectively, although sometimes instigated by the courts. In 2006-07, 83% of children who were adopted were placed within 12 months of their best interest decision being made, indicating good performance. Currently, the authority is well on track to meet its adoption target for 2007-08, reversing the weaknesses identified in the 2007 APA.

28. Effective advertising, coupled with very good strategies for recruitment and retention has significantly increased numbers of in-borough foster carers so that independent fostering agencies and residential care are also used only when this is in the best interests of the child. Foster carers are assessed

rigorously and receive excellent and effective support and training, to which they attribute the stability of many placements. Commissioning of residential care is robust and only preferred providers are used for emergency placements. Quality assurance is rigorous and thorough and regular monitoring of provision takes full account of the views of young people. A range of outstanding material informs looked after young people about all aspects of care. The well established advocacy service enables the reporting of concerns very effectively.

29. Professionals are very well informed of the needs and circumstances of looked after children and consistently strive to improve outcomes for them. Young people report very good support from their qualified social worker in particular. Reviews of care plans are a top priority and executed very well, irrespective of where children are looked after. Ninety-five percent are completed on time, well above the England average and that of comparators. Looked after young people engaged with the YOS receive specific guidance and good support. Independent reviewing officers are effective in their role. Young people are very aware of decisions affecting their lives as 97% contribute to their reviews, but not all engage fully in opportunities to influence decision-making.

30. Excellent multi-agency work and very good monitoring secures suitability and stability of placements, including for children placed outside the borough. As a result, placement stability for children having three or more placements in the past year is very good. At 9%, this is significantly better than comparator authorities and nationally. Longer term or adoptive placements compare well with those of similar authorities. Changes of care placement are managed very well and there are no delays in provision for learning. Numbers placed more than 20 miles from their home address are below similar authorities and nationally, enabling good continuity of services and very good contact with families and the council. The YOS prioritises continuity of support for young people at risk of re-offending placed outside the borough.

31. Excellent attention is given to health needs and indicators are above national figures. At 93%, the rate of annual health assessments and dental checks is very high. This is also the case for developmental checks for children under five, currently at 92%. Immunisation figures, currently at 87%, are high. The rate of pregnancy is very low, but specialist foster carers for looked after mothers and their babies are available if needed. All looked after children, whatever the nature of their placement and whether or not this is within or outside the authority, including those involved with the YOS, are served very well by dedicated multi-agency teams and a range of specialists. Health professionals encourage healthy living through accessible information, guidance and support and from effective outreach work. This secures appropriate and timely health care and treatment. Health assessments and personal health plans are reviewed regularly, with prompt referrals to specialist services when required and updates are sent to relevant professionals. CAMHS provision is outstanding, with MALT providing a very effective service for mental health problems.

32. Looked after children receive good support to enjoy and achieve and they have high aspirations for doing so. The priority given to admission to schools outside the borough is carefully monitored. Educational attainment is good overall. At GCSE, results consistently exceed those for similar authorities and national figures. At 14.3% in 2006-07, figures for five or more A* to C grades were above comparators by 3.5%, and 4.5% above national figures. For one or more A* to G grades, at 64.3%, results exceeded comparators by 6.2% and national figures by 9.2%. For five or more A* to G grades, the gap in attainment with their peers has closed dramatically, by 12% in the past three years. Very good pathway arrangements and excellent planning and support for individuals enables young people who have not gained formal accreditation at Key Stage 4 to continue to higher education. In particular, numbers entering university have increased significantly, from three in 2005 to 13 in 2007. The Building Bridges project has been particularly effective in continuing the engagement of disaffected young people. All looked after children have Personal Education Plans and all have access to a designated teacher. Although plans are regularly and thoroughly reviewed, these vary in the specificity of targets and strategies for monitoring progress.

33. Robust, very well targeted and prompt action through the Virtual Academy that combines all aspects of provision for looked after children, is addressing effectively a sharp rise in absence from school in 2006-07, which, at 20%, was above similar authorities at 14% and national figures at 13%. Very good inroads are being made into persistent absenteeism cases. Comparable data shows a 23% reduction in absences of 25 or more days and a 30% reduction in absences of between 15 to 24 days. The multi-agency team around the child is a highly proactive intervention for secondary-aged pupils at risk of fixed-term exclusion. Looked after children are encouraged very strongly, and given very good practical support to participate in a wide range of cultural and leisure activities and to develop individual interests.

34. The authority has a strong and longstanding culture of both seeking and acting upon the views of young people who are looked after. Mechanisms are very effective, formalised at strategic level and embedded in practice. Their views inform decision-making and the range, shape and quality assurance of services as well as the appointment of officers that run them. Young people themselves provide a successful drop-in service for others and for care leavers, act as peer educators and train officers and members on their particular circumstances. They also formally inspect services and report their findings to the council.

35. Advice for looked after young people is outstanding in its quality, co-ordination and range. This empowers them to be independent, achieve highly and be well prepared for adult life. Care leavers report positive in-care experiences, high satisfaction with their continued support and high aspirations for their future. Transitions are managed very well. MALT continues to provide a highly effective service and protocols for transfer to adult social care services are comprehensive, including for looked after young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All care leavers have personal advisers and secure

pathway plans, some of which are excellent. Very effective action secures a significantly higher take up of looked after young people in education, employment or training (EET) post-16 than in similar authorities and nationally. Young people's needs are met very well through highly accessible guidance that defines very clearly the support available to those leaving care, and through financial provision that is more generous than for many other authorities. Planning for independent living starts early. Provision for accommodation is particularly outstanding as a result of effective co-ordination of housing providers. All care leavers live in suitable housing and there is a supported hostel for care leavers with mental health problems. In the event of a failing placement, good safeguards prevent homelessness. The proportion of looked after children with final warnings, reprimands and convictions continues to be below figures for similar authorities and national figures.

Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Inadequate ☐Adequate ☐Good ☒Outstanding ☐

36. The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good.

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Good early intervention and preventative work to support children with complex needs.</p> <p>Very effective inter-agency work to assess, monitor and review health needs.</p> <p>Outstanding support for, and very good progress made by, children and young people in early years, special schools, hospital schools and pupil referral units.</p> <p>Good promotion of social inclusion.</p> <p>Good involvement of young people in shaping, delivering and evaluating services.</p>	<p>Limited availability of speech and language provision in schools from the age of five.</p> <p>Inconsistent quality of statements of special educational need.</p> <p>Slow progress to broaden opportunities for learning at Key Stage 4.</p>

<p>Good transition arrangements between early years education and mainstream schooling and on transfer to adult services.</p> <p>Very good use of direct payments and respite care to improve the quality of life for families, including siblings.</p>	
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37. Good early intervention and preventative work is making a positive impact on children's health, well-being and learning. The child development centre and the disabled children's team, as part of the integrated service for disabled children, are playing an important role in identifying the support requirements of children with complex needs, including those from harder to reach minority ethnic groups. Good use is made of targeted family support, for example, in improving parenting skills. The placing of social workers in seven schools is effective in raising families' awareness of available services. There is good engagement with parents of children with hearing/visual impairment soon after birth. Multi-agency diagnostic assessment is proving effective in identifying support needs for children with autistic spectrum disorder. Support for young people with complex needs in special schools and some of the pupil referral units is outstanding. Placements at the primary and Key Stage 3 pupil referral units are helping prevent exclusions.

38. Inter-agency working is very effective in assessing, monitoring and reviewing health needs and ensuring continuity of support. Joint commissioning of services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as part of an overall multi-agency strategy is very effective. During the past year, the integration of services and implementation of the integrated service for disabled children has resulted in more effective safeguarding interventions. Staff and carers are made aware of child protection issues. Although each member of the disabled children's social care team is trained in child protection, only one has completed 'achieving best evidence' training. The council recognises the risk this poses and has plans in place to address this. Information sharing has improved and the new arrangements offer good single-point access to services. The effective specialist CAMHS helps children with disabilities and complex needs to remain with their families enabling easier access to local community provision. Transfer from paediatric care to adult health services is good. Children receive excellent regular physiotherapy and occupational therapy support from the integrated disabilities team. Provision for speech and language support in early years is very good. For over-fives, the quality of support is also very good. Limitations in availability, that impedes the progress of some children, are now being addressed.

39. Children and young people make good progress overall, although this masks uneven performance in some schools where identification of need and arrangements for appropriate support have been slow. Outstanding support for learning secures very good progress for children and young people in early

years, special schools, the two hospital schools and the pupil referral units. In mainstream schools, pupils make good progress in the primary phase and standards at Key Stage 2 are generally higher than comparator and national figures. At Key Stage 3, targeted literacy work has helped to raise standards in English across all categories of special educational need and results are generally above national figures. By the end of Key Stage 4, progress and the trend of improvement are broadly average. Progress to broaden opportunities for learning has been slow. The new programmes are very recent and are not yet embedded.

40. Attendance is monitored closely and is improving. It is significantly above 90% for almost all groups of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in primary schools and just below for pupils at school action in secondary schools. Permanent exclusions are low and although fixed-term exclusions increased in 2006-07, targeted work has helped particular schools to reverse this trend, including for Black and minority ethnic groups. Reintegration of excluded pupils into mainstream schools from the primary and Key Stage 3 pupil referral units is good.

41. Statements of special educational need are always completed on time and are of generally good quality, although formal arrangements for agreeing their content show inconsistency. All children, young people and carers were involved in reviews during 2006-07, but not all review processes took full account of changes in young people's needs to identify amendments required in statements or for exit strategies. The authority provides a comprehensive framework for planning and evaluating provision in schools, but this is not yet fully implemented by schools. Limitations with regard to clarity and levels of delegation in the current system of special educational needs funding have been identified and are being addressed well. Implementation of the new inclusion strategy for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to embed a shift in resourcing away from statementing has rightly been delayed in order to secure arrangements for further delegation to schools.

42. The promotion of social inclusion of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good overall. The draft inclusion strategy signals a clear intent to educate more young people from this group in mainstream schools. The support provided by staff from special schools and pupil referral units is helping to build capacity and expertise in the mainstream sector very effectively. In schools with specialist resource bases, young people with physical disabilities are particularly well integrated. A good range of mechanisms are used to consult young people, who are involved in shaping, delivering and evaluating many services. A very recent advocacy initiative, 'Getting your voice heard', encourages young people with disabilities to express their views. It also promotes access to the complaints procedure, but this is very recent and not widely known among young people, parents and carers. Advocacy support provided by a voluntary organisation is good. Young people have good provision for culture and leisure activities through after-school activities, holiday play services, some YCS activities and the Summer University. These activities are introducing them to new areas of interest and increasing

their self-confidence. However, mainstream pupils are not consistently made aware of what is available and school transport arrangements sometimes limit access to out-of-school activities.

43. Support for transition between early years education and mainstream schooling is good, as are arrangements for transfer to adult services. Guidance on 14-19 issues has improved. Post-16 transition support now starts at age 13 and Connexions advisors liaise closely with each young person, their parents/carers, social workers and teachers. Good and effective use is made of adult mentors and their impact is good. The percentage of young people with disabilities aged 14 and above with a transition plan, at over 90% for the last two years, is well above both similar authorities and national averages. The excellent 'Fast forward' planning booklet for children and young people is used very effectively in two special schools to assist 14-plus planning. The 2007 APA identified the need to ensure the participation of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in EET. The percentage who are not in education, employment or training has reduced significantly for those aged 16-19 from 23.7% in September 2005 to 11.8% in November 2007. Progression rates into EET for those leaving the Key Stage 4 pupil referral unit are good at 75% and for special schools are outstanding at 100%. Steps are being taken to extend access to work-related learning for young people, including up to the age of 25. The 14-19 implementation plan identifies clear progression routes for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but actions to remove barriers to learning are not specific enough.

44. Information for parents and carers, for example on housing, benefits and support packages is of good quality, but it is not easily accessible to all parents, notably in mainstream schools. Parent partnership arrangements are good, but are not widely known by parents. Very good use is made of direct payments and respite care to improve the quality of life for families, including siblings. Placements in residential schools have reduced in favour of more family home-based respite services and increased uptake of direct payments. Extended day and respite care services are very helpful in supporting families but entitlement is not widely known. Innovative solutions tackle homelessness among young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, for example, through supported housing schemes. The booklet 'Finding somewhere to live in Camden' provides a range of useful information. However, there are some inconsistencies in removing barriers to learning through the provision of accessible and adapted housing for families

Service Management

Inadequate



Adequate



Good



Outstanding



Capacity to improve

Inadequate ☐ Adequate ☐ Good ☐ Outstanding ☒

45. **Both the management of services for children and young people and the capacity to improve further are outstanding.**

Major strengths	Important weaknesses
<p>Strong political and corporate commitment, creative leadership at all levels and outstanding capacity to make further improvements.</p> <p>Effective partnerships, including with service users.</p> <p>Very challenging ambitions with a sustained and explicit focus on diversity, inclusion and tackling inequality.</p> <p>Highly effective prioritisation translated into very comprehensive strategic and delivery plans.</p> <p>Very strong preventative agenda and effective and expert multi-agency services reducing the need for intervention.</p> <p>Very strong performance management and monitoring.</p> <p>Very effective financial and value for money management, with an embedded culture of continuous improvement.</p>	<p>New funding and commissioning arrangements are causing uncertainty for small and medium providers.</p> <p>An action plan to support the move towards integrated youth services is not yet in place.</p>

46. The 2007 APA judged the management of children's services and the capacity to improve as excellent. This is endorsed strongly by inspection findings.

47. Ambitions for children and young people are excellent. These are clearly informed by a comprehensive analysis of need, underpinned by excellent shared partnership data and through extensive and wide-ranging consultation. The Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) has very clear vision and direction. Its challenging yet realistic ambitions are stated very clearly. A

sustained focus on equality and diversity consistently informs strategy, policy and practice, for example, in improving the educational attainment of underachieving Black and minority ethnic groups, looked after young people and vulnerable white boys. Community cohesion is promoted very well, and there are very good measures to combat racism through, for example, in-depth analysis of ethnicity, achievement and exclusion to identify pupils at risk. Equality impact assessments are routinely undertaken and the council has made good progress in achieving the Level 4 Equality Standard.

48. Strategic partnerships are highly productive, based on openness, trust and constructive challenge and characterised by transparent decision-making. There is a long history of excellent partnership working with the voluntary and community sector, with good representation already linking them into the governance structure of the CYPP. Voluntary and community representatives are actively involved in all key strategic groups, although some small and medium providers are not always fully aware of the extent of the authority's work. Very secure partnership working with the PCT has led to continuous improvement in healthy lifestyles, particularly for the most vulnerable groups. CAMHS provide effective, highly regarded, targeted services and outreach work.

49. Challenging objectives and targets for the next three years are very clearly set out in the comprehensive CYPP. A thorough review of its first year provides an excellent example of how the culture of innovation and continuous improvement that is embedded in the Children, Schools and Families (CSF) service consistently strengthens practice and secures the council's ambitions. Other notable examples include nationally commended work on domestic violence and with children at risk of sexual exploitation.

50. Children's trust arrangements are well established. The views of children, young people and families, including those who are vulnerable, are actively informing strategy and the planning, delivery and evaluation of services, such as the community safety strategy and revised plans to tackle health inequalities. A consultation and involvement strategy and detailed implementation plan are further strengthening coherence and feedback to particularly hard-to-reach groups, such as newly arrived refugee families. Very strong participation and engagement at case planning level and some youth work also influences strategic decision-making and has resulted in the reconfiguration of services, improved provision and some outstanding multi-agency work that has improved outcomes for vulnerable groups in particular, for example, the significantly high numbers of looked after young people in EET post-16.

51. Prioritisation is excellent. Strategic priorities for the CYPP dovetail very well with the council's corporate plan, community strategy and other key partnership strategies and inter-relate very well with the PCT's revised top priorities. Priorities are translated into very comprehensive strategic and operational delivery plans, primarily through the CYPP, that have the full agreement and financial commitment of partners. Good progress has been made in addressing weaknesses in provision for youth work, although an action plan to support the move towards integrated youth services is not yet in place.

Very effective prioritisation also extends to the management of the council's financial resources that are allocated to areas of need effectively and efficiently. A very good service planning framework explicitly links partnership priorities to *Every Child Matters* outcomes and to preventative services and addresses needs promptly, for example innovative and successful care pathways to prevent homelessness.

52. Capacity to deliver priorities is excellent. Corporate and political commitment to children's services is very strong. Elected members champion children, young people and families very effectively. They are very well informed, hold officers firmly to account, demand excellence and do not shirk from making difficult decisions that improve outcomes, for example the building of a new school. All responsibilities placed on the Director of CSF and lead members are discharged effectively.

53. Well established operational partnerships increase the council's capacity to deliver through well focused collective efforts. A notable example is the impact of work with the voluntary and community sector in removing barriers to accessing sexual health services. Productive collaboration with the PCT is reducing the number of teenage conceptions and highly effective work with the police to reduce anti-social behaviour is resulting in safer communities. Effective multi-agency preventative services are reducing the need for statutory provision, for example, in enabling children with disabilities to remain with their families. These include extended services, provision for early years and childcare and exemplary multi-agency work in children's centres by Family Support teams that successfully engage minority, vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups and improve health, education and social care outcomes.

54. Financial management and value for money are excellent. Expenditure is directed towards the front line and central costs are below average. Budgets have been realigned across directorates and aligned with CYPP commissioning intentions. This, together with a strong and successful track record of securing additional funding, has a high impact on key priority areas such as the reconfiguration of preventative services for looked after children and basing social workers in schools. Both have resulted in innovative multi-agency work that has improved outcomes and effective inter-agency processes for assessing, planning and reviewing provision for individual young people. Here, the CAF is used increasingly effectively across all agencies and there are some outstanding examples of the role of lead professionals in case records.

55. Arrangements for joint commissioning are very well advanced. A framework is in place and specific joint commissioning strategies are being implemented with very sound collaboration in areas such as CAMHS, parenting support and services for looked after children and for children and young people with disabilities. The council's capacity is increased by some commissioned services of exceptional quality, for example, those provided by the Hopscotch Asian Women's project. Service specifications are robust and monitoring is rigorous. New funding and commissioning arrangements, however, are causing uncertainty for small and medium providers.

56. Workforce planning is highly effective. The CYPP is actively implementing a joint workforce development strategy to achieve priorities and address gaps. Learning and development strategies are being aligned to the CYPP's objectives. Arrangements for, and the quality of, integrated training, much of which is nationally accredited, are highly effective in developing expertise, although not given sufficient priority in the YCS. The recruitment and retention of staff is good, although the turnover of agency staff is affecting some aspects of provision in the YOS. Staff are highly committed to improving outcomes and demonstrate high levels of professional satisfaction.

57. Performance management of children's services is excellent. The council has a sustained track record of strong performance against national and local performance indicators. Decision-making within the CYPP is predicated on robust and ongoing risk assessment. A comprehensive performance management framework, based on a mature corporate system, supports very good performance monitoring of outcomes at all levels. Monitoring reports highlight very clearly performance, achievement and variances. Financial information links very well with service performance to provide an integrated analysis for effective decision-making and evaluation. Robust action planning is a strength overall. Outcomes and strategies for monitoring progress are clear, thus enabling rigorous review. Services are very aware of development priorities and are proactive in their implementation.

58. Challenging performance arrangements inform the improvement of services. These have led to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people against targets and risks, such as preventing children being taken into the care of the local authority. The leader of the council conducts challenge meetings with lead members and the Director of CSF which hold them constructively, but robustly, to account. Critical performance information is thoroughly scrutinised and variances and emerging service pressures are tackled promptly and effectively. Council scrutiny arrangements are working well. New structures introduced last year align very clearly with integrated services and include dedicated CSF and Health committees. Outcomes from recent reviews include the scrutiny of improvements to attendance for looked after children. Councillors are provided with excellent information from officers which they interrogate with rigour and challenge. There is effective and robust scrutiny of budgets by the Schools Forum.

59. Partnership performance management is strong. Effective collaborative work is well advanced to agree further CYPP performance 'stretch' targets ready for the new Local Area Agreement in April 2008. Alongside this, the new corporate IT performance management system that has networking capability to partners' systems is being piloted in CSF.

60. The capacity to improve is excellent. Very high calibre and highly visible political and managerial leadership at all levels drives improvement. A proven track record of delivering services of very high quality, and of finding innovative solutions to seemingly intractable problems, has resulted in secure and sustainable improvements in a wide range of outcomes for children, young

people and families. Significantly, good or improved performance has been maintained against a background of challenging savings targets. Weaknesses are identified early and rectified by prompt and effective action, often through creative reconfigurations of services. The people, skills, capability and development opportunities are in place to maintain outstanding provision.

Annex A

MOST RECENTLY PUBLISHED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CAMDEN

Summary

Camden Council consistently delivers services well above minimum requirements for its children and young people. Over the past year, the authority has sustained or improved outcomes for children and young people in each of the five Every Child Matters aspects. Outcomes for children and young people are good despite the significant social and economic challenges they face. The council is proactive, innovative and ambitious in supporting children and young people to overcome these challenges. The authority works very effectively with its partners and there are many opportunities for children and young people and their families to have an influence on service development. Priorities are clear and are based on detailed analysis of information; performance information is being used very well to drive improvement. The very effective leadership and good financial capacity means that there is excellent capacity to improve further.

The full annual performance assessment can be found at:

http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports/pdf/?inspectionNumber=304590&providerCategoryID=0&fileName=\\APA\\apa_2007_202.pdf

Annex B: Summary of the Enhanced Youth Inspection Report

Main findings

1. The quality of youth work provided in Camden is adequate overall with some good features; the council sufficiently secures youth work. The service makes very good use of activities and centres commissioned from the voluntary sector. The council supplements this work well with cross-borough initiatives including an effective detached team and a well attended Summer University programme. Overall, the range and diversity of opportunities is broadly responsive to young people's needs and ensures there is a good range of places to go and things to do in the borough. Although activities reflect the cultural diversity of the local community they are not well promoted to some vulnerable groups. Achievement and youth work practice are adequate and in a few instances very good. Young people make good progress in their personal and social development. Buildings, and resources, are of acceptable quality with good provision in some areas. Although a new curriculum has been developed it is not yet well established. Too few youth workers remain adequately qualified and there is insufficient investment in continuing professional development. Opportunities to share good practice across the borough are limited. Significant changes to senior managers and its location within the council's structures places the service well to contribute to the development of an integrated approach. The service has good advocacy by elected members and scrutiny is now good. Quality assurance procedures are satisfactory and good progress has been made recently in the collection, analysis and use of data. Criminal Records Bureau, and other checks, are systematically undertaken and closely monitored by the council and relatively minor flaws in the YCS and voluntary sector are being tackled.

Key aspect inspection grades

Key aspect		Grade
1	Standards of young people's achievement	2
	Quality of youth work practice	2
2	Quality of curriculum and resources	2
3	Leadership and management	2

Inspectors make judgements based on the following scale

4: excellent / outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate/satisfactory; 1: inadequate

Strengths

- Young people make significant gains in their self-confidence and personal and social development.
- Youth workers know the young people, and their communities, with whom they work, well.
- A broad and diverse range of projects and activities are in place with some very good specialist provision.
- Engagement with voluntary sector providers and other agencies is very good.

Areas for development

- Increase the involvement of young people in developing, monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the work of the service.
- Increase significantly the proportion of the workforce that is appropriately qualified.
- Provide greater access to appropriate continuing professional development for youth support workers/fractional staff.
- Develop and implement an action plan to support the move towards integrated youth services.

Annex C

CORPORATE ASSESSMENT ACHIEVEMENT - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Outcomes for children and young people in Camden are good or excellent. Health outcomes are excellent. The authority has a very good understanding of the needs of its communities and indicators are mostly well above comparators. There is an embedded culture of safeguarding and children are safeguarded very effectively. Outcomes for staying safe are consistently above or well above comparators. Pupils make at least good progress in schools and educational outcomes are good. The performance of looked after children is good overall. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress in some aspects of provision. A high percentage of young people, including those looked after and young people who offend, continue in education, employment or training post-16. Children and young people are consulted and listened to very well. Young people participating in provision from the youth and Connexions service make significant gains in their self-confidence and personal and social development.

2. This inspection concurs with the 2007 annual performance assessment (APA) judgement that service management is outstanding. Political and corporate commitment is strong and partnership working at all levels is excellent, although new funding and commissioning arrangements are causing uncertainty for small and medium voluntary and community providers. Children's trust arrangements are well established, and creative and dynamic leadership at all levels drives improvement. Ambitions are very challenging and underpinned by a sustained and explicit focus on diversity and inclusion. Highly effective prioritisation is translated into very comprehensive strategic and operational delivery plans, although an action plan to support the move towards an integrated youth service is not yet in place. The very strong preventative agenda minimises the need for statutory interventions. Excellent performance management and monitoring is supported by very effective financial management.

3. Children and young people appear safe and arrangements to ensure this are outstanding. Core assessments are significantly improved from the situation found by the 2007 APA. Safeguarding is a key and sustained priority in the work of all partnership agencies. The well-established Local Safeguarding Children's Board provides highly effective leadership. Children in need and child protection services are excellent with very good management supported by excellent review and auditing. Despite diligent work, a relative weakness is the small number of privately fostered children referred to safeguarding and social care by other agencies.

4. The combined work of all local services in securing the health of children and young people is outstanding. This concurs with the 2007 APA. Good baseline information leads to clear priorities, well targeted services and

effective, often innovative multi-agency work. There is an outstanding comprehensive Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service that operates very well at all four tiers, with targeted services for vulnerable groups. The service also offers a wide range of support to partner agencies and therapeutic intervention to enable children with disabilities to remain with their families. The 2007 APA recommended that partners continue to improve childhood immunisation rates. This has been addressed very well. Excellent attention is given to the health needs of looked after children and to children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

5. The impact of all local services in helping children and young people to enjoy their education and to achieve well is good, as identified in the 2007 APA. The quality of early years provision is excellent and children get a good start to their education. Schools offer good provision and results are improving, although performance across schools is uneven. Looked after children receive good support and attainment is good overall. Excellent support enables young people who have not gained formal accreditation at age 16 to continue in learning, and numbers entering university have increased significantly. For children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, outstanding support secures very good progress in early years, special schools, the two hospital schools and the pupil referral units. Weaknesses lie in the slow progress to broaden opportunities for learning at Key Stage 4 and in the inconsistent quality of statements of special educational need. Attendance is monitored closely and is improving. Permanent exclusions are low. Well targeted work has helped particular schools to reverse an increase in fixed-term exclusions. Reintegration of excluded pupils into mainstream schools is good. Children and young people have good access to a wide range of recreational and voluntary learning opportunities. The APA identified a need to improve some aspects of attainment, attendance and exclusion. This inspection concurs with these findings.

6. The impact of all local services in helping children, young people and families to contribute to society is outstanding, as identified in the 2007 APA. Consultation is regular and extensive, including at case planning level and the views of service users have significantly influenced strategy and provision. As a result, services have been reconfigured, with improved outcomes for vulnerable groups in particular. Agencies work exceptionally well together on community safety and on the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour.

7. The impact of all local services in helping children, young people and families to improve their economic well-being is good, as identified in the 2007 APA. Childcare provision is matched to the needs of families. Opportunities for employment and training for young people are maximised, including through good engagement with employers, and a high percentage, including young offenders, continue in learning after the age of 16. For looked after children, the quality, co-ordination and range of advice to prepare them for independence and adult life is outstanding. Transitions are managed very well. Care leavers are positive about their in-care experiences and their high aspirations for the future are supported very well by highly accessible guidance

defining very clearly the services available to them, generous financial support and assured accommodation. The proportion of looked after children with final warnings, reprimands and convictions is low. For children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, transition at post-16 is smooth and effective and access to work-related learning up to the age of 25 is being broadened.

8. The capacity of council services to improve is outstanding. Very high calibre and highly visible political and managerial leadership at all levels drives improvement. A proven track record of delivering services of very high quality, and of finding innovative solutions to seemingly intractable problems has resulted in secure and sustainable improvements. Weaknesses are identified early and rectified by prompt and effective action, often through creative reconfigurations of services. Significantly, good or improved performance has been maintained against a background of challenging savings targets. The people, skills, capability and development opportunities are in place to maintain outstanding provision.

Annex D

SUMMARY OF JOINT AREA REVIEW AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

1. This joint area review was conducted using the arrangements required under Section 20 of the Children Act 2004. It was carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of inspectors from Ofsted, the Healthcare Commission and the Audit Commission. The review was undertaken according to the requirements of the *Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services*.
2. The review was linked to the contemporaneous corporate assessment of the local council by the Audit Commission and these findings plus aspects of the most recent Annual Performance Assessment are represented in the relevant part of the corporate assessment report.
3. This review describes the outcomes achieved by children and young people growing up in Camden and evaluates the way local services, taken together, contribute to their well-being. Together with the Annual Performance Assessment of Children's Services, joint area reviews focus on the extent to which children and young people are healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and are well prepared to secure economic well-being. This review explores these issues by focusing on children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, children who are looked after and children at risk or requiring safeguarding and a few additional investigations. It evaluates the collective contribution made by all relevant children's services to outcomes for these children and young people.
4. The review took place in two stages consisting of an analysis stage (where recorded evidence was scrutinised) and a two week fieldwork stage (where inspectors met children and young people and those who deliver services for them).