

9 December 2009

Ms Kath Tunstall  
Strategic Director for Services to Children and Young People  
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council  
City Hall  
Bradford  
West Yorkshire  
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Dear Ms Tunstall

## 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

<b>Children's services rating</b>	<b>Performs adequately (2)</b>
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Children's services in the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council perform adequately.

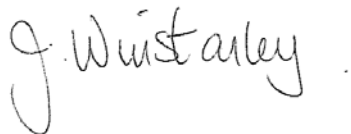
The overall effectiveness of around half of all inspected services, settings and institutions is good or better. Performance in nursery schools and pupil referral units is above that found in similar areas and nationally. However, too many inspected services were judged to be only adequate, with childminders, non-domestic childcare, primary schools, secondary schools and sixth forms not performing as well as in similar areas and seen nationally. Judgements for staying safe and enjoying and achieving in inspected services are good or better in the large majority of cases.

There is mixed performance in the provision made for children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Special schools are largely good, as are both pupil referral units. The local authority's fostering and adoption services are both good, and private fostering arrangements are adequate. However, the performance of children's homes is more variable, with four out of 13 judged inadequate. Two serious case reviews have been carried out of which one was conducted adequately and one inadequately. The council has had a recent unannounced inspection of its contact, referral and assessment arrangements. This noted strengths, including in lessons learned from serious case reviews, as well as noting some areas for development and one area for priority action.

Performance against the large majority of indicators, including those for staying safe, is at least in line with similar areas and national figures. For enjoying and achieving, performance is much lower with only a majority of indicators at least in line with similar areas or national rates. There are some particular weaknesses in achievement at the age of 16, and in outcomes for specific minority ethnic groups at the end of primary school and at the age of 16. However, the achievement gaps in relation to those whose circumstances make them vulnerable (both those eligible for free school meals and pupils who have special educational needs) are better than those found elsewhere at the age of 16. Achievement of level 2 and 3 qualifications by the age of 19 remains low.

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'.

Juliet Winstanley  
Divisional Manager, CAA