



Making Social Care
Better for People



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Dear Mr Coppard

**ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL'S EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE
SERVICES 2005**

This letter summarises the findings of the meeting held on 27 June 2005 to assess the performance of the education and social care services within your authority and takes into account your response to the first draft. We are grateful for the information which you provided to support this process and for the time made available by yourself and your colleagues to discuss relevant issues.

Being healthy

Outcomes in this area are good. A health equity audit has been completed which demonstrates the significant inequalities in health in Barnsley. The indicators of poor health and choices such as the high proportion of young people smoking at age 15 reflect the high levels of disadvantage in the borough. The authority acknowledges that improvements are needed and has in place a good range of initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles and works well with partners to support these initiatives. The partnership between social services, education and the Primary Care Trust is good. There are good arrangements for multi-agency training. Actions are targeted where there is the greatest need. For example, work to reduce the high teenage conception rate at age 15 to 17 is being carried out amongst those most likely to be not in employment, education or training. The Youth Service works well with young people in relation to sexual health.

All schools have signed up to the Healthy Schools standard and 12 have completed full accreditation. The Life Chances Team which has gained national recognition, supports the health education of looked after children well. The authority has shown particularly

good year-on-year improvement in the health assessment of looked after children from 77% in 2001/02 to 84% in 2004/05.

There have been significant improvements in Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The recent inspection of children's services by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) in March 2005 found a significant improvement in waiting times. The national target time for referrals directly to a psychiatrist within 13 weeks is met. The authority has arrangements in place which ensures that urgent cases are dealt with within 24 hours.

Staying safe

Outcomes in this area are good overall. Child protection services are well organised with effective collaboration and good inter-agency working. Procedures for child protection in schools are sound and there is full compliance with requirements. The authority has made good progress in meeting the recommendations of the Climbié inquiry and has made significant improvements since the initial self-assessment in 2003. Between April 2003 and September 2004, the quality of providers of childcare at registration was overall in line with national figures although a relatively high proportion of providers of out of school day care were found by Ofsted to be unsuitable. The authority is alert to the need to support providers to ensure they meet the standards required. The recent children's full service inspection by the CSCI judged the council to be serving most children well with a promising capacity to improve and recognised good practice such as the midwives planning for the protection of unborn children assessed to be at risk.

In common with others, the authority has difficulty in recruiting qualified social workers but ensures sufficient suitable cover to allocate all child protection cases, and most children looked after cases (99.6%). Plans are in hand to enhance the capacity to deal with the cases put forward. There has been a reduction in the number of children on the child protection register although the proportion remains above national figures. The low proportion re-registered within a year is very good as is the review of cases. Parental attendance at child protection conferences is consistently good at 80% attending initial conferences.

The authority has shown significant improvement in the number of core assessments of the needs of looked after children completed within 35 working days from 16% in 2003/04 to 61% in 2004/05. The completion of initial assessments is in line with comparable authorities.

Enjoying and achieving

Outcomes in this area are satisfactory overall. The authority has made significant progress in improving attainment and attendance and in reducing permanent exclusions. The Local Area Agreement 2005–2008 has a central focus on the enjoying and achieving aspect of outcomes for children and is well linked to regeneration and improving economic well being. Since the inspection of the local authority by Ofsted in January 2004, the education service has improved its arrangements for monitoring, challenge, support and intervention in schools and now has a well-thought out, comprehensive and rigorous system. Targeted actions have led to a reduction in the proportion of schools judged by the authority to be in need of support. The proportion of schools judged by Ofsted to be causing concern is lower than the national average. The most recently available analysis of inspection reports published in 2003/04 shows that there is a smaller proportion of excellent and very good teaching and learning in schools compared with the national picture; judgements about the overall effectiveness of provision are similar.

Attainment is well below national averages and that of statistical neighbours at all key stages. Attainment on entry to school is in line with national averages but progress made between key stages is not as good as predicted and is below national averages. Intensive work by the authority is leading to improvements in attainment. In 2003/04, Barnsley was amongst the authorities showing the greatest improvement at Key Stages 1 and 2, in particular at Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics. At Key Stage 4, the rate of improvement in 2003/04 was above that of statistical neighbours and that found nationally. Provisional data for 2004/05 indicate that the good progress is being sustained. There have been significant improvements in some schools where attainment is lowest.

There are good opportunities for young people to demonstrate their achievements. They develop practical, personal and social skills through a variety of activities such as debates and elections, dry-stone walling and information and communication technology. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve individual units of vocational qualifications, certificates at entry level in mathematics and English, and awards by the Open College Network and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network.

Barnsley provides an extensive range of opportunities for recreational and voluntary learning and participation by children and young people is good. For example, in 2004, more than 4,000 young people aged 8 to 16 took part in out of hours learning provided by the Barnsley Learning Centre Network; some 650 young performers took part in 91

theatre productions. The pass rate for graded music examinations was above the national average in 2004.

Overall attendance at school has improved. Figures for authorised absence are in line with statistical neighbours at both primary and secondary level, in line with national averages at secondary level but above national averages in primary schools. Unauthorised absence figures are in line with national averages and above statistical neighbour averages at both phases of education. Permanent exclusions have fallen substantially and the figures are better than national averages. To date, in 2004/05, no pupil with a statement of special educational needs has been permanently excluded from school. There is a lower proportion than that found nationally of young people educated out of school. Attendance at school by looked after children is very good. Their progress in enjoying learning and achieving is supported through their personal education plans which are in place for 85% of these children. They are supported well by the Life Chances Team. However attainment in the general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) by children leaving care remains well below national figures.

Support for young people with special educational needs was judged to be highly satisfactory in Ofsted's inspection of the local education authority and since then further improvements have been made. Support for raising the achievement of travellers, black and minority ethnic groups and gifted and talented pupils which was judged to be unsatisfactory has been strengthened since the inspection. This has yet to have an impact on improved attainment.

Overall the quality of early years provision is good. The service has grown substantially in recent years to meet the needs of children and their carers with an increase in places of 31.4% last year. Sure Start centres provide a good range of preventive services located in areas of high deprivation and give parents and children activities and services they value.

Making a positive contribution

Outcomes in this area are very good. Very young children are supported well in their personal and social development in provision for the early years. There is good partnership between providers and carers and feedback is positive. The authority has a high and visible commitment to inclusion and has taken a range of appropriate actions to improve the promotion of equality and diversity. All schools and out of hours learning provision have anti-bullying policies and programmes. Guidance and procedures for recording, reporting and responding to racist incidents and bullying are now in place in schools. The Youth Service works closely with local agencies to encourage young people to play an active part in the life of the community and in

regeneration projects. Activities are successful in raising young people's awareness of prejudice. Children and young people are given very good opportunities to participate in decision-making and are encouraged to do so, for example, through school councils, the Youth Parliament and the Democratic Engagement Working Party with elected members. The views of children, young people and their parents and carers are taken into account in planning services. Care leavers are involved in the recruitment of staff in children's services.

The Youth Offending Team provides intensive support to carers to prevent offending by looked after children. There has been a year-on-year improvement in the number of final warnings and convictions of children looked after which is significantly below comparable authorities. The number of first time offenders continues to fall and is below the national figure. Most looked after children take the opportunity to participate in a review of their care. Looked after children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have access to independent visitors through the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and are encouraged to express their views. The proportion of children expressing satisfaction (at 46%) is in line with national figures.

Achieving economic well-being

Outcomes in this area are satisfactory overall. The provision for education and training for 14 to 19 year olds was judged by Ofsted to be unsatisfactory at inspection early in 2004. The recent 14 to 19 post-inspection action plan submitted to the Department for Education and Skills has been well received. Robust actions are being taken to address the weaknesses, notably to develop the strategy, improve partnership working with schools and the local Learning and Skills Council and provide a better range of courses for young people. There is evidence of improvement. For example, there is already an increased range of vocational courses available and plans are in place for further improvement. Some 75% of learners in schools are participating in vocational courses.

The overall proportion of young people moving on to education or training at age 16 remains well below the national average. The proportion of young people not in education, employment or training at age 16 to 18 has declined, but at 11.3% remains above national figures. There has been a significant improvement in the proportion of care leavers in employment, training and education. The Youth Offending Team data show that in 2003/04 81% of ex-offenders were in employment, education or training, a good performance against the ambitious national target of 90%. The Life Chances Team gives good support to young people with a learning difficulty and/or disability and works well with other organisations to smooth their transition from school. In 2003/04, all young people with a disability progressed to further education or training

at age 16. The attainment by learners in the school sixth form is above the national average in the general certificate of education (GCE) at advanced level.

Summary

Strengths	Areas for improvement
<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good partnership working • Life Chances Team provides a valuable service • contribution by Youth Service to education about sexual health • effective CAMHS • good range of initiatives to promote health improvements identified in recent children’s service inspection. 	<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant inequalities in health • high conception rate for 15 to 17 year olds.
<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective collaboration and good interagency working • good progress in meeting the recommendations of the Climbe Inquiry • timeliness of core assessments of need for looked after children • good safeguarding procedures identified in recent children’s service inspection. 	<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment of qualified social workers.
<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rapidly improving attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 • reduction in permanent exclusions • much improved arrangements for school monitoring, challenge, support and intervention • extensive range of recreational and voluntary learning opportunities on offer and good take up by young people • Sure Start centres in place which provide good preventive services. 	<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low attainment by children and young people between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 4 and poor progress • insufficient excellent and very good provision, teaching and learning identified in school inspections in 2003/04 • achievement of children of travellers, black and minority ethnic groups, gifted and talented children.

<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Youth Offending Team provides intensive support to carers to prevent offending by looked after children the level of offending by young people is lower than that found nationally most children looked after make a contribution to their care reviews very good opportunities for young people to participate in decision-making. 	<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p>
<p><i>Achieving economic well-being</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Life Chances Team give good transition support to young people with a learning disability attainment at general certificate of education advanced level is above the national average in school sixth form good progression to education, training and employment by young people with a learning difficulty and/or disability. 	<p><i>Achieving economic well-being</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> unsatisfactory provision for education and training for 14 to 19 year olds high proportion of young people not in education, employment or training low proportion of young people progressing to education and training at 16.

Service management

There is a very strong commitment in Barnsley to improving services for children. New management teams are in place in education and social services and there have already been improvements in the outcomes for children and young people. Education and social services are developing joint plans and collaborative working arrangements. A programme manager has recently been appointed to lead the integration agenda. The appointment of a Children's Services Director is planned for 2006/07 with full integration by 2008. Barnsley was granted status as a pilot Children's Trust in 2003. The Local Area Agreement 2005–2008 recognises the economic, social and environmental issues facing Barnsley. The plan sets out coherent proposals for joint working and community involvement to improve the outcomes for children and young people.

The plans and self-assessment show an ambitious authority that has set clear priorities. The self-assessment shows broadly where improvements have been made and where further development is needed. Good use is made of a range of information and data, local knowledge and the views of children, young people and their parents and carers in planning services. Strategic planning links education and social care. Objectives are well aligned with the council's priorities and those in place nationally. Measured progress is being made towards producing a single plan for children's services from 2006.

The education department has made substantial changes to improve its procedures for monitoring, challenge, intervention and support in schools. Better use is now made of data by schools and link advisers in analysing performance and deciding on actions to be taken. Strengthened arrangements for scrutiny by elected members and a new framework for performance management ensure that performance measures and progress against action plans are carefully monitored and thoroughly evaluated.

There is a good level of expenditure on children in need and family support. Education and social care target their services well to support the most vulnerable. However, the weekly cost of placing a child in a children's home or in foster care has increased and is well above the national average.

Partnership working is good and improving. There is a strong network of interrelated partnerships. The authority has been judged good by the Government Office (Yorkshire and the Humber) for its collaborative working practices with statutory and voluntary agencies. This has been accelerated by the work on the Local Area Agreement 2005–2008. The council has developed strong partnerships and pooled budget arrangements with the Primary Care Trust. There are good partnerships with voluntary organisations that benefit children and young people. The good work of the CAMHS is undertaken through effective partnership working managed by the social services department. For example, comprehensive CAMHS are provided in schools by the NSPCC.

In common with the picture nationally, there have been difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified staff in social services. While the proportion of residential childcare workers achieving national vocational qualifications at level 3 has improved, the figure remains below national comparators at 5.8%. The authority has been slow to develop a better coordinated work force planning strategy for social services. In education, there is a low turnover of staff but a high proportion of teaching posts remain unfilled.

The council has a very good capacity for further improvement.

Areas for exploration in the joint area review

Being healthy

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

- reduction in health inequalities.

Enjoying and achieving

Early years provision promotes children's development and well-being and helps them meet early learning goals:

- sustainability of increase in provision for early years.

Action is taken to ensure that educational provision 5-16 is of good quality:

- the progress in implementing the LEA inspection action plan, in particular for school improvement
- continued improvement in attainment at Key Stages 1 to 4.

Achieving economic well-being

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

- progress in improving education and training for 14 to 19 year olds.

Final judgements

Please see your final annual performance assessment judgements attached at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely



FLO HADLEY

Divisional Manager
Office for Standards in Education



JONATHAN PHILLIPS

Director – Quality, Performance and
Methods
Commission for Social Care Inspection

CC: Sandie Keene – Executive Director of Social Services

CC: Edna Sutton – Executive Director of Education

APA final judgements 2005: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Areas for judgement	Final judgements ¹
The contribution of <i>the local authority's social care services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	3
The contribution of <i>local authority's education services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	2
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 capacity to improve its services for children and young people	4

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