

9 December 2009

Mr Robert McCulloch-Graham  
Director of Children's Services  
London Borough of Barnet  
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Dear Mr McCulloch-Graham

## 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

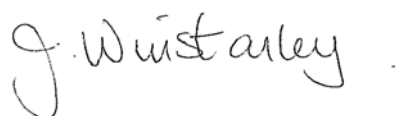
<b>Children's services rating</b>	<b>Performs well (3)</b>
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Children's services in the London Borough of Barnet perform well.

Higher than average proportions of both primary and secondary schools are good or outstanding and none are inadequate. Nursery provision is also stronger in its overall effectiveness relative to similar areas or the country overall. Childcare and childminder provisions, however, are satisfactory and the proportions of good or better settings are below the averages for similar parts of the country. The extent to which these settings help children develop healthy lifestyles and stay safe is also satisfactory, whilst they are good in supporting the other Every Child Matters outcomes. For children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable the local authority fostering agency is good, as is one of the two children's homes, the other being satisfactory. Pupil referral units are good. Special schools are strong with three outstanding and one good.

Barnet performs well against the Every Child Matters national indicators, being in line with or above national or similar area values, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving. Initial assessments are carried out on almost all referrals to social care services. Children's achievements at age 11 are above the national average and in line with similar areas. They make good progress during secondary education and at age 16 achievement is above both national and similar area averages. At age 19 higher numbers than average nationally achieve level 2 or 3 qualifications and proportions are in line with similar areas. Gaps in achievement between children and young people from low income families and others are similar to those seen nationally and in similar areas at ages 11 and 16, and likewise with respect to achievement of level 2 or 3 qualifications at age 19. A smaller proportion of young people than seen nationally are not in education, training or employment. The achievement gap between those with special educational needs following the national curriculum and others is narrower than average at age 11 but has broadened by age 16 where it is wider than seen nationally.

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.



Juliet Winstanley  
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