

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
Textphone 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 020 7421 6666
Direct F 020 7421 5633
Juliet.Winstanley@ofsted.gov.uk



8 November 2011

Ms Deborah Brownlee
Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road
Stretford
Manchester
Lancashire M32 0TH

Dear Ms Brownlee

Annual children's services assessment

Ofsted guidance published in April 2011 explains that the annual assessment of children's services is derived from the performance profile of the quality of services for children and young people in each local area. This performance profile includes findings from across Ofsted's inspection and regulation of services and settings for which the local authority has strategic or operational responsibilities, either alone or in partnership with others, together with other published data.

In reaching the assessment of children's services, Ofsted has taken account of inspection outcomes including the arrangements for making sure children are safe and stay safe and performance against similar authorities and/or national measures. More weight has been given to the outcomes of Ofsted's inspections and regulatory visits (Blocks A and B in the performance profile).

The annual assessment 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, an assessment of 'performs excellently' does not mean all aspects of provision are perfect. Similarly, an assessment of 'performs poorly' does not mean there are no adequate or even good aspects. As in 2010, while the performance profile remains central to Ofsted's assessment, meeting or not meeting the minimum requirements alone does not define the grade. The assessment has involved the application of inspector judgement.

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council children's services assessment 2011

Children's services assessment	Performs excellently (4)
--------------------------------	--------------------------

Children's services in Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council perform excellently. This performance has been sustained from 2010 to 2011. The large majority of services are good or better overall and help children and young people to stay safe and enjoy learning. The areas of strength and areas for improvement have changed little since last year. As found elsewhere, changes to secondary provision are taking place and more schools have become academies. Previous inspection judgements for these schools have been taken into account in the assessment.

In May of this year, an unannounced inspection was held of contact, referral and assessment arrangements for children in need and children who may be in need of protection. This identified strengths in the multi-disciplinary approach to safeguarding and the highly effective arrangements for screening domestic abuse referrals. There were no areas for priority action.

Strengths

- As in 2010, the large majority of early years and childcare providers are good or better. The proportion of childminders who are outstanding has doubled and, unlike last year, none of them is inadequate. Since last year, four of the 16 children's centres in the local authority have been inspected. Three are good and one is satisfactory. A recurring theme in the reports is the need for the centres to provide families with more help in achieving economic well-being.
- For children under five, almost all the provision in nursery and primary schools is good or better and a considerable proportion is outstanding; a situation that is very similar to last year. For the last five years, the achievement of five-year-olds at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been better than the averages for similar areas and across the country.
- The very large majority of primary schools continue to be good or better. Last year two schools were inadequate but, with the support of the local authority, they have both improved and one of them is now good. As a result, there are no inadequate primary schools in Trafford. For the last five years, the attainment of 11-year-olds has been above the averages for similar areas and across the country. Provisional figures for 2011 indicate that this good performance is being maintained.
- As in 2010, the very large majority of secondary schools are good or better and there is no inadequate provision. Since last year, six secondary schools have become academies. At their last inspections, five of these were outstanding and one was good. Even with the removal of these high

performing schools, 11 of the 12 secondary schools that continue to be maintained by the local authority are good or better and seven are outstanding. The one school that is satisfactory has good capacity to improve. For the last five years, the proportion of 16-year-olds achieving A* to C grades in five GCSE subjects, including English and mathematics, has been above the averages nationally and for similar areas.

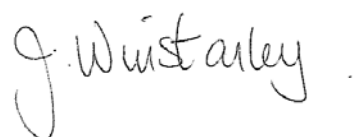
- As in 2010, all the provision for post-16 education is good or better. The proportion of 19-year-olds gaining the equivalent of two A level passes is in line with the averages elsewhere. At this age, the attainment gap between young people from low-income families and their contemporaries has narrowed. It is now in line with similar areas but wider than the average nationally. The proportion of 17-year-olds in education, training or work is higher than in similar areas.
- Almost all the provision for specialist education is good or better. With good support from the local authority, the one special school that is subject to special measures is making satisfactory progress.
- For looked after children, the fostering and adoption services continue to be good. Three of the four children's homes run by the local authority are good or better, with the remaining one being satisfactory. Of the five homes commissioned from other agencies or local authorities, five are good or better and none of them is inadequate.

Areas for further improvement

- Since last year, there has been an increase in the proportion of children's homes that are only satisfactory, although one of them is now outstanding.
- The achievement gap between five-year-olds from low-income families has not narrowed over the last four years and is wider than in similar areas and across the country. The gap between the attainment of 16-year-olds from low-income families and others of the same age has narrowed in the last two years. It is now in line with similar areas but continues to be wider than the average nationally.

This children's services assessment is provided in accordance with section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliet Winstanley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, Children's Services Assessment