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Ms Penny Penn-Howard
Director of Children's Services
Council of the Isles of Scilly
Town Hall
St Marys
TR21 0LY

Dear Ms Penn-Howard

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.

Council of the Isles of Scilly children's services assessment 2011

Children's services assessment	Performs well (3)
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Children's services on the Isles of Scilly perform well. This good performance has been sustained from 2010 to 2011. Almost all services, settings and institutions inspected by Ofsted are good or outstanding and provision helps children and young people learn well and stay safe. The strengths remain the same as last year and action has been taken to improve the adoption service. The new service, merged with that of another local authority, was inspected in March this year.

In 2011, an unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements for children in need and children who may be in need of protection found one strength, many satisfactory aspects and two areas for development. There were no priority actions requiring urgent attention.

Strengths

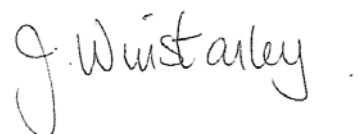
- Almost all childminding and childcare provision is good or better and all of it is at least satisfactory. The nursery school is outstanding.
- The Five Islands School provides good education and good boarding provision for children and young people from the age of five to 16. At the last inspection, in 2010, outcomes for pupils overall were judged as outstanding. An inspection of the citizenship curriculum, in 2011, also judged the overall effectiveness of this area as outstanding.
- Educational attainment is better than similar areas and the national average at every stage from five to 19 years. Rates of improvement in attainment for those aged five, 11 and 19 years are much better than the national trend seen over the last four years. Provisional results in 2011 at Key Stage 2 show a further increase of five percentage points.
- The new adoption service is good; however there were no children from the island undergoing assessment for adoption at the time of the inspection.
- The local authority provides a wide range of high quality preventative services. Three of the four areas for development identified at the inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements, in May 2010, have been met and work is in hand with the fourth. Assessments of children in need and children who may be in need of protection are of good quality and demonstrate that children's views are taken into account. Record keeping is up to date and management oversight is effective.

Areas for further improvement

- In 2010, the progress made by children between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in mathematics and English was below similar areas and the national average. Progress in English has slowed since 2008, but this is the first time that progress in both subjects is not as good as the average elsewhere. At the last inspection of the Five Islands School, progress in the primary years was judged as only satisfactory and was not as good as the progress made in the secondary years.
- The trend of improvement in the proportion of young people achieving five or more good GCSE results, including English and mathematics, is not as good as the national trend seen over the last four years. This means that while young people on the island continue to out-perform their peers on the mainland, the gap between them is closing.

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 cursive script that reads "J. Winstanley".

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, Children's Services Assessment