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Mr John Readman
Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services
Kingston upon Hull City Council
Room 22, The Guildhall
Alfred Gelder Street
Kingston upon Hull
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Dear Mr Readman

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.

Kingston-upon-Hull City Council children's services assessment 2011

Children's services assessment	Performs adequately (2)
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Children's services in Kingston-upon-Hull City Council perform adequately. This is the same as in 2010. The majority of services, settings and institutions inspected by Ofsted are good or better and the large majority of provision helps children and young people to stay safe and to do well and enjoy their learning. Areas of strength and areas for development are similar to last year. The previous inspection judgement for a school that has become an academy has been taken into account in making this assessment.

A recent announced full inspection of safeguarding and services for looked after children reported that safeguarding services and provision for looked after children are both adequate with several areas identified as good, including capacity for improvement and leadership and management. It found that some improvements had been made in addressing the areas for development identified in the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements for children in need and children who may be in need of protection carried out in October 2010 and that further work was in progress.

Strengths

- There has been a small improvement in the quality of provision made by childminders and registered day-care providers and there is now no inadequate provision.
- For children under five, provision in nursery and primary schools has also made a small improvement and the very large majority are good or better. Achievement at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is now in line with similar areas and the national average and there has been a particularly good improvement in performance, including for children from low-income families. The gap in achievement between these children from low-income families and their peers in Kingston-upon-Hull has narrowed significantly this year.
- Monitoring reports for schools that are, or have been, in an Ofsted category of concern show that the local authority is providing good, targeted support that is helping to bring about improvement.
- The very large majority of post-16 provision is good or better, although one secondary sixth form in the local area is adequate. Both sixth form colleges are good and the further education college is outstanding. The gaps in achievement between young people from low-income families and their peers at the age of 19 have reduced well in respect of level 2 qualifications.

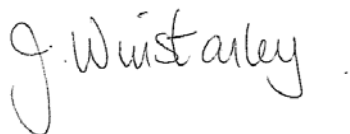
- Four of the six local special schools are at least good and all five pupil referral units are good or outstanding. There has been an improvement in the quality of the local authority's children's homes and five of the seven are now good. The provision the local authority commissions elsewhere is all at least good.

Areas for further improvement

- Although showing slight improvement, the quality of secondary school provision is still far too low and standards of behaviour have not improved. This was an area for development last year. Three schools are in an Ofsted category of concern and are making satisfactory progress.
- Despite steady improvement, standards achieved by children and young people at the ages of 11, 16 and 19 remain too low – and below those of similar areas and nationally. This was an area for development last year. Provisional data for Key Stage 2 in 2011 indicate a small drop in performance. At Key Stage 4 the data indicate a slightly smaller increase than in 2010. While there has been a good improvement in the number of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs at A* to C including English and mathematics at the age of 16, there remains much to do to raise standards further. Similarly, by the age of 19, insufficient progress has been made in bringing about improvement, particularly in gaining level 3 qualifications.
- The full inspection of safeguarding and services for looked after children identified a number of areas for improvement, the most urgent of which are concerned with the consistency of referrals, the timely completion of assessments and improving the quality of child protection and children in need plans.

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".

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, Children's Services Assessment