

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](mailto:Juliet.Winstanley@ofsted.gov.uk)



8 November 2011

Mr Jack Blackmore  
Interim Strategic Director, People and Communities  
North East Lincolnshire Council  
The Municipal Offices  
Town Hall Square  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire DN31 1HU

Dear Mr Blackmore

## 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.

## North East Lincolnshire Council children's services assessment 2011

<b>Children's services assessment</b>	<b>Performs adequately (2)</b>
---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

Children's services in North East Lincolnshire Council perform adequately. This is the same as in 2010. Specialist services make good provision for children and young people. The very large majority of all provision helps children and young people stay safe and the large majority of all provision helps them to do well and enjoy their learning. Areas of strength and for development are largely similar to last year. As in other local authorities, changes to secondary provision are taking place and some schools have become academies. Previous inspection judgements for these schools have been taken into account in making this assessment.

An 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 found two strengths and no areas for priority action. Two of the areas for development identified at the previous unannounced inspection of front-line child protection services had not been addressed.

### Strengths

- The quality of early years and childcare provision has improved slightly overall this year and no provision is inadequate. Two children's centres have been inspected and both judged to be outstanding.
- Although not showing such strong performance as in the previous assessment, the large majority of provision in nursery and primary schools for children under the age of five is good or better. There has been a very good improvement in outcomes for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This was an area for further development in the previous assessment. The proportion of Early Years Foundation Stage children from low-income families showing a good level of development compared to their peers has also improved well and is above the national average and that of similar areas. The gap in achievement with all children in North East Lincolnshire has narrowed over the last few years.
- Specialist provision is mostly of good quality, as it was last year. Both of the local authority's special schools are outstanding. The local fostering agency is good and the adoption agency is outstanding. Six of the nine local authority children's homes are good; this is two more than at the time of the last assessment.
- There was a significant increase in the percentage of 16-year-olds gaining five or more GCSEs at A\* to C including English and mathematics in 2010, and the difference between outcomes in North East Lincolnshire and the national average has reduced significantly over the last four years. Although the proportion of 16-year-olds from low-income families who

achieve at this level has also increased, the rate of improvement is not as fast and the gap in achievement between these groups has widened.

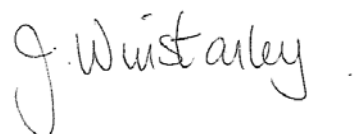
- The recent inspection of youth offending services in the local area identified very strong outcomes in the key areas for performance.

### **Areas for further improvement**

- Only half of the local authority's 45 primary schools are good or better, although only two are inadequate. Too few children reach the expected standards at the age of 11 and between 2007 and 2010 there was no improvement. Consequently, performance in North East Lincolnshire remains below that of similar areas and the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. Progression between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics are also below comparators. Provisional data for 2011 indicate a small improvement in test results for 11-year-olds.
- Although no secondary school is inadequate, only a third are good and the three secondary school sixth forms taken into account for this assessment are all only satisfactory.
- Despite steady improvement, the proportion of young people who gain level 2 and level 3 qualifications by the age of 19 remains below that of similar areas and the national average. The gaps in achievement between young people from low-income families and their peers in gaining qualifications by the age of 19 reduced last year but have not narrowed over time.
- Only one of the two pupil referral units is good, as one has deteriorated and is now only satisfactory.
- The unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements identified six areas for development, including two unaddressed issues from the previous inspection. These relate to closing contacts without sufficient evaluation of the risks and the inconsistent use of chronologies to inform current assessments.

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