

11 November 2011

Ms Sue Butterworth  
Director of Children's Services  
London Borough of Havering  
Town Hall  
Main Road  
Romford  
Essex RM1 3BD

Dear Ms Butterworth

## 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.

## London Borough of Havering children's services assessment 2011

<b>Children's services assessment</b>	<b>Performs well (3)</b>
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Children's services in the London Borough of Havering perform well. Last year children's services were assessed as performing excellently, but the very recent inspection of safeguarding and services for looked after children found both services to be adequate overall. The outcome of this inspection is, therefore, pivotal in the children's services assessment judgment for 2011. The June 2011 unannounced inspection of children's social care contact, referral and assessment arrangements identified many areas of practice that met requirements and five areas for development. Coherent arrangements are now in place to address these.

The quality of most types of provision for children and young people remains strong overall and the very large majority of settings are good or better. A number of schools have become academies and previous inspection judgements for these schools have been considered as part of the assessment. The very large majority of published indicators, including those for educational attainment and progress, are at least in line with both similar areas and national averages.

### Strengths

- Good performance has been maintained regarding the overall quality of early years and childcare provision in the borough. The large majority of registered provision is at least good, as it was last year. There is hardly any inadequate day-care provision and no inadequate childminding.
- Nursery school and Early Years Foundation Stage provision in primary schools is of high quality overall, with the very large majority being good or better. The proportion of five-year-olds achieving a good level of development by the end of their Reception Year in school continues to improve and children from low-income families achieve well in comparison to their peers in similar areas and the national average.
- The large majority of primary schools are good or better, as they were last year. The small numbers in an Ofsted category of concern receive effective support to improve from the local authority. Provisional data for 2011 show that test results for 11-year-olds have improved again and are above the national average.
- The majority of secondary schools remain good or better. The proportion of 16-year-olds gaining five good GCSEs including English and mathematics continues to improve year on year and is significantly above both similar area and national averages. Local data show a further improvement in 2011.

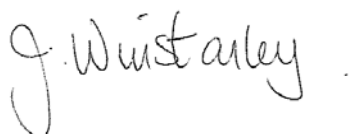
- As last year, the quality of provision for those over the age of 16 is very good, with all secondary school sixth forms being at least good. The most recent inspection of the local college judged the overall effectiveness of provision to be good and outcomes as satisfactory for the high proportion of 16- to 18-year-olds that attend. The numbers of young people gaining level 2 and 3 qualifications by the age of 19 is in line with performance in similar areas and nationally, although improvement has been made at a faster pace elsewhere over the last four years.
- The quality of specialist provision for those children and young people with additional needs is very good overall. All three of the local authority's special schools are good or better and children and young people's excellent behaviour within school is a common feature of these settings. Three of the four pupil referral units are at least good and the fourth is satisfactory.
- The local authority's fostering and adoption agencies are both good. The local authority has no children's homes of its own. The large majority of the homes it uses are good or better.

#### **Areas for further improvement**

- The very recent inspection of safeguarding and services for looked after children found both services to be adequate in all aspects other than the impact of partnership working to ensure children and young people who are looked after enjoy their learning and achieve well, which was found to be good.
- The recent inspection of the youth offending service found that substantial improvement is required in its safeguarding work and in its work in reducing risk of harm. Moderate improvement is required in preventing re-offending by young people.

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

Yours sincerely



Juliet Winstanley  
Divisional Manager, Children's Services Assessment