

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



25 November 2011

Ms Carol Chambers
Director of Children's Services
Rutland County Council
Catmose
Oakham
Rutland
LE15 6HP

Dear Ms Chambers

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.

Rutland County Council children's services assessment 2011

Children's services assessment	Performs well (3)
--------------------------------	-------------------

Children's services in Rutland County Council perform well. The very large majority of services, settings and institutions inspected by Ofsted are good or better overall and almost all provision supports children and young people to learn and stay safe. Areas of strength remain as last year and extend across universal, specialist and targeted provision. As found elsewhere, 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 the assessment. Some progress has been made in addressing areas for development identified in 2010.

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 May 2011, identified a range of practice that meets the requirements of statutory guidance but no strengths and five important areas for development. A more recent full inspection of safeguarding arrangements and services for looked after children showed that swift and effective action has been taken to address these areas for development. Safeguarding arrangements are adequate overall and services for looked after children, young people and care leavers are good.

Strengths

- The very large majority of early years and childcare provision is good or better. Although the number of childminders has reduced, the proportion that is good or better has increased. This was an area for further improvement last year. All but one of the registered childcare providers are good or better and none are now inadequate.
- For pupils of both primary and secondary school age, provision is almost always good or better. Since last year, all three secondary schools have become academies. In their most recent inspections, two of them were judged to be outstanding and the other to be good. One outstanding primary school has also become an academy. A primary school that was previously inadequate is now satisfactory, having made the necessary improvements with good support from the local authority.
- Specialist provision in the one local authority special school, two independent special schools and a residential special school in the local area is at least good. Children's homes commissioned by the council for children in its care are good and the local authority fostering service is outstanding. The adoption agency is adequate.
- The large majority of published indicators for educational attainment are at least in line with similar areas and almost all are above the national average. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the age of five years is well above average. The proportion of 11-year-

olds attaining the expected level in both English and mathematics is well above average and continues to improve each year. The trend of improvement at 16 years of age continues and more young people achieve five A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics than found elsewhere. Achievement of level 2 and level 3 qualifications at 19 years of age is well above average and improved at a faster rate than found nationally in 2010.

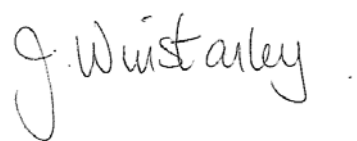
- Numbers are small, but the proportion of 16-year-olds from low-income families achieving higher grade GCSEs including English and mathematics is above elsewhere, and the gap with all young people in Rutland is reducing more quickly. This is also the case for 19-year-olds from low-income families attaining level 2 qualifications.

Areas for further improvement

- The proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training at 17 years of age remains above the average for similar areas.
- The recent inspection of safeguarding showed that there are appropriate arrangements for the management of formal child protection processes. However, in some cases, there is a lack of clarity about the nature and purpose of the work to be undertaken and delays in recording lead to drift in the planning and implementation of child protection plans. These factors detract from the overall effectiveness of the work to improve outcomes for children.

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 style with a large initial "J".

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, Children's Services Assessment