

9 December 2009

Ms Frankie Sulke
Executive Director for Children and Young People
London Borough of Lewisham
3rd Floor, Laurence House
1 Catford Road
London
SE6 4RU

Dear Ms Sulke

Children's services annual rating

Ofsted guidance published in May 2009 explained that the annual rating would derive from a new performance profile of the quality of services and outcomes for children and young people in each local area. This profile includes findings from across Ofsted's inspection and regulation of services and settings for which the council has strategic or operational responsibilities, either alone or in partnership with others, together with data from the relevant *Every Child Matters* indicators in the new National Indicator Set (NIS).

In considering the evidence in the profile to determine the children's services rating for 2009 it has become clear that the continuing gaps in the data are significant, particularly those relating to aspects of social care and services for Looked After Children. Ofsted has decided therefore to use 2009 as a transitional year easing into the full application of the new system in 2010. As a consequence, although the performance profile remains central to Ofsted's rating, we have interpreted the performance bands with flexibility and exercised professional judgement with caution.

The annual rating 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, a rating of 'performs excellently' does not mean all aspects of provision are perfect. Similarly, a rating of 'performs poorly' does not mean there are no adequate or even good aspects.

Children's services rating 2009

Children's services rating	Performs Excellently (4)
-----------------------------------	---------------------------------

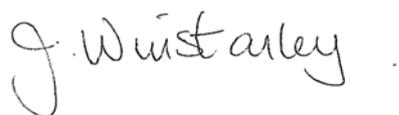
Children's services in the London Borough of Lewisham perform excellently.

The overall effectiveness of a very large majority of inspected services and settings is good or better. A higher than average proportion of universal school provision, including primary secondary and sixth form schools is good or better and there is little inadequate provision.

The proportion of good or better childminding and childcare provision on non domestic premises is above the average found in similar areas, but not as good as the national average. Provision for children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable is good overall. The one pupil referral unit is good and of the six special schools inspected, four are outstanding and two are good. The fostering agency is good. The joint area review in 2007 found services for looked after children were good and safeguarding adequate. Judgements for staying safe and enjoying and achieving are good or better across the very large majority of inspected settings and services.

Performance against a very large majority of national indicators, including those for staying safe and enjoying and achieving, is in line with or above similar areas and national figures. The difference in the performance of children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable and others of the same age is too wide in some areas, such as young people from low income backgrounds achieving level 3 qualifications by the age of 19, but there has been significant progress made in other areas such as the attainment of Black pupils.

The children's services rating is provided for the purpose of section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The rating of local authority children's services will contribute significantly to the managing performance theme of each local authority's Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) organisational assessment and therefore to the score for each local authority overall.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliet Winstanley".

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, CAA