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Making Social Care
Better for People



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Dear Ms Lock

2006 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

This letter summarises the findings of the 2006 annual performance assessment process for your local authority. We are grateful for the information which you provided to support this process and for the time made available by yourself and your colleagues to discuss relevant issues.

Summary

Areas for judgement	Grade awarded¹
The contribution of <i>the local authority's children's services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	3
The council's overall <i>capacity to improve</i> its services for children and young people	3
The contribution of <i>the local authority's social care services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	3

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Grade	Service descriptors	Capacity to improve descriptors
4	A service that delivers well above minimum requirements for users	Excellent / outstanding
3	A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users	Good
2	A service that delivers only minimum requirements for users	Adequate
1	A service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users	Inadequate

Leicester City is a good performing council. It is one of Britain's most diverse cities and includes some of the most disadvantaged areas in England; with a population of almost 300,000, it is the largest in the East Midlands. A range of established and new Black and minority ethnic (BME) communities make up 36.5% of the population, with over 80 different languages spoken in the city. In schools, 52% of pupils are from BME backgrounds. Leicester continues to attract people from abroad. A key service delivery challenge for Children and Young People's Services is to remain responsive to the city's varied and changing demographic profile and the lifestyle changes of children and young people, their parents and carers. This takes place in the context of a city with one of the lowest levels of child development on entry to school, together with one of the highest levels of pupil mobility or turbulence, in the country and a high level of referral to specialist and targeted services.

Being healthy

The contribution the council's services make to improving outcomes in this area is good and result from the strong contributions made by both social care and education services. Services are effectively coordinated to ensure that they focus clearly on specific local priorities. The health national targets for children and young people are met in most areas and exceeded in some. The council's Children and Young People's Plan (2006-2009) and the Local Area Agreement set clear priorities and performance indicators to improve the outcome of being healthy. The council is working both corporately across its housing, benefit and children's services directorates and collaboratively with primary care trusts and schools to promote healthy lifestyles, to ensure early identification of difficulties and the implementation of suitable levels of support, and to reduce the significant disparities that exist between different geographical areas within the city. The council's Children and Young People's Plan first priority is to reduce health inequalities.

The council can demonstrate it is taking action to promote children and young people's health, and that it supports parents and carers in keeping their children healthy. For example, there are Sure Start programmes in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods providing parenting education and support; ante and post-natal care; speech and language therapy; safe and healthy home surveys and services targeted to support teenage parents, fathers and children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

One area for improvement identified in the 2005 annual performance assessment was for the council, with its partners, to continue initiatives to reduce teenage pregnancies further, particularly in the west of the city. The council now has an improved teenage pregnancy strategy in place which underpins a range of provision to promote young people's sexual health and supports teenage parents. Based on the 2004 data, the number of conceptions amongst 15-17 year olds per 1000 population has shown a significant decrease.

In addition, the council's initiatives have had a positive impact on measurable outcomes for children and young people: there have been increases in breast-feeding initiation and sustaining; reduced waiting times for access to specific therapies including physiotherapy, speech and language and occupational therapy.

The promotion of healthy lifestyles has been a strength in school inspection reports. The authority already has 84% of schools enrolled on the National Healthy Schools Programme and is well on track to reach its target for 50% of its schools to achieve the Healthy Schools standards by December 2006. During the past year inspection judgements have shown that participation in sport is satisfactory or better and that schools provide suitable guidance and support on healthy eating, substance misuse, sex and relationships education and pupils' emotional well-being. All schools are involved in the School Sport Coordinator Programme within two area partnerships. These partnerships are increasing participation in sport; for example, school twinning has been undertaken with Islamic schools to promote opportunities for female pupils to engage in physical sport. There has been a reported increase in the proportion of pupils eating fresh fruit.

The council has made good progress during 2005/2006 in ensuring that the health needs of looked after children are reviewed and met. Almost all children and young people received medical and/or dental checks and have been encouraged to participate actively in the health assessment process so that they adopt a positive attitude towards health issues. Inspections of the council's direct provision found that the National Minimum Standards (NMS) relating to health were generally met or exceeded with only very minimal shortfalls noted. These have been subsequently addressed by the council.

An area for improvement identified in the 2004-05 APA was for the council to improve access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for the children and young people requiring referral for assessment for acute services. Staffing problems early in 2005 led to a decline in the number of young people from the youth justice service receiving a prompt referral to CAMHS services. However, these issues were addressed. Access to CAMHS for young people known to the authority has now improved and targets for referral waiting times are being met. The data for other referral streams indicated robust performance, with the council's performance being above that of its comparators. The proportion of young people accessing prompt early intervention and treatment is excellent.

The council provides a wide range of support services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to their parents and carers. Collaboration with partner agencies ensures that early identification systems are in place, reducing timescales for assessment. Multi-agency pathways to services are being developed. A multi-agency Model of Care Board has been established with parent/carer members who are able to have a positive impact on service planning and the development of services.

Staying safe

The contribution the council's services make to improving outcomes in this area is good. The council provides a good range of services and has robust safeguarding procedures and practices in place to ensure that children and young people living in the city of Leicester are safe.

The council has strong membership and representation on the Local Children's Safeguarding Board, Domestic Violence Forum, Safer Communities Board and a range of lower level multi-agency partnership arrangements. Local arrangements are cohesive, with a range of joint strategies, policies and procedures in place that are fully compliant with statutory requirements and current government guidance. These strong partnerships across all sectors ensure that child protection issues are everyone's responsibility.

Safeguarding children and ensuring effective child protection are evident as core elements in the commissioning, planning, delivery and review for children and young people. A wide range of information, support and guidance is easily accessible to children and their carers.

The levels of deprivation in Leicester contribute to a higher than average number of referrals of children in need. The council was able to demonstrate that it continues to focus on identifying those children at significant risk and ensuring that interventions are both timely and effective.

Key performance indicators relating to staying safe show good or improved performance. However, performance in core assessments remain below average. Any data that indicates fluctuation in performance, for example in the higher percentage of repeat referrals of children in need, has been properly analysed in order to implement suitable actions. Council audits indicate satisfactory quality of services and that duty and assessment workers have acted appropriately.

There is improved performance in the numbers of children and young people participating in and contributing to their reviews. The council has a Children's Rights Service in place and can access advocates for children who need an independent voice. Outcomes from regulatory inspections of the council's direct provision were generally good with no major shortfalls identified. Support for young carers has increased during 2005/2006. A well established Black Cases Panel ensures that the needs of Black and minority ethnic children are considered and met appropriately.

Children and young people have reported that bullying is a concern and the council is currently developing its anti-bullying strategy. The authority's anti-bullying guidance and resources, developed in partnership with Leicestershire Constabulary, and its racial incident reporting procedures have been recognised nationally by the DfES as good practice. Racist incident figures are reported regularly by schools, and training on racist incidents, bullying, child protection, health and safety, and on governance issues is being delivered. The council has reported that 91% of schools returned racist monitoring reports for the academic year 2004-2005.

The council has succeeded in maintaining its overall numbers of looked after children to the same level as 2004/2005 by strategic management and targeted family support services, effective care planning, and good policies on permanent placements. Performance in relation to the timeliness of reviews of looked after children is good. All children on the Child Protection Register and/or looked after are allocated a named social worker who actively coordinates a care plan or child protection plan which is regularly reviewed in accordance with standards set out in national guidance. The council's

workforce strategy has been devised to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved for its service users.

The council has well developed safeguarding arrangements for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The council has a specialist social work team based at the Leicester Royal Infirmary which engages with parents at the time of a child's birth and offers follow up support and guidance. A resource directory has received positive feedback from parents and carers.

Safeguarding training has been provided across the city and corporately within the council with the aim of developing early recognition and preventative work. A social inclusion team focuses on access opportunities across all sectors so that children with disabilities can safely access the same resources as non-disabled children. Inspections of schools during 2005 and 2006 found that arrangements to meet pupils' care, welfare, health and safety were at least satisfactory, with no schools judged inadequate. All schools inspected were judged to be compliant in having fully operational child protection procedures in place. During 2005-2006, up to 90% of children with disabilities aged 14+ had a transition plan to support their move from children's services to adult services.

The effectiveness of the council's early years advice, guidance and support service was highlighted as a weakness in last year's APA. Inspections in 2005-2006 indicate that early years childcare providers continue to have a higher percentage of actions required at initial registration than is the case nationally. The council has earmarked specific funding for schools and early years settings, has developed its support through advice and guidance packs and has bought in additional senior capacity to strengthen safeguarding. However, this work has yet to impact on providers and remains an area for improvement.

Enjoying and achieving

The contribution the council's services make to improving outcomes in this area is adequate. Standards of attainment are too low because they are below those of similar areas and well below national average figures. However, they have shown a clear and sustained improvement. The pupils in Leicester make progress that is broadly in line with that expected at most key stages in their education. Pupils rates of absence from school and levels of exclusion are higher than average. The authority has achieved notable success in addressing weaknesses and raising standards, particularly through its effective intervention strategies, and has maintained the overall improvement trends of past years across all these areas. Standards of attainment showed some significant improvements at all Key Stages in 2005. There has been sustained improvement in attendance and exclusions.

One of the biggest challenges facing the authority is children's very low levels of basic skills when they start their formal education, with a significantly high proportion of children speaking English as an additional language and at an early stage of language acquisition. These circumstances are exacerbated by some very challenging socio-economic factors, including high levels of turbulence. Addressing low standards on entry to school and in the Foundation Stage, particularly in communication language and literacy, have a high priority

within the Children and Young People's Plan and the Local Area Agreement. Early years support for schools, and the private and voluntary sector, has ensured that outcomes from Ofsted inspections are satisfactory or better. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils generally make good progress in the Foundation Stage although their attainment places the authority in the bottom 10% of authorities nationally. Increasing pupils rates of progress from this low baseline is an ongoing challenge.

Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 were well below national median figures in 2005, with results in reading and writing below those of similar areas. However, increases in mathematics, and particularly in reading, were higher than average. Standards of attainment at Key Stage 2 in 2005 were well below expected levels in English, mathematics and science and below similar areas. At Key Stage 3 standards were also well below expected levels in English, mathematics and science, but not significantly below similar areas. Although increases in mathematics and science enabled the authority to close the gap on similar areas at Key Stages 2 and 3, average scores in English declined. At Key Stage 4 standards were well below average and below similar areas on all indicators. All key indicators showed improvement on 2004 figures, although these increases were only in line with those achieved by similar areas.

Attendance figures were below the national average in 2005. Of particular concern are the significantly high levels of unauthorised absence, notably in secondary schools. Attendance of looked after children continues to be poor. However, the rising trend in attendance in primary and secondary schools 2001-2005 has been sustained. Strategies for improving attendance have had a significant impact on attendance figures, particularly on the high levels of unauthorised absence. Improvement in attendance levels in primary schools has exceeded increases in statistical neighbours and nationally. Attendance rates at secondary schools have improved at twice the national rate.

Exclusion rates in 2004-2005 were higher than average figures. Fixed-term exclusions, both in primary and secondary schools, were higher than average, with permanent exclusions in secondary schools almost twice those in similar areas. Nonetheless, the authority's positive strategies for improving the high rates of exclusions have had a significant impact. There has been a reduced rate of exclusion in primary schools to that of the national average, with particular improvements in schools targeted through the Behaviour Improvement Programme. Exclusions of looked after children have reduced to below half the national average. High rates of fixed-term exclusions remain a concern. Further reducing this remains a key priority for next year. The authority plans to build on the successful collaborative work undertaken to date.

The authority has a well developed system for identifying and supporting schools causing concern. It is involved in a range of local and national initiatives to support schools and neighbourhoods in challenging circumstances. Effective monitoring and well focused intervention and support have led to a significant and sustained reduction, over time, in the number of schools in Ofsted categories of concern. All schools previously in Ofsted categories were judged to have improved over the last year, and fewer schools than nationally, or in similar areas, were judged inadequate. This is a direct result of targeting

support to secure leadership and management, to implement national strategies and to improve pupil tracking.

In addition to effective support for schools, parents and carers receive support directly and indirectly through both targeted and universal services. This includes the work of Sure Start centres with local communities; extended schools and a wide range of events, programmes and guidance including a Toy Library, a book start initiative and TV or not TV guidance for parents. Partnerships with parents are generally good. There is early identification and assessment of the needs of vulnerable groups, especially looked after children and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Parents, carers and children and young people receive support to contribute to this process.

There has been significant improvement in the overall achievement and standards of attainment of looked after children in 2005. In 2005-06, 75% of looked after children sat at least one GCSE equivalent exam compared to 53.8% the previous year, with a significant proportion achieving at least five A*-G grades at GCSE. The 100% success rate at the Short Course Centre has contributed significantly to the improved attainment of looked after children and care leavers. Exclusions of looked after children and of pupils from special schools are low compared with statistical neighbours.

The Youth Offending Team has had a lower than average proportion of young offenders in education, training or employment (ETE) from the period July 2004 to September 2005 and has struggled to meet this target. Despite the overall poor performance in this area the Youth Offending Team has managed significant higher rates of ETE engagement in areas where it has more direct control over provision of services through the Resettlement and After Care and Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programmes, and is working collaboratively with partners to improve performance.

A broad range of recreational, leisure and cultural facilities is available and used well by many children and young people. The council has won Beacon Status for the seventh consecutive year for its work in providing cultural and sport services to hard to reach groups. The services that scored highly included: free swimming lessons; free delivery of library service to looked after children; specialist sports coaching courses to enable local people to coach groups of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; and a project that brought together young people across the city to learn different sports. The council has exceeded its target to refurbish nine play areas in 2005/2006, with 16 play areas improved to meet European standards.

Inspection evidence indicates that the overall effectiveness of most nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, and the progress made by their pupils, are at least satisfactory. Outcomes in the most recent inspections since September 2005 are generally good. The responses of children and young people indicate that they feel that life is at least quite enjoyable and that they are at least quite happy at school and enjoy their education.

Making a positive contribution

The contribution the council's services make to improving outcomes in this area is good. Nonetheless, the council's Children and Young Peoples Plan recognises the need to develop clear ways for the voices of children and young people to be heard and acted upon. Despite much good practice, children and young people report they do not feel listened to. Consultation builds upon successful models of active involvement of children and young people, including the development, and implementation, of local and national initiatives. Consultation is regular, frequent and inclusive, especially engaging traditionally hard to reach and vulnerable groups of children and young people. It discernibly makes a difference: over 100 young people were involved in the design and development of the Children and Young People's Plan; 300 children were involved in the selection of creative partners to work with schools to raise attainment, and in the 19 schools where Creative Partnerships are working, the council has seen a marked difference in young people's readiness to learn.

Active participation strategies are in place across the council's partnerships and across a range of settings to encourage children and young people to participate in both the design and delivery of services and wider community governance. The cross cutting nature of making a positive contribution is embedded in the Children and Young People's Plan. The strategy is inclusive, joining together the challenges of individual representation for special interest groupings, looked after children, disabled children and young people, those known to the Youth Offending Team, with more universal participation across schools and youth services. This supports a partnership structure that allows for individual representation, involvement in area based decisions, the formation of a Young People's Council and a direct linkage to the democratic structure of the city. The council's strong track record in involving young people in the recruitment of senior staff has included recruitment of the Director of Children and Young People's Services. There is corporate commitment to the involvement of children and young people; children and young people are involved in the Council's Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee and their representation is planned across other council scrutiny processes.

Inspection evidence in schools indicates that pupils are generally well engaged in the decision making process and are suitably encouraged to make a positive contribution to the school community. All secondary schools, and an increasing number of primary schools, have pupil councils. Over 250 young people received awards at the Youth Achievement Awards for making a positive contribution to the life of their school and wider community. The involvement of secondary aged pupils in the city's 16 secondary schools as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme has raised their aspirations and provided impetus for the project. A project has been engaged that brings together the Arts Council, Creative Partnership and schools entitled Planning for Real. One special school has taken part and found it to be beneficial for participants.

The city has three Junior Youth Inclusion Programmes (JYIPs) located in three neighbourhoods with the highest rates of crime and deprivation. The programmes have exceeded their target of working with 200 children per annum aged 8-12 years who are at risk of involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour, making a significant contribution to

reducing the first time entrants in the youth justice system in 2005. The Youth Offending Team has commissioned a Youth Inclusion and Support Panel to strengthen multi-agency youth crime prevention activity. The panel will be piloted in an area of high crime and deprivation and will work collaboratively with existing projects developing targeted services at children and young people at risk of crime and anti social behaviour.

Children and young people are very involved in the design and evaluation of support programmes. Looked after children have been actively involved in the development of a new 16+ service to support young people leaving care. This has received significant recognition, including young people working with Radio Leicester to promote greater understanding of the life experience of looked after children.

During 2005, the proportion of offenders in education, employment or training has risen to 60% and the numbers of looked after children involved in offending have decreased by 50%. Data on youth offending shows that strategies and initiatives are having an impact; trends over time indicate that rates are reducing. There is active corporate support for restorative justice, with several council services offering community payback placements.

Achieving economic well-being

The contribution the council's services make to improving outcomes in this area is adequate with an overall improving trend. Pupils' success rates are improving, but remain below average and those of statistical neighbours. The local authority works with the Local Learning and Skills Council (LLSC) and Connexions to ensure that children and young people, including children in care and care leavers, have sound advice and guidance at all key transition points. There is a well coordinated approach to supporting families through various partnerships. Planning for childcare places is properly coordinated and developed in order to meet the needs of children and families. Young people and children are generally positive about service provision and delivery.

Coordinated planning and delivery of good quality 14-19 education makes an important contribution to the economic well-being of children and young people in Leicester. The development of the 14-19 strategy is collaborative and based on a sound needs analysis. There is strong and developing collaboration across the LLSC, Leicestershire County Council and other partners, including business partners, to develop good vocational provision. The curriculum includes an increasing range of vocational pathways and progression routes relevant to the needs of most learners. The percentage increase in student participation through the Increased Flexibility Programme between 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 was 30%; the programme has enabled students to access more targeted work experience opportunities. Standards in secondary schools, including sixth form students, are continuing to improve. Success rates for learners from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds in Leicester have improved, but are not as high as they should be. Almost all schools inspected since September 2005 have been graded satisfactory or better in developing workplace skills, and there is continued improvement in performance across non school post-16 providers. Evidence from college inspections indicates that post-16 provision is improving. Unsatisfactory provision is very small and recent inspections indicate improvement. Adult

and community learning in the city has improved. The LLSC has worked very closely with training providers and colleges to improve standards and quality.

The quality, and range, of advice to children and young people is evaluated and the range of opportunities is extended accordingly to ensure that services reflect the diversity of need. There is effective coordination between health, education and social services to meet educational, personal and welfare needs of children and young people, especially of vulnerable and other groups. Transition to adult services is improving and is satisfactory.

The council has well established and effective provision for looked after children, including the 16+ service, which makes arrangements for pathway and transition planning and college placements. A financial support system is in place to meet the needs of 16+ looked after children and care leavers, and the council has also established a standard support package for care leavers in higher education. Specific projects aim to raise the educational aspirations of looked after children. The housing department and the 16+ service work together to ensure that care leavers access independent accommodation at the appropriate time. They have access to an increased leaving care grant and can attend a modular course on Managing Your Own Home. There is also a range of supported accommodation. Unaccompanied asylum seeking young people leaving care have access to the full range of services outlined and are supported by a specialist team.

Partnership working has led to measurable improvement. Effective action is taken to support families in maximising their economic well-being, both through improving educational provision and with a number of targeted initiatives and strategies. Childcare provision is available and is geographically distributed over the area. Action is taken to fill gaps and to meet the needs of disadvantaged families. Information, advice and guidance to support families in maximising their economic well-being is provided through the Connexions website, the Bridges website, Children's Information Service and a range of targeted leaflets. Support for parents and carers is also provided through family learning initiatives, with information on childcare and facilitating access to Job Centre Plus through Children's Centres.

The authority has achieved improvements in several areas of employment, education and training (EET) for vulnerable groups. There has been an increase in the number of young parents in EET in 2005; care leavers in EET at age 19 maintained the substantial improvement noted last year. In addition, the Youth Offending Team has achieved a 10% improvement in education to employment figures for the period April to December 2005 compared with the previous year, although this figure remains below similar areas. The council has developed a range of protocols to address the major shortfalls identified relating to effective transition for vulnerable young people. The proportion of young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) is static. Despite the long-term downward trend since 2004, the rate of reduction poses a potential risk to meeting the local NEET target of 9.7% by November 2006.

Independent research into the housing related support needs of vulnerable young people in Leicester has been completed. This will support action to maximise the proportion of children and young people living in homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard. The

percentage of care leavers at age 19 who are living in suitable accommodation has increased considerably and is now reported to be at 100%. There are no families in bed and breakfast accommodation.

All agencies within the 14-19 partnership have incorporated their specific aims for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into a set of inclusive principles, which are embedded into the priorities and actions of the Children and Young People's Plan. This will help to drive further improvements to practice already recognised as innovative.

The council's management of its services for children and young people, including its capacity to improve them further

The council, and its partners across all sectors, provide effective leadership for children's services across the area. The Director of Children's Services took up post on 1 April 2006 and has a very clear vision of what a good children's services directorate should look like. Strong leadership is evident. The council's children's services structure has now been finalised with clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability defined.

The services for children and young people in Leicester have been developed through a strong tradition of partnership across all sectors and with an active focus on the involvement of service users, including parents and carers. The development of the Children and Young People's Plan was completed through wide ranging consultation on need, priorities for action, and joint agency working arrangements. This was in order to secure performance improvement, create efficient and seamless services and achieve value for money. Both at a strategic level, and operationally, there are strong partnership arrangements that focus upon a shared understanding of the action required to improve outcomes across all five Every Child Matters areas. The Children and Young People's Strategic Plan, the Local Preventative Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the council's corporate plan all clearly identify the council's direction of travel and identify common priorities and targets to drive forward service improvements.

Services for looked after children and other vulnerable groups are good. Performance indicators and the findings from regulatory inspections support the fact that the outcomes across all five areas are good. However, there is room for further improvement from the Youth Offending Team.

Forward planning and performance management systems have improved and are used to inform practice. The council increasingly uses benchmarking and comparisons to improve its self-awareness, efficiency and performance. Staff retention and recruitment are good with low vacancy and sickness levels. Training is invested in, often jointly with other partner agencies. Equal opportunities and actions to ensure workforce planning and recruitment of appropriate staff reflect the culturally diverse nature of the city and remain high priorities.

The budget settlement has reflected the importance that the council gives to its children's services. A joint commissioning strategy is being developed with partners, but in the interim the council has effectively built financial and other resource capacity through the strategic

use of partnership working and investment. The council's medium-term financial plan demonstrates its financial capacity to deliver its identified priorities by investment in preventative services. It can demonstrate improvements in value for money in some areas and has taken an invest to save approach in others by increasing spending to secure longer-term gains.

During the 2005-2006 year the council has faced considerable challenge in ensuring it maintained its delivery of services without detriment to service users whilst it restructured and created the new Children's Services Directorate. It successfully maintained good service delivery whilst achieving improved outcomes across most areas and has thus demonstrated good capacity for further improvement.

Key strengths and areas for improvement

Key strengths	Key areas for improvement
<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is effective promotion of healthy lifestyles in schools • there has been improvement in many of the key indicators over the last year • the health needs of looked after children are assessed and met. 	<p><i>Being healthy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce health inequalities between different neighbourhoods and communities.
<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are robust safeguarding procedures and practices in place to ensure that children and young people are safe • key performance indicators relating to staying safe show good or improved performance. 	<p><i>Staying safe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthen the early years advice, guidance and support service to improve outcomes. • improve performance in relation to core assessments.
<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeted intervention and support is effective in bringing about improvement in the quality of provision and in standards of attainment • there has been sustained improvement in raising standards and improving achievement. 	<p><i>Enjoying and achieving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raise standards of attainment particularly at Key Stages 2 and 4, to bring them in line with similar areas • sustain improvements in attendance by further reducing levels of unauthorised absence • reduce absence levels of looked after children • reduce rates of exclusions, both fixed term and permanent exclusion.

<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultation builds upon successful models of active involvement of children and young people • the council has been effective in engaging the traditionally hard to reach groups. 	<p><i>Making a positive contribution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement plans to further engage children and young people in all aspects of planning and in the evaluation of services to more fully empower different groups and communities to support themselves.
<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-ordinated planning and delivery of good quality 14-19 education makes a good contribution to the economic well-being of children and young people • partnership working includes voluntary and private providers and has led to some measurable improvement. 	<p><i>Achieving economic well-being:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raise standards of attainment and reduce the number of young people Not in education, employment or training so that outcomes are more securely in line with similar areas.
<p><i>Management of children's services:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the council and its partners, across all sectors, provide effective leadership for children's services • the services have been developed through a strong tradition of partnership across all sectors and with an active focus on the involvement of service users, including parents and carers. 	<p><i>Management of children's services:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the outcomes and effectiveness of the Youth Offending Team, particularly in relation to education, training and employment targets.

Aspects for focus in a future joint area review or the next APA:

- Effective action is taken to further improve achievement and enjoyment by raising standards of attainment, increasing levels of attendance and reducing exclusions.
- Progress is made towards further reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training, including meeting the Youth Justice Board targets for young offenders in education, training or employment.

We confirm that the children's services grade will provide the score for the children and young people service block in the comprehensive performance assessment (CPA) and will be published to the Audit Commission. The social care judgement is for CSCI information only.

Yours sincerely



FLO HADLEY

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JONATHAN PHILLIPS

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Commission for Social Care Inspection