

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

25 January 2011

Subject: Ofsted Rating of Children's Services 2010

Cabinet member: Councillor Lionel Grundy, Children and Education

Key Decision: No

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the Ofsted assessment of the performance of the children's services within Wiltshire.

Background

2. The Ofsted Rating was part of the CAA arrangements and contributed to the overall CAA assessment. The CAA has now been abolished but the rating currently remains. It derives from an Ofsted performance profile of the quality of services and outcomes for children and young people in each local authority area. The information used takes account of the following data groups with an emphasis on A and B:

- A. inspected and regulated services and settings eg childminders, preschools, schools and colleges
- B. inspections of safeguarding and services for looked after children; annual unannounced inspections; relevant joint area review inspection findings in relation to safeguarding and looked after children; findings from any triggered inspection; and serious case review evaluation findings
- C. Every Child Matters indicators

3. A single rating is given and there are 4 possible outcomes:

Performs excellently	an organisation that significantly exceeds minimum requirements
Performs well	an organisation that exceeds minimum requirements
Performs adequately	an organisation that meets only minimum requirements
Performs poorly	an organisation that does not meet minimum requirements

4. Ratings are to be published by Ofsted on 9 December 2010 together with a brief commentary.

Main Considerations for the Council

5. The Wiltshire rating is "Performs well". The commentary is included as appendix 1 of this report.

6. The letter identifies key area for further development. Work is ongoing to:

- **Improve the overall quality of childminding**

There are presently over 650 childminders in Wiltshire registered with Ofsted. To improve the quality of their service the local authority is implementing the Family Childcare Environmental Rating Scale (FCCERS) to assess the quality of childminding practice. This will enable the team to target support, direct training programmes and support focused improvement plans to raise standards.

- **Improve primary schools so that more are good or better**

Following the introduction of the revised Ofsted inspection framework in September 2009, 55 primary schools have been inspected. Of these schools 60% were judged to be good or better overall. This profile reflects the continuous improvement in primary schools. The Leadership development programme for primary education has continued to expand with an increased focus on the development of middle and subject leadership.

- **Close the gap in attainment between the majority of 11-year-olds and those from low income families, as well as those with special educational needs.**

We still await validated school performance data for the summer 2010, however early indications show an overall performance improvement for all pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, against the key National Indicator of percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+ in English and maths. Provisional data also shows that the gap in attainment has narrowed for pupils from low income families who are eligible for Free School Meals. Schools are reporting that a number of strategies are making a difference to improving pupil progress including one to one tuition in English and maths. In 2009-10 over 1600 pupils in primary schools gained access to the additional tuition programmes. While the Every Child programmes target intensive support in numeracy, reading and writing in the primary phase and have led to rapid improvement for some of our lowest attaining pupils.

Environmental and climate change considerations

7. None.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

8. The commentary acknowledges unacceptable gaps in the outcomes for some vulnerable groups, particularly in school attainment eg special educational needs and those children and young people in receipt of free school meals. This area remains a high priority both within the Departments' improvement plan and the multiagency Children and Young People's Plan.

Risk Assessment

9. In the current climate of change and limited resources it is difficult to assess risk. It is not yet known whether this rating will exist next year but central government has indicated that it expects Ofsted to take a more proportionate approach and has also abolished the national indicator set, part of which is a key part of this assessment.
10. Significant policy change, reduced budgets and lack of certainty in relation to particular grants could have an impact on performance and outcomes for children and young people. This will need to be mitigated through effective prioritisation and strengthened partnership working.

Financial Implications

11. No specific financial implications arising from this report.
12. The full impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review is not yet known as grant allocations and clarity around funding streams will not be finalised until mid December. In order to minimise the impact on front line services efficiencies are being focussed on reducing management and support costs.

Legal Implications

12. None.

Proposal

14. That Cabinet note the content of the report and the rating letter from Ofsted dated 9 December 2010.

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Appendices

Rating Letter from Ofsted dated 9 December 2010