

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET
15 December 2009

AGENDA ITEM NO.11c

Ofsted Children Services Rating 2009

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 is part of the new CAA arrangements and contributes to the overall CAA assessment. The rating derives from a new Ofsted performance profile of the quality of services and outcomes for children and young people in each local authority area. The data contained in the performance profile is not the same as that which has been used by Ofsted during the previous annual performance assessment (APA) process and the joint area review (JAR) inspections. It takes account the following data groups with an emphasis on A and B:
 - A. inspected and regulated services and settings eg childminders, pre-schools, 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 (NIS)

This shift is in line with the key underlying principle that more emphasis should be placed on findings from the most recent front-line inspection and regulation of services and settings.

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 10 December 2009 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. Work is ongoing to improve the identified areas of concern:
 - Childminding - From April 2008 the LA brought the childminding contract in-house as improvements were needed and a robust team has been developed.
 - Primary Schools - In 2008/9 Wiltshire's overall Ofsted inspection results improved with 58% of primary schools deemed to be good or better compared with 52% in 2007/8. A Leadership development programme is in place and 70% of primary schools have engaged in leadership CPD this year. Reading Recovery (Every Child a Reader) is in place and being implemented wider. It is aimed at Year 1 pupils who have individual tuition with a specifically trained teacher for 30 minutes daily for 12 – 20 weeks. Results from the first year have been impressive with 81% of children making rapid progress which is sustained. Every Child Counts will be launched soon and teachers are currently being trained. This programme works with the lowest mathematics attainers in Year 2. National results are impressive with children making 13.5 months progress with 20 hours teaching. Schools have 1-1 funding to enable the delivery of these programmes and the Teacher Development Agency has provided us with a list of 600 teachers in the Wiltshire area willing to become involved.
 - SEN/FSM Secondary – The rating uses 2008 exam results. Good progress has been made between 2008 and 2009 in reducing these gaps. SEN: The SEN gap for 5 A* - C GCSE with English and mathematics (NIS 105) closed by 4.9% between 2008 and 2009. Pupils with SEN making 2 levels progress has improved from 39.8% in 2008 to 43.1% in 2009 in English and from 29.6% in 2008 to 36.2% in 2009. FSM: The gap (NIS 102b) between FSM and peers for GCSE 5 A* - C with English and mathematics has also reduced significantly by 8.5% from 37.7% in 2008 to 29.2% in 2009.
7. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has submitted a revised serious case review within the agreed timescales. There has been no further feedback from Ofsted and the action plan arising from the review is being implemented by all partners.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

8. None.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

9. 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. Whilst there has been some improvement in 2009 tests and examinations, this area remains a high priority both within the Departments improvement plan and the multiagency Children and Young People's Plan.

Risk Assessment

10. The Council needs to recognise the shift in emphasis of the rating. National indicators previously had more significance in Ofsted's assessments. They are still important but the results from the inspections of "autonomous" settings and inspections of children's services now have greatest impact on the rating. Risk of maintaining the "Performs well" rating is impacted by the new, more demanding, Ofsted Inspection frameworks that are now in place both for services and settings. This is the first year of this revised approach to judging children's services and it is anticipated that the bar will continue to be raised to ensure that Councils and their partners are focussed on improving outcomes and life chances for children and young people.

Financial Implications

11. It is important to ensure that the quality of front-line services is not reduced, particularly those working with vulnerable children and young people and the school improvement team. The focus of service efficiencies has thus been on service redesign and management de-layering.

Legal Implications

12. None.

Conclusions

13. The rating of "Performs well" is an improvement on the Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment rating given in 2008 which was "Adequate".

Proposal

14. The Cabinet is asked to note the content of the report.

Carolyn Godfrey
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Date of report
15/12/09

Background Papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

Ofsted Children's Services Rating 2009

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Ofsted Children's Services Rating 2009