

Local authority children's services inspection outcomes Quality Report

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Introduction

This paper contains quality information relevant to Ofsted's six-monthly release on local authority children's services inspection outcomes data. This release can be found at the following webpage: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/official-statistics-local-authority-childrens-services-inspections-and-outcomes

The release covers inspections of all local authority children's services in England.

Relevance

Social care inspection outcomes are important for policy development, as well as for planning and providing public services, for example by informing the quality of social care provisions nationally and by area. There is a demand for local authority inspection outcomes information, both internally and externally, for example to help operationally and to influence policy.

The statistical release reports on inspections that are conducted on a three-year cycle so the release will not contain a full picture of these inspection outcomes until the framework has been completed and all 152 local authorities in England have been inspected. Generally, each local authority is only inspected once in a given inspection cycle, although they may be subject of re-inspection or improvement monitoring if they are found to be inadequate.

The data included in the release are generated by Ofsted's inspection process and are therefore administrative data.

Coherence and comparability

Ofsted has reported on outcomes from inspections of local authority children's services since September 2011. There have been a number of framework changes since the first release of statistics and these have been reflected in the releases. As a



result of framework changes there are differences in the judgements that are given in the inspections. Where it has not been possible to directly compare data, notes are given in the release to alert users.

In the current framework of inspections, a judgement is given for overall effectiveness of services and separate judgements are given for different parts of the service. Overall effectiveness is a cumulative judgement derived from:

- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection;
- The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence, including graded judgements on i) adoption performance and ii) the experiences and progress of care leavers;
- Leadership, management and governance.

The review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board also includes an overall judgement.

The outcomes used in these inspections are not directly comparable with previous inspection frameworks. The *Overall effectiveness* judgement takes into account all of the other elements of the inspection so, for example, for this current framework it includes children in need of help and protection and children looked after, whereas for the Child Protection Inspection (CPI) framework (from June 2012 to July 2013), it would only have included children subject of safeguarding and child protection services.

Where a release gives statements about whether inspection outcomes have declined or improved, they are referring to the most recent relevant outcome. Where things are not strictly comparable, we highlight this in the methodology section of the relevant release.

There are no comparable data published by directorates in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Other inspectorates such as the Care Quality Commission run inspections of safeguarding and looked after children's services which look at the quality and impact of local health care arrangements on these services. Although inspection reports are published, and there are plans to publish a national report, there are currently no data published on these inspection outcomes.

Assessment of user needs and perceptions

Social care outputs are shared with users in other organisations, such as the Department for Education (DfE) and local authorities (LAs), through Ofsted-led meetings as well as regional information group meetings. These meetings, led by local authorities, include representatives from each local authority's social care



children's services department and the attendees are providers of data and information to Ofsted. Ofsted's attendance at these meetings enables it to discuss ways in which it can help authorities to supply data, help them with any issues they are having in providing the data and introduce the published data. Ofsted has presented relevant information and publications to all of the existing regional groups, and sought feedback about whether its publications meet user needs.

These data are used internally and externally. Internally, the data are used to ensure Ofsted is informed about the latest picture of safeguarding, child protection and looked after children's services in local authorities in England. The data contribute to briefings, speeches and in meetings with senior leaders in local authorities and are used as a basis for improvement work being led by the regional teams. They also contribute to meetings with external organisations such as the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

Externally, users include data analysts and policy colleagues in the Department for Education (DfE), local authorities, researchers, trade publications and other groups including public bodies and charities.

Ofsted is currently running a consultation on all social care statistics releases, where it will gain user feedback on proposals to introduce more appropriate amend the frequencies of many of our publications and invite suggestions for improvement on the content. The closing data for this consultation is 8 December 2014.

There was an Ofsted-wide user consultation survey in January 2012 on all Ofsted official statistics releases. A report from this consultation can be found here: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/report-responses-2012-consultation-of-ofsted-official-statistics

Accuracy and reliability

The release reports on outcomes of local authority level children's services inspections in England that have taken place in a given period and that have subsequently been published. It does not include any other social care provider inspections such as children's homes, fostering or adoption services. These are included in a separate release called 'Social care inspections and outcomes' which can be found here.

The release does not use any imputation or other statistical techniques and data are not used to make any estimates about the population or other geographical areas. As the data are solely reporting on events that have occurred, the risk of bias or error is reduced. Comparisons between different timescales are not always possible due to the way inspections are risk assessed (e.g. some frameworks have



deliberately focused only on areas found to be adequate or inadequate), but where this occurs, information is given in the Methodology section.

Data are subject to a strict quality assurance process to eliminate the risk of reporting error. Each local authority is usually only inspected once in the three-year period and data are not subject to regular revision once published.

Data on local authority level children's services inspections are not currently held in a database. Data are therefore compiled manually from lists of inspection activity.

A rigorous data quality assurance procedure is adopted to ensure that data are accurate, which includes checking information against published inspection reports as well as internal consistency checks.

Timeliness and punctuality

Data are currently published on a six-monthly basis and include details of inspections that have taken place and been published in the period. To ensure data are as timely as possible, each release includes the most recent full month of inspections possible.

The publication was previously published on a quarterly basis but, because of the small number of inspections sometimes involved in a quarter (the lowest being reported in this release being five), it was decided to move to less frequent publishing to increase the usefulness of the data it contains.

Data are published on the date pre-announced in the publication schedule <u>here</u>. Where there has been a delay in publication users are alerted via a message on the Ofsted website. Reasons why a delay may occur include, for example, where more time is necessary to properly quality assure the data to ensure its robustness.

The average production time for this LA children's services release is approximately four to six weeks. This time includes obtaining and cleaning the data, drafting findings, quality assuring all outputs and getting the information on to the Ofsted website.

Publications are announced on Ofsted's Twitter page.

Accessibility and clarity

All statistical releases are currently published on the Ofsted website, although they will be moving to Gov.UK in December 2014. The data are stored in Excel files and key findings documents are stored in Word and Pdf format. The information is publicly available and there are no restrictions on access to the data.



The report includes outcomes from Ofsted inspections that have subsequently been published. The data are aimed at keeping users informed of progress of the inspection framework and the quality of local authority children's services.

There are no sensitive or personal data collated as part of this release as it reports solely on inspection findings of local authority children's services. There is, therefore, no disclosure control process, or restriction on what can be published.

The inspection reports on which this, and other local authority level inspection outcomes, are based, can be found using the links in the table in Appendix 1.

Performance, cost and respondent burden

There is no respondent burden in relation to this statistics release as data are a byproduct of Ofsted's inspection process. The only cost involved is the internal resource involved in collating the release.

Confidentiality, transparency and security

Due to the nature of the release, which reports solely on inspection outcomes of local authorities, data are not subject to confidentiality concerns. All data releases follow Ofsted's confidentiality policies: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/terms-of-use/privacy-statement-and-cookie-policy and http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handling-and-retention-of-inspection-evidence

We welcome feedback on all our outputs. If you have any comments, questions of suggestions, please contact the Social Care Data Team on: socialcaredata@ofseted.gov.uk.



Appendix 1

Name of local authority	Link to web page
Barking and Dagenham	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/barking-
	<u>and-dagenham</u>
Barnet	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/barnet
Barnsley	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/barnsley
Bath & North East Somerset	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bath-and- ne-somerset
Bedford Borough	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bedford
Bexley	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bexley
Birmingham	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-
	<u>authorities/birmingham</u>
Blackburn with Darwen	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/blackburn-
	<u>darwen</u>
Blackpool	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/blackpool
Bolton	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bolton
Bournemouth	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-
	authorities/bournemouth
Bracknell Forest	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bracknell-
	<u>forest</u>
Bradford	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bradford
Brent	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/brent
Brighton & Hove	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/brighton-
	<u>and-hove</u>
Bristol	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bristol-city
Bromley	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bromley



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Bury	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bury
Calderdale	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/calderdale
Cambridgeshire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local- authorities/cambridgeshire
Camden	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/camden
Central Bedfordshire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/central-bedfordshire
Cheshire East	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/cheshire- east
Cheshire West and Chester	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/cheshire- west-and-chester
City of London	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/city-of-london
Cornwall	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/cornwall
Coventry	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/coventry
Croydon	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/croydon
Cumbria	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/cumbria
Darlington	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/darlington
Derby City	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/derby
Derbyshire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/derbyshire
Devon	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/devon
Doncaster	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/doncaster
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Dudley	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/dudley
Durham	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/durham
Ealing	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/ealing
East Riding of Yorkshire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/east-riding-of-yorkshire
East Sussex	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/east- sussex
Enfield	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/enfield
Essex	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/essex
Gateshead	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/gateshead
Gloucestershire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local- authorities/gloucestershire
Greenwich	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/greenwich
Hackney	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/hackney
Halton	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/halton
Hammersmith & Fulham	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local- authorities/hammersmith-and-fulham
Hampshire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/hampshire
Haringey	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/haringey
Harrow	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/harrow
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Islington	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/islington
Kensington and Chelsea	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local- authorities/kensington-and-chelsea
Kent	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/kent
Kingston upon Hull	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/kingston-upon-hull
Kingston upon Thames	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/kingston-upon-thames
Kirklees	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/kirklees
Knowsley	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/knowsley
Lambeth	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/lambeth
Lancashire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/lancashire
Leeds	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/leeds
Leicester City	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/leicester- city
Leicestershire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local- authorities/leicestershire
Lewisham	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/lewisham
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Madaga	
Medway	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/medway
Merton	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/merton
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Newcastle upon Tyne	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/newcastle-
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Newham	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/newham
Norfolk	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/norfolk
North East Lincolnshire	http://www.afatad.gov.uk/loopl.gov.thouitise/ookh.goot
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North Lincolnshire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/north-
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North Tyneside	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/north-
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North Yorkshire	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/north-
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Redbridge	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/redbridge
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