

APPENDIX 2

EMBARGOED UNTIL 13 NOVEMBER 2003

10 November 2003

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Dear Ms Goodall

Performance Ratings for Social Services: November 2003

I am writing to inform you of the latest performance ratings for your council's social services. This rating constitutes the social services component of the comprehensive performance assessment for all local government services.

a) Judgements and Rating

The judgements and rating for your council are as follows:

Services for children

Serving people well? **Some**
Capacity for improvement? **Promising**

Services for adults

Serving people well? **Some**
Capacity for improvement? **Promising**

Star Rating

Your social services performance rating is **One** star.

b) Context

A performance review report was sent to you following the annual review meeting earlier this year. This sets out the context and summarises separately the performance of services for children and those for adults. Improvements since the last review are detailed, as are the priorities for further improvement that were discussed and agreed.

c) Evidence

In assessing performance, SSI reaches judgements about performance against a set of standards and criteria, drawing on evidence from a number of standard sources. Further details are set out in SSI's Operating Policies, available at (<http://www.doh.gov.uk/scg/pssperform/>). The sources include:

- ◆ The published PAF performance indicators and other statistical data up to 2002-03, plus data supporting planned targets for 2003-04.
- ◆ Monitoring information from the Delivery and Improvement Statement.
- ◆ The audit of services to children in need carried out in response to the report of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry.
- ◆ The reports of SSI inspections, where applicable.
- ◆ The reports of Joint Reviews, where applicable.

A summary of evidence mapped onto the standards has also been sent to you.

Details of the standards and criteria have been published, and are available from SSI, or may be seen on the Department of Health's performance web-site. (<http://www.doh.gov.uk/scg/pssperform/standardscriteria.htm>)

The star ratings range from zero to three stars. The categories for "serving people well?" are *no, some, most and yes*. The categories for "capacity for improvement?" are *poor, uncertain, promising and excellent*.

The final decisions on star ratings were made by the Acting Chief Inspector.

d) Further Changes to Star Ratings

SSI policy on star ratings is that they will be published each year, and for the most part will not be changed during the year. For councils with a zero star rating, a higher rating may be awarded later if robust and substantial evidence of performance improvement becomes available. Conversely, if serious concerns about performance arise during the year, a council's rating may be adjusted to zero stars, and special monitoring arrangements put in place.

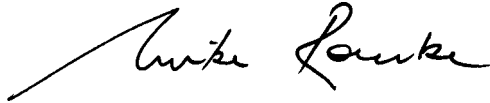
e) Further Information and Publication

The new performance ratings and underlying judgements will be published on Thursday 13 November. The performance review report for your council will also be available on the DH web-site, (<http://www.doh.gov.uk/pssratings/index.htm>) and a copy of this letter will also be placed there within two weeks of the date of writing.

We will send you an e-mail containing the embargoed star ratings for all councils on Tuesday 11 November. Both this e-mail and the e-mail setting out the star ratings for all councils are sent to give you time to prepare local briefing - for example, to handle press enquiries.

Any questions about your star rating that are not answered by the guidance or by the contents of this or your Performance Review Report should be addressed in the first instance to your link inspector.

Yours sincerely



Mike Rourke

Director, Social Services Inspectorate

Copies:

Christabel Shawcross, Assistant Director
Community Care
Mimi Konisberg, Assistant Director of
Social Services – Children’s Services
Gareth Daniel, Chief Executive,
London Borough of Brent
Ron De Witt, Chief Executive,
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