



**Nadhim Zahawi MP**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

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Councillor Daniel Thomas  
Leader  
c/o Conservative Group  
Members Room  
Hendon Town Hall  
The Burroughs  
Hendon  
NW4 4BG

1 July 2019

*Dear Daniel,*

**London Borough of Barnet: INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES (PUBLISHED 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019)**

I am writing following Ofsted's re-inspection of the London Borough of Barnet's children's social care services. Ofsted has judged the overall effectiveness of services to be 'Good' and good across all three sub-judgements; the impact of leaders on social work practice, the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection and the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers.

This outcome reflects the hard work and commitment of all involved at the Council and I would like to congratulate you on achieving such a significant improvement since Ofsted's 2017 inspection. The Council has clearly taken considerable steps to transition and strengthen services at pace and I would like to thank everyone at the council for all the work carried out to achieve this result.

Ofsted's inspection report highlights numerous examples of strong practice across the service. The council has developed a well-integrated early help service that gives access to a broad range of preventive and targeted support, underpinned by strong partnerships. Staff are tenacious and thoughtful in their work, know their children well and are prepared to go the extra mile to ensure vulnerable children are well supported in all circumstances. I am also delighted to hear that there is suitable provision for care leavers who are well supported and have access to a good range of suitable accommodation.

The report clearly evidences your commitment to creating a child-focused service that is delivering good outcomes. It is clear that both the political and corporate leadership has invested time in understanding the needs of such a service and now embraces its role as corporate parents. I would like to congratulate Chris Munday and his senior team in particular for their determined approach to

continuous improvement.

Due to the significant improvement of services, the revised Direction issued to Barnet in June 2018 will be lifted with immediate effect.

I recognise the significant challenges faced by local authorities in delivering high quality and effective children's social care services. However, it is imperative that we deliver the best services possible to our most vulnerable. Elected members, senior leaders, partners and staff at all levels in Barnet have demonstrated how this can be achieved and I look forward to hearing about your continued improvement in the areas where Ofsted have made recommendations.

Finally, I am keen to encourage local authorities to share their learning on improvement, and on delivering good quality services with other authorities facing similar challenges, both regionally and nationally. I am pleased to learn that Chris is already sharing his experience with others and hope that this will continue. As you will be aware, the department is working closely with ADCS, LGA and SOLACE to develop a sector-led approach to improvement in children's services provision. I would encourage you to play a full part in this work to support your own continuous improvement and allow others to benefit from the good practice you are delivering.

I am copying this letter to: Councillor David Longstaff, John Hooton, Chris Munday, Dave Hill and Barnet MPs Mike Freer, Matthew Offord and Theresa Villiers

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N. Zahawi', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Nadhim Zahawi MP**  
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