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10 February 2010

Tim Loughton MP
House of Commons
London
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Christine Gilbert
Her Majesty's Chief
Inspector

Dear Mr. Loughton,

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NUMBER 307578: to ask the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, what the cost has been of each common area assessment of children's services.

Your recent parliamentary question has been passed to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, for response.

In line with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 Ofsted is charged with providing an annual performance rating for children's services for each local authority area. The children's services rating is a wide-ranging and robust assessment of the outcomes for children and young people that is strongly based on the evidence from Ofsted inspections of early years provision, schools including special schools and Pupil Referral Units, colleges, fostering and adoption services, children's homes, safeguarding and looked after children services inspections.

In addition, as one of the partner inspectorates, Ofsted has contributed to both the organisational and area assessments which together make up the Comprehensive Area Assessment of local areas. The children's services rating is a significant factor in the organisational assessment overall score for each council. For Ofsted and local authority children's services the Comprehensive Area Assessment replaces the annual performance assessment and the joint area review programmes.

The Comprehensive Area Assessment was introduced in April 2009. Consequently costs are provisional and have been estimated for 12 months. Full audited costs will be available from the end of June. Taking into account the time contributed to this work by Her Majesty's Inspectors, data analysts, management and administrative staff, the estimated cost of Ofsted's contribution to the 2009 CAA is £18,829 per local authority. Please note that this estimate does not include any allocation of corporate overhead.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

A copy of this reply has been sent to Vernon Coaker MP, Minister of State for Schools and Learners, and will be placed in the library of both Houses.

Yrs sincerely
Christine Gilbert

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