



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cliff Sara Bolton  
The Warren  
5 Wood Croft  
Littleover  
Derby, DE23 7DR

17 June 2009

Our ref: ED09/17.06/0042

Dear Sara

I enclose a copy of the reply that I have received from Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families in response to the enquiries I made following receipt of the letter to him that you copied to me regarding the impact of the integrated children's system on performance against national indicator NI 59.

Regards

Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP





17 JUN 2009

2009/0045714POSoS

Rt Hon Ed Balls MP  
Secretary of State

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Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1A 2NE

Your ref: ED09/13.05/0019

17 June 2009

Dear

*Margaret*

Thank you for your letter of 13 May enclosing correspondence from Councillor Sara Bolton, Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Commission, in connection with the Integrated Children's System (ICS).

As you know I was sent a copy of Councillor Bolton's letter directly and replied on the 4<sup>th</sup> April. I enclose a copy of the response for your information.

While I do recognise the concerns expressed by Councillor Bolton, I am aware that there has been a wide spectrum of performance by local authorities in the implementation of ICS, and that many local authorities anticipate achieved benefits from their use of this framework. I want to ensure that all local authorities and their front line social workers are in a position to do so, to improve outcomes for children in need in their areas. A great deal of activity has taken place since Councillor Bolton's letter, including the Government's response to Lord Laming's progress report on child protection, and the publication of the Social Work Task Force's specific recommendations on ICS. You will be aware that this Government has accepted these recommendations, and we intend to publish our detailed plans for taking these forward very shortly. I am glad to say that representatives of both the Task Force and the Association of Directors of Children's Services are assisting my officials with this.

I hope that this work will address many of the concerns which Councillor Bolton has highlighted. We intend to look very carefully at both usability for practitioners and the underlying requirements themselves, and to give priority to changes that will support front-line practitioners in improving outcomes for children in need. We will also



department for  
children, schools and families

continue our work with information technology suppliers to encourage the wider adoption by them of the features of the best products.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ed Balls', written in a cursive style.

ED BALLS MP