

## HOUSE OF COMMONS LONDON SW1A 0AA

Clir 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







2009/0045714POSoS

Rt Hon Ed Balls MP Secretary of State

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT tel: 0870 0012345 dcsf.ministers@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

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

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Your ref: E0/9/43 05/00 9

June 2009

Dear

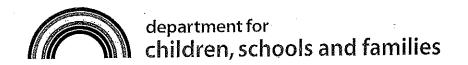
Thank you for your letter of 13 May enclosing correspondence from Councillor Sara Bolton, Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Commission, in connection with the Integrated Children's System (ICS).

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



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

Yours sincerely

ED BALLS MP