



Report sponsor: Strategic Director People
Services
Report author: Head of Strategy and
Performance

Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services

Purpose

- 1.1 In November 2017, Ofsted published their framework for the inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS), with inspections commencing in 2018.
- 1.2 These inspections focus on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements:
 - to help and protect children
 - the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home
 - the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after, including adoption
 - the experiences and progress of care leavers
- 1.3 Derby's services for children and young people were inspected in March 2022, and this report presents the outcomes of this inspection.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the inspection findings presented in paragraph 4.4, with the full letter available at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2 To note that an improvement plan in response to any areas identified for development will be submitted to Ofsted by 19 August 2022, in line with the principles within the inspection guidance.
- 2.3 To recommend that this report is referred to the Audit and Governance Committee, to reflect on under their function *"to consider reports from external regulators (e.g. OFSTED, Care Quality Commission, Local Government Ombudsman) that impact on the Committee's areas of responsibility."*

Reason

- 3.1 Inspectors carry out inspections under section 136(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA). Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) has the power to carry out ILACS functions as listed in section 135 of the EIA.

Supporting information

- 4.1 Before 2022, Derby's last judged inspection of children's services was in 2017 under the 'single inspection framework' or the 'SIF', when we were assessed as 'good' for our overall effectiveness.
- 4.2 For the ILACS inspection, inspectors (HMI) were onsite for five days from Monday 21 March 2022 to Friday 25 March 2022; focusing on social workers' direct practice with families by:
- scrutinising and discussing a sample of children's cases that reflected the scope of the inspection, alongside discussions with practitioners working with the child or young person
 - where possible and appropriate, having meetings with children, young people, care leavers, parents and carers, foster carers and adopters
 - shadowing staff in their day-to-day work
 - where possible and appropriate, observing practice in multi-agency/single-agency meetings or, more likely, parts of meetings that relate to the protection of children and young people and in reviews for children in care.
- 4.3 During the inspection, HMI:
- met with the Lead Cabinet Member, Chief Executive, Independent Chair of Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Strategic Director of People Services (Director of Children's Services, DCS)
 - assessed 275 different pieces of evidence before arriving onsite, with a further 30 pieces considered during their time completing the inspection fieldwork
 - reviewed the experiences of 12 children and young people, where previous quality assurance activities had been completed in the last 6 months by the local authority
 - spoke with over 50 of our colleagues, directly sampling children and young people's experiences, with visits to the Integrated Disabled Children's Service and the Leaving Care Service
 - observed a Section 47 Strategy Meeting
 - met with six members of our Children in Care Council
 - talked to four foster carers and four adopters
 - spoke to four Designated Teachers in schools within and outside of the city
 - heard about the experiences of many of our care leavers, including speaking directly to six young people.
- 4.4 The final inspection report was published on 11 May 2022, reporting the overall effectiveness of services for children and young people in Derby as 'outstanding', with the judgement grade breakdowns set out below:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding

- 4.5 At the time the report was published Derby was one of only three cities outside of London to be rated as 'outstanding' for overall effectiveness, with only 9% of authorities nationally inspected judged 'outstanding' for help and protection.
- 4.6 Inspectors identified two areas for improvement:
- Access for all children to life-story work that helps them to understand their histories.
 - Sufficiency of placement choice and location for children in care.
- 4.7 An action plan responding to the findings of the inspection, specifically the identified areas for improvement, must be submitted to Ofsted by 19 August 2022, and the development of this plan has already commenced.
- 4.8 The full inspection letter, setting out the details behind each judgement is set out in **Appendix 1**, and is available to read on the Ofsted website – [Derby ILACS \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 Engagement in inspections are coordinated by Ofsted and a summary of activities completed to inform findings is presented in paragraph 4.3.

Other options

- 6.1 None.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 Not applicable to this report.

Legal implications

- 8.1 Inspectors carry out inspections under section 136(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA). Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) has the power to carry out ILACS functions as listed in section 135 of the EIA.

Climate implications

- 9.1 Not applicable to this report.

Other significant implications

- 10.1 Not applicable to this report.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal		
Finance		
Service Director(s)	Suanne Lim – Director Early Help and Children's Social Care	23/06/2022
Report sponsor	Andy Smith – Strategic Director People Services	23/06/2022
Other(s)		

Background papers:	
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Ofsted ILACS Inspection Letter – Derby