



Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS)

2022

Children and Young People Scrutiny Review Board

Context

Derby's last judgement inspection was in March 2017

Children's services in Derby City are good		
1. Children who need help and protection		Requires improvement
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence		Good
	2.1 Adoption performance	Good
	2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
3. Leadership, management and governance		Good

In the last five years, we have also been assessed via:

- **JTAI** (*CSAFE and our multi-agency front door*) - 2019
- **Focused Visit** (*CIC, sufficiency and permanence*) - 2021

SIF recommendations

1. Caseloads in Reception and Locality Teams
2. Quality of assessments
3. Quality of CIN and CP plans
4. Private fostering arrangements
5. Assessments of those 16/17 years and homeless
6. Supervision – regular and reflective
7. Quality of return home missing interviews
8. Quality of PEPs
9. Recruitment of foster carers
10. Care leavers health histories
11. Oversight of the Corporate Parenting Board



ILACS background

- Part of a '**whole-system approach**' to inspections
- Authorities can be assessed via a **short or standard inspection** (based on last inspection outcome)
- Inspections focus on the **effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements** in relation to:
 - how our practice helps and protects children;
 - the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home;
 - our arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after, including adoption; and
 - the experiences and progress of care leavers.



What did inspectors do?

- **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 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 IDCS 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**

Headline findings

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

[Read Derby's inspection letter-
\(ofsted.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Key highlights

“An impressive and committed senior leadership team ensures that children living in Derby City receive a consistently good and often outstanding response from services. This ensures that children have the right help and support when they need it. Children’s services benefit from strong corporate support that appropriately invests in and prioritises resources for vulnerable children. Senior leaders have established a clear and tangible service culture that places children at its centre”



Help & protection

- Timely and appropriate response to contacts and referrals
- Thresholds consistently and appropriately applied
- Limited drift and delay, through good quality assessments, direct work and plans
- Effective monitoring of CME and EHE
- Quality return interviews, PF and 16/17 homelessness processes have improved
- Partnership working is effective
- CYP voices effectively captured
- PLO processes effective
- Services for disabled CYP

Children in care & care leavers

- Only looked after if in CYP best interests
- CYP engaged, feel listened to and workers know them well
- SMART plans
- Strong IRO footprint
- Stable placements where risks are proactively managed
- Contact promoted
- Sensitive and appropriate support for all CIC (inc. UASC)
- Strong Virtual School
- Good fostering assessments with appropriate scrutiny
- Care leavers supported to positive outcomes by passionate PAs



Impact of leaders

- Passionate and loyal workers
- All SIF, JTAI and FV recommendations acted on
- DCC is self-aware and leaders are connected to practice
- Strong corporate support and Corporate Parenting Board
- CYP are at the centre of work and influence decisions
- Senior management/leaders are visible, accessible and valued
- Robust partnerships
- Regular, reflective supervision
- Strength based model of practice embedded and is consistently applied



Recommendations

1. Access for all children to life-story work that helps them to understand their histories
2. Sufficiency of placement choice and location for children in care



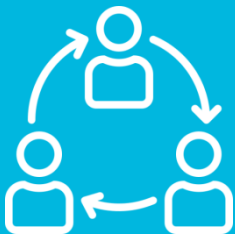
Next steps



Review and reflect alongside our colleagues, partners and peers (*including supporting peers with their inspection preparations*)



Development of our ILACS improvement plan – **submission deadline 19 August 2022**



On-going service development with further targeted deep-dive and QA assessments to sustain and develop

