

# Inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services

East Riding of Yorkshire

---

**Inspection dates:** 31 October to 11 November 2011

**Reporting inspector** Neil Penswick HMI

**Age group:** All

**Published:** 16 December 2011

---

© Crown copyright 2011

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the local authority or at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

# Contents

<b>About this inspection</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The inspection judgements and what they mean</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Service information</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Safeguarding services</b>	<b>5</b>
Overall effectiveness	5
Capacity for improvement	7
<b>Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people</b>	<b>10</b>
Children and young people are safe and feel safe	10
Quality of provision	11
The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe	11
Ambition and prioritisation	21
Leadership and management	21
Performance management and quality assurance	25
Partnership working	25
<b>Services for looked after children</b>	<b>27</b>
Overall effectiveness	27
Capacity for improvement	28
<b>How good are outcomes for looked after children and care leavers?</b>	<b>27</b>
Being healthy	30
Staying safe	31
Enjoying and achieving	33
Making a positive contribution, including user engagement	35
Economic well-being	37
Quality of provision	38
Ambition and prioritisation	40
Leadership and management	40
Performance management and quality assurance	42
<b>Record of main findings</b>	<b>43</b>

---

## About this inspection

1. The purpose of the inspection is to evaluate the contribution made by relevant services in the local area towards ensuring that children and young people are properly safeguarded and to determine the quality of service provision for looked after children and care leavers. The inspection team consisted of four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one inspector from the Care Quality Commission. The inspection was carried out under the Children Act 2004.
2. The evidence evaluated by inspectors included:
  - discussions with children and young people receiving services, front line staff and managers, senior officers including the Director of Children's Services and the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, elected members and a range of community representatives
  - analysis and evaluation of reports from a variety of sources including a review of the Children and Young People's Plan, performance data, information from the inspection of local settings, such as schools and day care provision and the evaluations of a serious case review undertaken by Ofsted in accordance with *'Working Together To Safeguard Children'*, 2010
  - a review of 60 case files for children and young people with a range of need. This provided a view of services provided over time and the quality of reporting, recording and decision making undertaken
  - the outcomes of the most recent annual unannounced inspection of local authority contact, referral and assessment services undertaken on 13 and 14 October 2010
  - interviews and focus groups with front line professionals, managers and senior staff from NHS East Riding of Yorkshire and Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust, North Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and the Humber NHS Foundation Trust.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

3. All inspection judgements are made using the following four point scale.

Outstanding (Grade 1)	A service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements
Good (Grade 2)	A service that exceeds minimum requirements
Adequate (Grade 3)	A service that only meets minimum requirements
Inadequate (Grade 4)	A service that does not meet minimum requirements

## Service information

4. The East Riding is one of the largest unitary councils by area in England, covering 930 square miles, 90% of which is classified as agricultural land. The East Riding has an estimated population of 337,000; the 0–19-year-old population is approximately 74,000. Over half of the population live in rural communities, many of which are small, scattered and geographically isolated.
5. The East Riding has an ethnic population of 4.9%, with a recent increase in the number of migrant workers from eastern European countries. Generally the East Riding appears affluent; however this masks significant challenges from its rurality in relation to communications links and the lack of local employment. The East Riding ranks 151st in the local authority deprivation index in England, out of 326.
6. Education in East Riding is provided by four nursery schools, seven infant schools, six junior schools, 112 primary schools, 18 secondary schools, three special schools and two pupil referral units, of which seven are academies. There are 20 children's centres and a comprehensive range of child care provision. East Riding supports over 8,200 children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, around 2,300 children in need, and provides for 296 looked after children placed in the East Riding by other local authorities.
7. Youth Support Services, Early Years and Extended Services have recently been aligned with Children's Social Care to create a more integrated approach under the Children and Young People's Support and Safeguarding Service. Children's social care services are delivered by 10 family support teams, two specialist looked after children teams, an adoption team, a fostering team, a prevention & intervention team, a contact team, a pathway team, a participation & rights team and an

independent safeguarding unit. Services to children and young people who are at risk of offending or who have offended are provided through the East Riding of Yorkshire Youth Offending Team, which is now managed by the Children and Young People's Support and Safeguarding Service.

8. The partnership arrangements of children's services in East Riding of Yorkshire are overseen by the East Riding Children's Trust. It has senior representation from East Riding of Yorkshire Council, NHS East Riding of Yorkshire, Humber NHS Foundation Trust, Hull & East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust, Humberside Police, Humberside Probation, Jobcentre Plus and East Riding Safeguarding Children Board (ERSCB). ERSCB is independently chaired and brings together all the main agencies working with children, young people and their families to provide safeguarding services.
9. Primary care is commissioned by the NHS East Riding of Yorkshire. Acute hospital services are provided by Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust, North Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Scarborough and North East Yorkshire Healthcare Trust. Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) are provided by the Humber NHS Foundation Trust.
10. At the time of the inspection, there were 156 children who were subject to child protection plans. Of the 296 children that were looked after by the local authority, 133 were placed in foster placements provided by the local authority and 59 placed with independent foster care agencies. There are two children's homes provided by the local authority and a further 12 children and young people are placed in residential placements that are commissioned externally.

## Safeguarding services

### Overall effectiveness

### Grade 3 (adequate)

11. The overall effectiveness of the council and its partners in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in East Riding is adequate. There is good leadership and partnership work and good provision of services to deliver the wider safeguarding agenda. Front line social work practice is inconsistent and for a very small minority of cases plans to protect children and young people have been insufficiently robust resulting in them being subject to further incidents of harm. The inspection did not identify any children currently at risk of harm.
12. Services for children are a key priority for the council and the local strategic partnership. Political and senior management commitment is clearly stated and underpinned by the sufficient allocation of resources to ensure joint objectives, priorities and targets, as identified in the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), are met. Leadership and management are good. Ambition for the safety of children and young people in East Riding is good and is reflected in the priorities for service delivery set by the partnership as a whole. Financial management is robust and there is a commitment to maintain resources for children's services for at least the next three years.
13. Partnership working, including with voluntary organisations, is effective at both strategic and case levels, with good examples of effective collaboration to meet assessed needs. The multi agency Children's Trust has a good understanding of the challenges of providing a service across the largely rural county and is targeting services accordingly.
14. The ERSCB is responsive to the wider safeguarding needs of children, young people and families in the county. Awareness of safeguarding across the county is good and supported through effective service commissioning, staff development, public information and the leadership of senior managers of the council and partner organisations. Training and staff development are well regarded and valued by staff. The quality of learning from the serious case review is good, and the board, through its independent chair, is providing an appropriate level of challenge for the wider safeguarding agenda. Auditing of casework by the ERSCB and respective partners is not, however, yet fully established, and this is a gap in the work undertaken by the partnership.
15. The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe is good, with health visiting, school nursing, midwifery and accident and emergency (A&E) services all being effective. Health service senior management involvement is evident in all strategic partnerships including the Children's Trust and ERSCB.

16. There are good early intervention services across the county including the 20 children's centres, the direct work by the local authority to assist children in need and the extensive contribution from the voluntary sector which provides support to the most vulnerable children and families. Work continues to embed the common assessment framework (CAF). There is a clear understanding across the council and its partner agencies of the need for, and commitment to, preventative services to ensure that children's needs are met as early as possible.
17. Good services exist to tackle domestic abuse issues including the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). The coordination of services to respond to the risk of dangerous offenders through Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) is also good.
18. Children's centres, children's homes and schools have been judged either good or outstanding in recent inspections. The work by schools to safeguard children and young people is good. There is good stability of staffing across agencies. The level of experience, skill and staff morale is good overall. In children's social care, staff are well supported by their managers and receive regular supervision, although this is not always recorded in a way that sets clear case management objectives. Workforce development, including safe recruitment, is good.
19. There is strong participation by children, young people and their families. Most children and young people, when age-appropriate, contribute to their own assessments and conferences. A number of consultations have been carried out to feed back user opinions and help shape safeguarding services, for instance the Young People's Safeguarding Group.
20. While there is much good work to protect children and promote the wider safeguarding agenda there are also weaknesses in the provision and overall outcomes for children and young people. Strengths in the provision include reductions in incidents of bullying, domestic violence and hospital admissions, and within children's social care, contacts and referrals are appropriately handled. However there is inconsistency in the quality of social work practice. The quality of social work assessments is variable, with many that were seen by inspectors being of a poor standard. Children subject to child protection plans do not always have effective contingency planning to take account of changing circumstances. Records of strategy discussions are not always timely and this hinders planning for child protection investigations. When working with a sibling group, the needs of individual children are not always recorded by staff. The ineffective use of recording systems by front line practitioners does not enable management oversight and quality assurance of the work undertaken. As a result of the variable quality of social work a very small minority of children have not been fully protected and have experienced further harm.



21. Quality assurance is under-developed although performance management systems for safeguarding are good and ensure good reporting and scrutiny of key indicators. Performance management overall is adequate.

## Capacity for improvement

## Grade 2 (good)

22. The capacity for improvement is good.
23. The Children's Trust strategic partnership has identified safeguarding as a key priority and has developed a good range of preventative services to respond to the levels of demand across the county. The Children's Trust and ERSCB have established firm foundations for further development and continued improvement. Resources have been made available to underpin the CYPP and to ensure there is capacity in the right places to deliver effective services. In addition, there is an ongoing commitment to children's services and supporting safeguarding as a high priority area. Joint commissioning is good with excellent arrangements for those children and young people with the most complex needs.
24. Since the local authority came into being in 1996 there has been a strong focus on early intervention services. Despite the economic challenges investment has been maintained by the local authority, and recently capital investment has been made available to develop the children's centres' provision, as a response to issues identified by the Children's Trust about the effects of rural poverty and the challenges of delivering locality-based services. The council identifies that, as a result of the focus on early intervention and prevention, the number of referrals to children's social care has reduced from 372 per 10,000 in March 2010 to 187.5 per 10,000 in September 2011.
25. The recent Ofsted inspections of adoption and fostering services have judged safeguarding as outstanding. There has also been significant improvement in the number of schools and children's centres having been judged as outstanding in their staying safe and safeguarding arrangements in recent inspections.
26. Performance management systems are robust and in place to monitor key indicators and aspirations set within the partnership. However quality assurance arrangements are under-developed. There is a good track record of improving services as a response to identified need. For instance, the development of 'the golden number', a single telephone point of contact for children's services, as a response to issues identified by the Children's Trust, has resulted in improvements in the performance and quality of services used by children and families and front line practitioners across the county. Consultation has shown high levels of satisfaction with the new service.
27. There have been a number of recent developments to further improve safeguarding arrangements. These include a new multi agency

safeguarding unit which has been established to better coordinate services; the development of the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and new co-location arrangements by the Humberside Police and the council to improve the response to child protection decision making including domestic violence. As a response to the increased demand for services, the council has also identified additional funding to create 14 new permanent social work posts and seven support officers.

28. Health provision to ensure that vulnerable children and young people are identified and protected from harm is good. Midwives, health visitors and school nurses discharge their safeguarding responsibilities well. Police engagement in safeguarding arrangements is excellent.
29. The workforce is committed to continuous improvement and ensuring partnership working remains focused on the needs of vulnerable children, young people and families, underpinned by an ambitious programme of safeguarding training for all local authority and partner staff across the East Riding of Yorkshire; over 6000 staff have received basic safeguarding awareness training. Financial management is good and there is a commitment that the budget for children's services will not be reduced for at least the next three years.

## **Areas for improvement**

30. In order to improve the quality of provision and services for safeguarding children and young people in the East Riding of Yorkshire, the council and its partners should take the following action.

### **Immediately:**

- ensure strategy discussions on child protection Section 47 enquiries consider all relevant issues, include contingency plans, and are recorded thoroughly and made available to all relevant agencies within 24 hours after taking place
- ensure supervision records are up to date and include clear direction by managers on children in need and child protection cases in respect of planning objectives, timescales, performance measures and contingency plans
- ensure that team managers monitor the work of their teams and that assessments, reports and plans are only signed off when completed to agreed standards.

### **Within three months:**

- ensure case records are up to date, are consistently entered into the electronic recording system and address individually the needs of all the children in the family

- ensure that child in need and child protection plans identify contingency arrangements
- ensure that all assessments meet national minimum standards and include appropriate consideration of risk and protective factors.

**Within six months:**

- introduce a robust quality assurance programme to assure senior managers and the council that the work undertaken by social workers in relation to children in need and child protection meets national standards
- conduct regular multi-disciplinary audits of cases to test the quality of joint assessments and child in need and child protection plans.

# Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people

## Children and young people are safe and feel safe

### Grade 3 (adequate)

31. Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people are adequate. Despite much good work across East Riding to ensure children are well protected, for a small number of children whose case files were read by inspectors during this inspection the services they received did not meet national standards and the poor quality of social work had not prevented them being subject to further incidents of harm.
32. Most children and young people report that they feel safe in East Riding. Some 90% of children and young people responding to the Care4Me survey as part of the preparation for this inspection reported that they feel safe, and this is good, 80% of these children also reported that they have an adult with whom they can speak. Members of the Young People's Safeguarding Group report that they feel safe in East Riding.
33. Young people who spoke to inspectors were confident that they were safe in school and in their local community. They report that anti-bullying work in schools is strong, making sure that incidents are rare, and when they do occur that they are tackled well. There are a large range of initiatives, both council and school driven, to tackle bullying behaviour. Training and support needs are identified, including the healthy schools programme, which promotes good outcomes in this area. Head teachers report that the council is tenacious in gathering recorded information about racial bullying and harassment and that schools are followed up if they do not return information promptly.
34. Positive educational outcomes are contributing to the effective safeguarding of vulnerable children and young people. For example, the council has a priority to 'narrow the gap' between the achievements of vulnerable children in East Riding and their peers. The tracking information shows that this group is making strong improvements in various subjects. This is greater than that found for similar young people nationally.
35. Most recent Ofsted inspections report that children are well protected in the county. The adoption inspection (October 2011) and fostering inspection (November 2011) reported that safeguarding arrangements were outstanding. Three nurseries and eight children's centres recently inspected were all judged as outstanding or good with outstanding features. Of East Riding's schools, 80 are judged good or outstanding for safeguarding. Support for schools by the council has also improved with the development of a safeguarding accreditation scheme; 30 schools have

achieved this accreditation and another 68 are currently on the programme.

36. Safe recruitment practices meet statutory minimum requirements. There is good tracking and follow-up of staff that require renewed Criminal Records Bureau checks and General Social Care Council registration. Safe recruitment processes meet statutory minimum requirements. Support for schools to help leaders ensure robust safe recruitment practices and help them keep their children safe is good and valued by both head teachers and designated teachers for child protection. Training provided to designated teachers, governing bodies and head teachers is of good quality and timely reminders are provided.
37. There has been significant development of the role of the LADO during the last two years and the work undertaken is now good. The post holder also contributes to training for foster carers, safer recruitment in the voluntary sector and sits on both MARAC and MAPPA panels. The ERSCB provides appropriate governance for the LADO and there are strong links with the complaints team and human resources team. Head teachers speak very highly of the good work of the LADO. The LADO is easily accessible and provides high quality advice, support and guidance to support schools to ensure their pupils' safety.
38. Complaints are dealt with well. Children and their families and other professionals are made aware of the complaints procedures. Complaints from service users are overseen and managed by the Customer Services Manager. Children and young people are supported by the Participation Team in both the making of complaints and also their resolution. Children and young people told inspectors that their complaints are responded to well, and that they are consulted about the outcomes they would like. There is a clear feedback loop to senior managers to ensure that learning from complaints leads to improvements in service delivery.
39. Children and young people spoken to during this inspection reported that their views and feelings are taken into account and inform nearly all assessments and planning undertaken through the CAF, child in need and child protection arrangements. However the recording does not reflect the good standard of work.
40. The quality of provision overall is adequate. There is a strong focus on early intervention and preventative services across the county. However, for a small minority of the most vulnerable children supported by children's social care, there are inconsistent services.
41. No children were seen to be insufficiently safeguarded at the time of the inspection, however the quality of social work assessments was variable. Although good examples were seen, the majority lacked depth in terms of the exploration of risk and the prognosis for change. Children subject to child protection plans did not always have contingency planning. Most

case recording is poor with forms uncompleted and management oversight frequently absent. In some cases where there are sibling groups the recording is the same on every child's file or only written on some of the children's files. As a consequence it is not possible to establish whether the individual needs of children are identified, understood and are being met.

42. In a very small minority of cases, over the last 12 months, children had experienced further harm before action was taken to fully protect them. In the main this was a result of insufficient changes to parenting behaviour leading to children continuing to be neglected, witnessing further family violence and, in one case seen by inspectors, assaulted. The local authority had already taken steps to ensure these children were sufficiently protected.
43. Despite these important weaknesses, there are a number of strengths to the provision. There is good and focused work overseen by the ERSCB to improve the safety in local communities by: reducing accidents and hospital admissions; bullying and domestic violence; campaigning on the dangers of co-sleeping; and by registering sports' clubs and activities in relation to the robustness of promoting the safety of children and young people. The range of work carried out by the ERSCB includes promotional activities, prevention programmes, large scale conferences and training workshops. The community and voluntary sector provides a vital role in providing a range of services which complements and enhances the work of the statutory sector.
44. Anti-bullying strategies in schools are also making a positive difference to young people's sense and experience of safety. Advice and support from council services, on the quality of anti-bullying strategies, is valued by governors and head teachers in schools. Cyber-bullying has been identified as of particular concern for young people and is being appropriately addressed. Curriculum opportunities, such as personal and social citizenship and health education, are used successfully to tackle wider issues about bullying and discrimination.
45. There are comprehensive protocols and good quality multi agency arrangements in place for children and young people who run away or go missing from home and schools. This includes additional support to manage their behaviour. Head teachers speak highly of the well coordinated actions by agencies such as Police and children's social care on the rare occasions that any pupils go missing.
46. Locality-based groups of professionals, including education welfare officers, targeted youth workers, neighbourhood policing officers and children's social care staff, work together well to target young people who have been involved in low level anti-social behaviour or have other identified additional needs. Re-offending by young people in the county is

comparable with other similar areas and the youth offending service works well with other agencies to prevent re-offending. The number of young people who have been caught breaking the law for the first time has reduced significantly.

47. Twenty children's centres have been developed across the county in order to provide comprehensive cover to vulnerable children and their families who otherwise would not receive a service in their own local communities. Several hundred families are supported through this initiative. Parents who spoke to inspectors were full of praise for the difference made by staff in children centres, to their own development, parenting skills and ability to maintain positive relationships with their children.
48. Children's social care teams also work with approximately 2,200 children in need who do not meet the threshold for compulsory intervention at any one time. Social workers work directly with, and coordinate support for, these vulnerable families in order to improve their parenting skills and resilience in dealing with complex situations, including rural poverty and isolation. As a result of these early intervention and preventative services, children and young people living in families where there are mental health issues, substance misuse and domestic abuse concerns, receive additional and much appreciated support in order to improve their lives.
49. Effective partnership arrangements ensure that families with children and young people at risk of coming into care have access to a range of identified, targeted, support services. Good quality multi agency working including that carried out in children's centres is successfully supporting children and families at times of significant crisis and this is helping to avoid some children entering the care system. The Early Help and Advice Team (EHAT) within children's social care also provides coordination to further develop the use of the CAF and the Team Around the Child meetings across all of the partner agencies; the number of both of these completed continues to rise. Further work is underway by EHAT to provide better support to lead professionals.
50. High-quality support is provided for children with disabilities. There is highly-regarded work done by the multi agency children with disabilities team, the children's centres, the disability rights team and Barnardo's. An example of excellent practice is the All Stars groups which were formed as a result of parents and disabled children wanting to take a lead in pursuing their own leisure interests; there are now six of these across the county helping children to experience a range of activities that boost their confidence and self-care skills.
51. As a result of the focus by the council and its partners on early intervention and prevention, the number of referrals to children's social care has reduced. For example, the number of referrals reduced from 372 per 10,000 in March 2010 to 187.5 per 10,000 in September 2011.

52. Arrangements by the council to deal with contacts from members of the public and other professionals are good. The council employs a private company to run its customer services. Over a month, they deal with approximately one thousand contacts related to child care and welfare issues. The staff are trained and supported well to deal with these issues. All cases are progressed in a timely manner, recorded thoroughly and passed on to the children's social care teams. Partner agencies report that children's services are accessible and that thresholds are clear.
53. Locality-based social work teams across the county respond to referrals adequately. Generally referrals are allocated promptly and monitoring systems are used effectively by team and area managers to oversee prompt actions. Examples were seen by inspectors though, of delays in responding to new referrals in two offices in the county. All cases are allocated to qualified social workers and efforts are made to ensure cases are allocated to staff on the basis of skills, experience and ability. During assessments children are routinely seen and their views are recorded and taken into account.
54. The number of referrals leading to initial assessments, and the timeliness of those assessments, has worsened since March 2011. For instance 77.9% were completed within timescale in March whilst the most recent data indicate that this is now 68%.
55. Joint communication and planning by the Humberside Police and children's social care is good. The co-location of a social care manager with the Police has improved service delivery in respect of responses to domestic violence and child protection enquiries. However the recording of strategy discussions to plan child protection investigations is not always timely.
56. Out of hours arrangements are clear, robust and link well to the daytime services. In the main, social work practice is sensitive to the diverse cultural and ethnic needs of children and their families. For instance good examples were seen of the work with eastern European families in Goole. The children with disabilities team also provides a high quality assessment service for children and families based on well developed consultation with families and agencies.
57. Tackling domestic abuse is a high priority within the local Humberside Police. Multi agency work to improve the safety of victims and their families is coordinated well. Partnerships in relation to domestic violence are well established and provide joined up targeted services to victims regardless of gender, and to children and young people who have witnessed domestic violence. There is also a range of programmes aimed at perpetrators. Co-location by social workers and the Police public protection unit has resulted in recent improvements in the timeliness and quality of work. MARAC is highly regarded and linked in well with front line services across partner agencies. The MARAC arrangements are supported



by a wide range of agencies which have signed up to an information sharing agreement. The oversight and governance of these arrangements is well established through the ERSCB.

58. Health visitors and school nurses described how the 'Safe and Well' project has positively impacted on the health and well-being of families who were fleeing domestic violence. Staff working in the minor injuries unit at Goole and District Hospital reported how they had identified and referred families to the children and families team as well as signposting them to the local support service, the Domestic Violence Accommodation Project.
59. The coordination of services to respond to the risk of dangerous offenders through MAPPA are robust and well organised. East Riding has a preventative strategy for forced marriage, race and religious hate and extremist behaviour; incidents are low given the cultural identities within the area. A significant concern in the past has been harassment faced by ethnic minorities, particularly in the Goole area. However, this has reduced considerably as a result of effective partnership working.
60. In 2010–11 all child protection conferences were held on time. Capacity within the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) team has increased during the last year ensuring that case reviews of children and young people subject to child protection plans are held on time. Individual IROs are allocated specific areas of specialism in order to maintain and develop expertise. IROs effectively challenge the quality of work undertaken by all agencies: for example in some cases they demonstrate a proactive approach and escalate concerns to social work managers. The IRO team works closely with the participation service to ensure the voices of individual children and young people are heard at child protection conferences and that wherever possible children and young people are able to attend their meetings. IROs are co-located with the LADO and they ensure concerns about the conduct of foster carers and others within the children's workforce are appropriately addressed.
61. There has been one serious case review undertaken recently in East Riding and this was judged to be good by Ofsted in July 2010. It has not yet been published as legal proceedings are still ongoing. However the action plan has been fully delivered. Action plans in relation to the last two unannounced inspections of contact, referral and assessment arrangements have in the main been delivered.
62. There has also been a significant investment in practitioner training for social workers to be equipped to undertake sex offender assessments. Instead of investing in specialist out of county services, social workers have been trained and accredited to carry out this complex area of work. Examples of this work have been praised by the local courts.

63. Social work staff report that they are well supported and have their development needs identified through a personal development plan and that this is reviewed every six months with their manager. Staff are well supported by their managers and receive regular supervision although this is not always recorded in a way that sets clear case objectives. This reduces the impact of management of these cases. Newly qualified social workers report that they receive good support and have protected caseloads. All staff report that they receive good training and were aware of the recent serious case review and the lessons learnt from this. They are able to discuss practice issues in team meetings in order to develop their practice further. Staff morale is high and all workers report that they have manageable caseloads.

### **The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe**

#### **Grade 2 (good)**

64. The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe is good, and health visiting, school nursing, midwifery and accident and emergency services are effective across the East Riding of Yorkshire. Senior health services' involvement is evident in all strategic partnerships including the Children's Trust and ERSCB.
65. There are well established systems in place across NHS East Riding, Hull and East Riding Hospitals NHS Trust and Humber Health NHS Foundation Trust and these help to assure the relevant management boards that safeguarding children practice is delivered to national standards. The effectiveness of safeguarding practice is reported annually to the ERSCB.
66. Senior managers from the various health organisations contribute significantly to the Children's Trust and ERSCB and their membership meets national requirements. Designated and named health professionals fulfil their statutory roles on these boards. Ongoing and time-limited working groups have good health involvement and these ensure the monitoring, development and review of the services for children across the county. The recent serious case review has appropriate health contributions.
67. The arrangements for the named and designated professionals across the Hull & East Yorkshire NHS Trust and the Humber NHS Foundation Trust are adequate and meet the requirements of the national standards in the Intercollegiate Guidance and *Working Together*, 2010. Both the Hull & East Yorkshire NHS Trust and Humber NHS Foundation Trust continue to make adequate progress in training staff in child safeguarding and there are improvements since the last inspection of their services. They are making good progress with arrangements to ensure that all identified staff have access to supervision for safeguarding children. Numbers of practitioners have been identified to attend accredited supervision training and this will increase the number of supervisors to support staff across the

organisations. The Humber NHS Foundation Trust has recently become responsible for the community health services for East Riding and due to this the current training needs analysis is out of date.

68. There is good progress being made in supporting general practitioners (GPs) in meeting their responsibilities to safeguard children and young people. A new and excellent conference report template has been developed in consultation with primary care and children's social care services and this effectively risk assesses the contact between the GP and the family being discussed at case conferences. Most GPs are up to date with their safeguarding children training and there is significant effort to support dentists and other independent practitioners in accessing appropriate training.
69. Midwives, health visitors and school nurses discharge their safeguarding responsibilities well. All health practitioners spoken to during the inspection were confident in knowing how to refer concerns to children's social care and how to escalate concerns where there is professional disagreement on the outcome of any referral. They appropriately refer cases and participate in core group meetings and child protection conferences. Practitioners confirmed that attendance at child protection meetings is an organisational priority for all health providers. The quality of their referrals is generally good. Their knowledge of families positively contributes to the planning for children in need and child protection cases.
70. There is good partnership working across health organisations to safeguard unborn children. Midwives also report good liaison with children and families' teams and confirm that when there is an identified need most babies are born with a child protection plan already in place.
71. There is comprehensive screening for vulnerabilities in the North Lincolnshire & Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Pregnant teenagers are part of the midwives' universal caseload and are referred to the children's centres for an individual plan of support. Specialist midwifery support is available for pregnant women who have a substance misuse problem. However, there is no agreed peri-natal mental health pathway on to which to refer pregnant women in Goole. If there are concerns about a pregnant woman's emotional and mental health well-being they are referred back to the GP for onward referral to an appropriate service.
72. Midwives employed by North Lincolnshire & Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust report that face to face translators can only be booked for the initial booking appointment and thereafter only telephone based interpreters can be used. Letters are translated using a free internet based translation programme and sometimes a family member is asked to interpret. This means that the accuracy of information and safety of the pregnant woman and unborn child may be compromised.

73. The health visiting and school nursing services provided by Humber NHS Foundation Trust are good. Most of the healthy child programme is delivered through the health visiting and school nursing teams with contacts taking place face to face, though there is some variability across East Riding in the delivery of the targeted three year check. There are well established arrangements in place to transfer children from the health visiting service to the school nursing service. The school nursing service offers the routine weighing and measurement service as part of the national programme, administers immunisations and vaccinations, and actively supports the creating and delivery of health plans in schools. This ensures that the health needs of children with complex care or learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met.
74. Health visitors and school nurses have a proactive approach to supporting children and families where there are vulnerabilities identified. There is good partnership working with the staff in the children's centres across the county. Children's centres offer a wide range of targeted interventions and support either through the CAF, a child protection or a child in need plan. Most health visitors and school nurses have undertaken the 'Embracing Children's Emotional Needs' training and are able to support children and their families as part of early intervention to address concerns about emotional health and well-being. Following learning from the recent serious case review, an action point was made to improve communication across primary care and public health nurses: these staff now report good communication with most practices.
75. There is good partnership working to safeguard families where there is domestic abuse. The staff working in the minor injuries unit at Goole and District Hospital reported examples of how they had identified and referred families to children and families team as well as signposting them to the local support service, the Domestic Violence Accommodation Project. The health visitors and school nurses were also able to describe how the 'Safe and Well' project has positively impacted on the health and well-being of families who were fleeing domestic violence. Health visitors and school nurses confirmed that they were starting to receive notifications from the Police when they had visited an address where children were present following a reported incident of domestic violence. However, there was no supporting guidance or protocol to advise staff on how these notifications should be dealt with once they had been received.
76. Adequate arrangements are in place to safeguard children and young people that attend the minor injuries unit at Goole Hospital. The minor injuries unit is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is staffed by nurse practitioners and a doctor. A consultant is on call from Scunthorpe Hospital to offer a consultation service. Following a number of incidents where seriously ill children have been brought to the unit by the ambulance service, there is now an agreed protocol with the local ambulance service that sick children should in future be taken to the

nearest major A&E department. Details of all children attending the unit are recorded along with the names of their health visitor or school nurse; there is also an alert on the system to show any repeat attendances. The current arrangements do not include asking if a family has a social worker involved and the unit staff are reliant upon this information being offered by the carer or parent accompanying the child. This means that staff may be caring and assessing a child or young person without being fully informed of their social circumstances and children and families social workers may not be informed of an attendance to the unit. At the time of the inspection, the list of children and young people who have a child protection plan in place or that are looked after by children's social care services was not provided to the minor injuries unit at Goole Hospital. This was addressed as a priority and the hospital is now receiving the list on a weekly basis

77. Satisfactory paediatric liaison arrangements ensures that all attendances of children and young people to the minor injuries unit at Goole Hospital are notified to the child's GP and to either the health visitor or school nurse. A member of the North Lincolnshire & Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's safeguarding team visits the unit weekly to review the notifications of attendance for any children out of the area and to review any referrals to children and families teams for appropriateness.
78. There are adequate protocols to safeguard young people who may attend the minor injuries unit following an incident of self-harm, including any overdose, and for those young people who may be in mental health crisis. The unit is supported well by CAMHS and by the out of hours team which provides care and advice for adults and children.
79. Referral processes to CAMHS and signposting to alternative provision is inefficient and can cause delay to the most appropriate service being offered to families. There is no standard referral form and there is confusion by practitioners on how to refer children and young people into the service. There is work in progress on a Hull and East Riding CAMHS review to address gaps in services.
80. Waiting times to access CAMHS across the county are now adequate. Any families referred to CAMHS and accepted for assessment are usually seen within four weeks, however if there is a need for additional intervention then a family may have an additional wait for treatment. Access to Tier 4 in-patient provision is at the Humber NHS Foundation Trust's residential unit but this is only open on weekdays. Any young people that require in patient accommodation outside of these hours or who are detained under the Mental Health Act are transferred out of the area. CAMHS do not use any outcome measures to evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions and therefore it is not possible to comment on the impact on children, young people and their families. The Early Psychoses Intervention Team

'PSYPHER' is highly regarded and described as accessible and flexible by other practitioners.

81. Specific health support for children with learning disability and complex care is limited. Therapy services are available up to age 19 if a young person is in education and in a special school. There is good provision of therapy support where this is specified on the statement of special educational needs; however, access to universal therapy services is poor. There is no CAMHS Learning Disability Consultant and there are only two learning disability nurses to support families with children and young people who are learning disabled. There are significant and unacceptable waits of up to 18 months for children up to five years old to be diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. The multi agency assessment panel is not compliant with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance. The assessment and diagnosis service for children over five years of age has been suspended and currently there is no diagnostic service for these children and young people unless there is a co-morbidity of mental health problems.
82. Good arrangements are in place to help young people make the transition from children's services to adult services. Transitions are well managed for young people supported by the children's disability team. Close liaison between the pathway team and children disability team ensures the right package of support for care leavers with complex needs. Some parents met by inspectors reported that transitions for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities who do not meet the necessary criteria to be supported by the Children's Disability Team, are not always as successful. The council is aware of these concerns and is working with the families to resolve the issues.
83. The provision of sex and relationship advice and education is variable across the county and is dependent upon the programmes the schools elect to engage in. School nurses offer a sexual health drop in clinic for approximately two thirds of schools and some colleges across the county, with one school trialling the provision of emergency contraception. There is good involvement of young people in evaluating the school nurse drop-in services through the 'You're Welcome' accreditation. The initial surveys have been completed and the findings have been translated into an action plan to further improve services.
84. Young people across the county have good access to contraceptive and sexual health services (CASH). There is a flexible and responsive approach taken by commissioners and providers to the delivery and location of CASH services. There is good outreach support to young people who find it difficult to engage with universal services. There is a texting service provided by the outreach sexual health nurses to respond promptly to young people. There is adequate access to emergency contraception through either urgent care services or pharmacists across the county.

Children's centres have a good range of support for parents, including a 'teenage dads' clinic. The rate of teenage conceptions remains lower than statistical neighbours and the national average although there is little progress in further reducing the numbers of young people who conceive. The Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board has produced a comprehensive East Riding Teenage Pregnancy and Young People's Sexual Health Action Plan to address the slow progress; this is being monitored by the Children's Trust Board.

85. Good services are available to support young people who have substance and alcohol misuse problems. The East Riding Under 19 Substance Misuse Service is a multi-disciplinary team and has open access. Practitioners within the team work flexibly and offer outreach support. Most young people complete their care plan and evaluate the service as good. The team is working with commissioners to further develop outcome indicators to measure the effectiveness of their service.
86. Good arrangements are in place to identify risk to the children of mental health service users. The Humber NHS Foundation Trust is making good progress with the development of a mental health clustering tool. This ensures that adult mental health staff include, as part of their risk assessment, details of any children or young people that their patients may come into contact with. Any risks associated with this contact are documented and acted on.
87. There are good arrangements in place for children and young people to receive an appropriate examination following an allegation of sexual abuse. Examinations are carried out by a paediatrician or alternatively a forensic medical officer depending on the nature of the allegation. Every effort is made by staff to support children who attend the unit, with the child protection nurses displaying a thoughtful and sensitive approach. Each child is asked to choose a gift prior to leaving the unit to provide a positive memory.
88. The Child Death Overview Panel is appropriately constituted and reports formally to the ERSCB every six months through the annual report and half-yearly update. There have been challenges in maintaining attendance for some partner agencies due to organisational changes. However, the panel has remained quorate and attendance across the partnership has improved. The panel has successfully highlighted issues around co-sleeping and rural safety though it has not yet evaluated the effectiveness of bereavement support for families within East Riding.

## **Ambition and prioritisation**

## **Grade 2 (good)**

89. Ambition and prioritisation are good.
90. There is a strong focus on early intervention services across the county. There are good preventative services including the 20 children's centres,

the direct work by the local authority to assist children in need and the extensive contribution from the voluntary sector providing support to the most vulnerable children and families.

91. The vision of a robust multi agency partnership that works together to provide preventative services and assist families in need runs throughout all of the relevant plans and is articulated at every level of the council from members and the Chief Executive to front line managers and workers. Staff and managers from other children's services organisations including the voluntary sector also report that this is a priority for their agencies.
92. The delivery of children's services across East Riding is well coordinated through the multi agency Children's Trust. The Director of Children's Services chairs the meetings, ensuring a strong focus and buy-in across agencies. The ERSCB lead on the coordination and delivery of services to ensure children are safe across the county. It has a strong focus on the wider safeguarding agenda and this is reflected in recent improvements in services to tackle domestic violence, issues about children who go missing, and in the development of practitioner training to undertake specialist sex offender assessments. In addition, the work in relation to serious case reviews is well developed and effective at disseminating good practice. The CYPP is clear and identifies the priorities for the partnerships within a framework of improving performance and outcomes for children and young people in East Riding.
93. Strong partnership working ensures safeguarding needs and risks are well understood and that these are addressed effectively. For example, good quality multi agency working in children's centres is successfully supporting children and families at times of significant crisis and this is helping to avoid some children entering the care system. Parents spoken with say this is making a great difference to their own self-esteem and well-being and helping them to develop successful relationships with their children. The impact of the council and its partners on the development of services for families that experience domestic violence, for missing children, and for the management of high risk adults through MARAC and MAPPA, has also been positive. These services have enabled good outcomes to be achieved by children and young people and this was confirmed by young people interviewed by inspectors during this inspection.
94. Poverty has been identified within the CYPP as a key contributing factor in preventing equality of opportunity for children and young people. Actions have, therefore, been identified and taken by the council and its partners to address the impact of inequalities. For example, the strong focus on narrowing the gap between outcomes of children and young people from more disadvantaged homes and of others in the local area is leading to improvement. Educational data show good improvement in the



achievements of this group of children. Over 150 families a week are also currently working with adult education services in work clubs to receive support and guidance on employability and cope with the difficulties associated with the economic downturn.

95. As a result of the effective work of the Children's Trust partnerships, improvements have been made in outcomes for most children in the county. This includes those who are looked after and children in need. Most children continue to be well protected.
96. Council services are well resourced and all social work posts are filled by suitably qualified and experienced staff. There is strong elected member commitment to services and to improving the life chances of children across the county. For instance this year there has also been additional investment by the council in the workforce with 14 new permanent social work and seven support posts created.
97. As a response to the reduction in central government finance, the council has introduced a programme aimed at the realignment of resources and achieving 7% budget savings across the council. Due to reserves and under-spend within children's services this has not resulted in a reduction in any children's social care services. The council is committed to ensuring that there is no reduction in the budget for children's social care over at least the next three years. Work has commenced with parish councils, the voluntary sector, schools and children's centres on a review of how services can be further improved. Discussions are in the early stages with neighbouring councils and partner agencies in relation to potential joint arrangements and savings. Commissioning arrangements are good with an excellent example of joint arrangements for children with complex needs.
98. Workforce management is good. Training is well resourced and highly appreciated by staff. There is also a rigorous programme of building confidence within the council workforce including coaching and mentoring and attendance at best practice workshops. Morale is reported to be high; staff turnover and sickness absence is low.
99. Increasing the participation of children and young people is an ongoing priority of the council and its partners and they are being increasingly successful in their endeavours. Children and young people are generally active participants in their care planning and reviews.
100. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The CYPP recognises the strong active prioritisation across the partnership to be inclusive, tackle inequalities, 'narrow the gap' and ensure equality of opportunity for all. Detailed equality assessments are completed by all services and included in service planning. Regular reporting to managers on progress towards targets within resulting action plans for improvement ensures a continued focus on meeting the diverse needs of the local area. For example, in

partnership with schools, a better focus on improving behaviour management strategies and in developing a curriculum that meets the interests and needs of pupils and students is helping to narrow the gap in the proportion of fixed term exclusions for vulnerable groups such as pupils of Gypsy and Traveller heritage.

## **Leadership and management**

## **Grade 2 (good)**

101. Leadership and management are good.
102. The Director of Children's Services chairs the Children's Trust ensuring a strong focus and buy-in across agencies. Senior representatives from partner agencies form the main board. There are no formal pooled budgets but agreements are in place to share financial responsibilities and planning. The CYPP articulates the vision of the board of protecting the 'vulnerable' and attracting and keeping families in the county for its economic survival.
103. The ERSCB leads on the coordination and delivery of services to ensure children are safe across the county. It is a partnership of relevant organisations and has an executive board and subgroups to ensure services work together and meet statutory requirements. It has an independent chair that provides the appropriate degree of challenge to the partner agencies. It also has a strong focus on the wider safeguarding agenda and this is reflected in the recent improvements in services to tackle domestic violence, children who go missing, and the development of practitioner training to undertake specialist sex offender assessments. The work in relation to serious case reviews is well developed and effective at disseminating good practice.
104. Strong partnership working ensures safeguarding needs and risks are well understood and that these are addressed effectively. Good quality multi agency working in children's centres is successfully supporting children and families at times of significant crisis and this is helping to avoid some children entering the care system. Parents spoken to say this is making a great difference to their own self-esteem and well-being and helping them to develop successful relationships with their children.
105. Increasing the participation of children and young people is an ongoing priority of the council and its partners and they are increasingly successful in their endeavours. For instance, the Young People's Safeguarding Group was formed in 2010 and meets regularly to discuss issues about safety. Its membership includes representatives from the Children in Care Council, Young People with Disabilities, and Travellers and Migrant Worker Children groups. There is also good involvement by children in their assessments. Children and young people are generally active participants in their care planning and reviews. All children and young people aged 10 and above attending an initial child protection conference have access to an advocate prior to the conference supported by a feedback visit after the meeting.

This ensures that children and young people have support in gaining understanding of the information and important decisions about them as well as ensuring that their views are shared at meetings.

106. Action plans in relation to the serious case review and the unannounced inspections of contact referral and assessment are in place and actions have, in the main, been completed.
107. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The CYPP recognises the strong, active prioritisation across the partnership to be inclusive, tackle inequalities, 'narrow the gap' and ensure equality of opportunity for all.

## **Performance management and quality assurance**

### **Grade 3 (adequate)**

108. Performance management and quality assurance arrangements are adequate. Despite good performance management arrangements across the council which are driving forward improvements, quality assurance arrangements within children's services are poor and do not enable a good understanding of the quality of individual casework and enable timely corrective action.
109. Good strategic performance management arrangements are in place within children's social care and these mirror those found across the council. There are clear links between higher level planning, service plans, and a quarterly monitoring process. These arrangements hold managers and staff successfully to account for their performance and to improve outcomes.
110. Self-evaluation of what is working well and what needs to improve is accurate and is reflected within the updated CYPP. A self-assessment produced for this inspection was generally accurate although did not identify the extent of the poor practice within children's social care.
111. The quality and frequency of supervision for social workers and front line managers is variable. Areas of concern are not always picked up by managers or used to tackle poor performance. Child protection conference chairs, however, effectively challenge the quality of work undertaken by all agencies: for example in some cases they demonstrate a proactive approach by escalating concerns to social work managers. Quality assurance arrangements are insufficient to enable managers to be aware of the quality of casework and be assured that children are safe.

## **Partnership working**

### **Grade 2 (good)**

112. Partnership working is good.
113. The Children's Trust is a good partnership between key partners including the voluntary sector which effectively coordinates the planning and

delivery of children's services around the mutually agreed objectives identified in the CYPP. The coordination and delivery of services to ensure children are safe across the county is led well by the ERSCB with appropriate contributions from all of the relevant children and young people's organisations.

114. Locality-based front line services are delivered well through partnership working including the work undertaken to support the CAF, children in need and child protection. High quality multi agency services are also delivered through the network of children's centres.
115. Effective partnerships are in place in support of targeted services in a number of key areas. For instance the multi agency response to children and young people missing from home, care and education have developed effective services that are well connected and allow education welfare, Police, social care and youth services to work together to respond to children and young people who go missing in a timely way. Similarly, partnerships in relation to domestic violence are well established and provide joined up targeted services to victims regardless of gender, children and young people who have witnessed domestic violence and programmes aimed at perpetrators. MARAC and MAPPA arrangements are in place and have developed positively during the last two years.
116. Across the county there are also specific examples of good of innovative partnerships delivered through co-located sites. These include services to support families in Bridlington and Swinemoor, children's social care services and Police based in the public protection unit in Market Weighton, and CAMHS.

## Services for looked after children

### Overall effectiveness

### Grade 2 (good)

117. The overall effectiveness of the council and its partners in promoting the welfare of looked after children and young people in East Riding is good.
118. Services for looked after children are a key priority for the council and the multi agency Corporate Parenting Group. Political commitment is strong and supported by effective services which ensure the needs of looked after children are met and they have good opportunities to participate and achieve. Leadership and management are good. Ambition for looked after children and young people in East Riding is good and is reflected in the priorities for the council and its partners in the CYPP. Financial management is robust and there is a commitment to maintain resources for services for looked after children over at least the next three years.
119. Partnership working is good at both strategic and case levels with some excellent examples of effective collaboration to promote the welfare of looked after children and young people.
120. The council and elected members have published a Pledge to improve services for looked after children. Together with a strong commitment to listening and acting on the views of children and young people, this has resulted in significant improvements in services.
121. There are strong partnerships with education with a focus on addressing absenteeism, children's and young people's attainment and attendance. There is a good service for care leavers and resources are appropriately identified to meet their needs. IROs are highly thought of by the young people for their accessibility and their ability to satisfactorily resolve problems.
122. The quality of provision for looked after children and young people is good, however, there is variable social work practice on some cases prior to children and young people becoming looked after. Some children and young people lack a timely and thorough assessment and clear planning. The use of recording systems by front line practitioners is poor. Staff are well supported by their managers and receive regular supervision although this is not always recorded in a way that sets clear case management objectives. Quality assurance is under-developed and although performance management systems are good and ensure good reporting and scrutiny of key indicators, overall this aspect of the council's work is adequate.
123. Health support for looked after children and young people is adequate. Although there is much support for children and young people, the quality is inconsistent and there are inadequate arrangements for the

administration of initial health assessments of looked after children and young people and there are no arrangements in place to provide young people with a leaving care health summary.

124. The CYPP's priority of narrowing the gap between the outcomes of children from disadvantaged homes and those of other children and young people in the county is reaping its rewards. The gap between educational achievement of looked after children and young people and the children's population in East Riding is narrowing at a faster rate than that found nationally.

## Capacity for improvement

## Grade 2 (good)

125. The capacity for further improvement is good.
126. Services for looked after children are effectively managed through the multi agency Corporate Parenting Group which is good at identifying priorities and ensuring that targets are met. Financial management is robust and there is a commitment to maintain resources for looked after children's services for at least the next three years.
127. Within children's social care two integrated looked after children teams have recently been developed to ensure delivery of coordinated services to children and young people and their families. Young people interviewed as part of this inspection reported that these are providing a much improved service.
128. The commissioning of services is effective. Consequently, care placements for looked after children and young people are of a good quality, there are effective measures in place to monitor contract compliance and outcomes for children and young people are good. Clear mechanisms are in place to respond swiftly where risk of placement breakdown is identified. This has resulted in an excellent improvement in the stability of long-term placements, from 54.9% to 77.5%, and stability in those having three or more moves has reduced from 10.5% to 2.7%.
129. Corporate parenting is embedded and well understood across the council. Well developed partnerships between children's social care and a number of other key organisations are making significant differences. For instance the strong partnership with education has resulted in the proportion of looked after children making expected progress in English improving from 37% in 2009 to 78% in 2011, with a similarly strong improvement in mathematics. This is greater than that found for similar young people nationally.
130. There is an increasing number of apprenticeships and work placements that care leavers can access within the council itself, supported by good mentoring arrangements. As a result the proportion of care leavers who

are in education, employment or training has been above average for a number of years. This is in the context of a declining trend nationally.

131. The workforce is committed to continuous improvement and there is an ambitious programme of training across the council and its partners ensuring that partnership working remains focused on the needs of vulnerable children including those looked after.

## **Areas for improvement**

132. In order to improve the quality of provision and services for looked after children and young people in the East Riding of Yorkshire, the local authority and its partners should take the following action.

### **Immediately:**

- ensure case records are up to date and being consistently entered into the electronic recording system.

### **Within three months:**

- ensure supervision records are up to date and include clear direction by managers on looked after children cases in respect of planning, objectives, timescales, performance measures and contingency plans
- ensure that young people leaving care are provided with a health summary.

### **Within six months:**

- introduce a quality assurance programme to assure senior managers and the council that the work undertaken by social workers for looked after children and young people is of a sufficient standard
- improve the quality and timeliness of initial health assessments for looked after children and young people.

## How good are outcomes for looked after children and care leavers?

### Being healthy

### Grade 3 (adequate)

133. The arrangements to ensure good health outcomes for looked after children and young people are adequate.
134. The recent appointment of a designated nurse for looked after children has brought leadership and stability to the specialist health team. The designated nurse has recently re-established links with children and families teams to ensure that in the future the looked after health team are involved in the training of foster carers and social workers. Long term sickness and absence in the looked after health team though continues to impact on the effectiveness of this service.
135. In 2010–11 only 3.7% of the initial health assessments were recorded as completed in 28 days, and this is inadequate. This is being addressed by the local authority and the Health partner organisations. The health assessments for children aged under five are carried out by the designated doctor. For children and young people over five years the assessment is carried out by a GP. The quality of the assessments carried out by the GPs is variable and some are poor.
136. In the same period 86% of looked after children received their annual health review, 81% had received their dental check up, which was a poorer performance and down from 87.5% in April 2010, and 72% of looked after children had received their immunisations and vaccinations. Overall this performance is adequate.
137. Young people are routinely asked where they would like to have their health review and staff try to accommodate their request. This results in young people being more engaged in their health review and plan. Most annual health reviews being carried out by health visitors and school nurses. The looked after children health team also carries out the assessment for those young people who are hard to engage or not in education. The designated doctor retains responsibility for the reviews where the care of the child is more complex.
138. There are good arrangements in place between the children and families teams and the looked after children's health team to liaise over any outstanding health reviews. The designated nurse has also recently introduced a quality assurance mechanism to audit completed health reviews and health plans and it is planned that she will feed the results of these into her training for public health nurses.
139. Young people who are looked after can access good support from the adolescent sexual health nurses. There is also a dedicated link worker with



the substance misuse team that supports looked after young people as well as the outreach work offered in the local children's homes. Older teenagers are supported well by a specialist health coordinator based within the council's pathway planning team. The health coordinator and school nurses prepare young people for leaving care. However there are no arrangements in place to provide the young people with a leaving care health summary and this is an omission in an otherwise good service.

140. The looked after children CAMHS provides a well regarded consultation service to social workers, foster carers, residential home staff and other professionals. This specialist CAMHS also carries out direct work although this is not always timely due to staffing shortages within the team.
141. Good arrangements are in place to ensure that children and young people placed out of county receive their health reviews promptly and that health needs are identified and met. There are also good arrangements for multi agency commissioning, monitoring and reviewing specialist placements outside of East Riding for those children with the most complex needs.

## **Staying safe**

## **Grade 2 (good)**

142. The arrangements to safeguard looked after children and young people are good.
143. All looked after children and young people have an allocated qualified social worker. Social work visits are regular. The children and young people who were spoken to during the inspection told inspectors that they see their social workers alone, if they wish, and that they have a number of trusted adults in their lives who provide them with good support. External providers report that social workers visit their establishments in line with statutory requirements.
144. Children and young people reported that they are happy and that they feel safe in their placements, in their local community and in their schools. One young person echoed the views of a number when they said 'I feel safe where I live and staff listen.' They have good access to well developed advocacy and independent visitor schemes. Children and young people taking part in an evaluation of the independent visitor service reported that they value this service as it offers continuity with someone in whom they have confidence.
145. Residential services and foster placements commissioned from external providers are only used if they have been inspected by Ofsted and judged at least good. The commissioning process, including the work of the commissioning panel, feedback from social workers, the IRO and reports from other professionals ensure rigorous arrangements are in place to monitor the care of children and young people who are in external placements.

146. Placements are well matched and the careful assessment of risk promotes the stability of placements.
147. The recruitment of foster carers and prospective adoptive parents is good. There are clear strategies and effective systems in place to ensure that those expressing an interest in adoption and fostering are suitable. The thoroughness of the recruitment and assessment, including the fostering and adoption panel decision making processes, ensures that children and young people are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted.
148. There are comprehensive protocols and good quality multi agency arrangements in place for children and young people who run away or go missing from care placements and schools. This includes additional support to manage their behaviour. Head teachers speak highly of the coordinated actions by Police and children's social care on the rare occasions that any of the pupils go missing and say that arrangements are particularly rigorous for looked after children and young people. Assessment and direct work with looked after children and young people is adequate. All young people who were spoken to said that they had a good relationship with their social workers. Care plans generally identify children's needs and the support they require.
149. However the quality of assessments seen did not always provide robust analysis and evaluation of risks prior to decisions being made for a child to be looked after and before cases were transferred to the two specialist looked after children teams.
150. The council's adoption service was judged as outstanding at the recent inspection in September 2011. The fostering service has been judged as good overall with five of the six areas inspected being judged as outstanding at the inspection in September 2011.
151. Decisions regarding the placement of children and young people with their parents are appropriately authorised by senior managers following thorough assessment, including assessment of risk. Monitoring by social workers and other professionals ensures that any change of circumstances which may place a child at risk is addressed and that the appropriate strategy and decisions are taken to safeguard and promote the child or young person's well-being. Good multi agency partnership work supports parents and those with special guardianship arrangements. For example, children's centres work closely with grandparents to assist them to support children to keep safe, in a nurturing and safe environment. Grandparents can work with family support workers who update them on strategies to manage their grandchildren's behaviour and to understand their particular needs.
152. The council's Children's Participation and Rights team ensures that all looked after children and young people are aware of their right to complain and how to access the procedure, including their right to an

advocate. Children and young people told inspectors that their complaints are responded to well, and that they are consulted about the outcomes they would like. Most complaints made by looked after children and young people are resolved at the initial stage.

## Enjoying and achieving

## Grade 2 (good)

153. The impact of services to enable looked after children and young people to enjoy and achieve is good. Strong and successful multi agency partnership working is making a positive difference to looked after children and care leavers attainment and achievements.
154. High quality partnerships between early years providers and children's centres is enabling early support and intervention for looked after children in Early Year Foundation Stage settings and enhancing children's achievements and preparation for school. Where needed, a pre-school personal educational plan is developed to ensure the appropriate support for a child's identified needs is provided.
155. Numbers of looked after children are particularly low in primary school years. Consequently school performance information varies significantly from year to year. This makes direct comparison with similar children nationally difficult. Their attainment is at least in line with the national average and sometimes above.
156. Head teachers and governors report they are held to account robustly by the council, for the achievements of looked after children and young people in their schools. The recently developed role of a virtual school head teacher is helping to raise the profile of looked after children, young people and care leavers further, although it is too soon for there to be demonstrable impact.
157. Detailed tracking information shows that the proportion of looked after children making expected progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is improving and is now good. For example the proportion of looked after children making expected progress in English has improved from 37% in 2009 to 78% in 2011, with a similarly strong improvement in mathematics. This is greater than that found for similar young people nationally. The gap between their attainment and that of East Riding's students as a whole has been virtually eradicated in English and narrowing effectively in mathematics. At Key Stage 4 the proportion of looked after students aged 16 sitting GCSE exams and gaining five or more A\*–C grades, including English and mathematics, has been above average for the last three years. In 2010, the most recent published performance information, the local council was ranked 5th out of 152 nationally for the attainment of looked after students.
158. Until recently, the attendance of looked after pupils and students has been below that of similar young people nationally. Good actions taken

collectively by schools and the looked after children teams have resulted in marked improvements. The most recent information shows that persistent absence rates have fallen significantly during 2010/11 and are now closer to that found nationally.

159. Although there are improvements in the educational attainment of looked after children and young people, this is not consistent across children of all ages and there remain gaps in achievement. For instance, test results at Key Stage 2 are no more than average.
160. Looked after pupils' and students' progress is tracked meticulously in schools and this information is used by the council's looked after children's services to inform students' personal education plans (PEPs). These plans are comprehensive, generally reviewed within timescales and updated at least six-monthly as required, with pupils current achievements. However, in the updating, previous progress information is overwritten and this means that the PEP provides only a snapshot in time rather than recording a celebration of students' progress over time. Plans are in place to tackle this recording weakness.
161. No looked after children or young people have been permanently excluded in recent years, which is an improvement. There has also been a 60% reduction in the proportion of secondary school age looked after pupils or students with one or more episode of fixed-term exclusion. A successful focus on ensuring the right curriculum provision, behaviour management strategies and the availability of alternative provision is making a positive difference.
162. Good quality training for designated teachers and foster carers is helping them to support looked after children's and young people's learning and development successfully. All looked after pupils and students are able to access one to one teaching support and this is helping those at risk of falling behind to catch up with their peers. Head teachers and young people themselves report that pupils are able to access personal education allowances to enrich their experiences and support their learning and enjoyment. Bespoke alternative provision and tuition for looked after children and young people who are reluctant to attend school is ensuring they can continue to learn and make good progress.
163. For those who attend schools locally, every effort is made to maintain a successful school placement when there is a breakdown in the home placement. Monitoring and evaluation of education provision for looked after children and young people placed out of the county are thorough; both in terms of their care and in ensuring high quality education provision.
164. Looked after children and young people are able to access a good range of out of school leisure and cultural activities. For instance children and

young people in children's homes and in foster care are able to access free provision in leisure centres across the area.

165. The range of respite activities for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities is increasing. Parent groups are able to access funding for activities chosen by themselves and commissioned by the council. Activities such as the 'All Stars' group in Pocklington, which includes young people from the local special school and young people in the local area, is valued by the young people themselves. They say they feel well cared for and enjoy the opportunities to mix with each other and have fun together. The group is inclusive and well supervised by volunteers.

**Making a positive contribution, including user engagement**  
**Grade 1 (outstanding)**

166. Opportunities for looked after children and young people to make a positive contribution are outstanding with a wide range of consultations and opportunities for involvement to inform training, evaluation and planning of services.
167. There is a strong commitment to listening to looked after children and young people's views through consultation and participation activities such as the Groovy Gang, Mini Children in Care Council and the main Children in Care Council. The Mini Children in Care Council is a good initiative for children aged between 6 and 11. These initiatives have been developed to ensure children and young people of all ages can have a voice. The children's rights participation group ensure that the views of looked after children are heard and taken into account in all their reviews and in developing future provision.
168. The council has made 64 promises to promote outcomes for children and young people and published this as a Pledge to improve services. The Pledge was subject to significant consultation with looked after children and young people prior to its development. Elected members are passionate and committed to their role as corporate parents and celebrate the success for looked after children and young people in events held across the county.
169. Young people sit on the Corporate Parenting Group and regularly meet with elected members and senior officers. This group is chaired by members of the Children in Care Council and managers are held to account for services. Children and young people spoken to by inspectors report that they are proud of both their achievements and that they are holding the council to its promises.
170. Children and young people reported to inspectors that they are engaged in their reviews, with some chairing their reviews. They value the opportunity to say how they feel and to influence decisions about the

plans for their care. Young people spoke of the good relationships they have developed with their IRO, and, for some, the IRO has been the most constant and appreciated professional in their life.

171. Residents' meetings are facilitated by the children's rights and participation team in the local authority children's homes and this has recently been extended to private residential care homes. Feedback from these meetings is considered by the Corporate Parenting Group.
172. Results from the Care4Me survey of looked after children's views are extremely positive. All young people surveyed indicated that their regular reviews take note of their wishes or feelings and 80% feel their opinions make a difference to how they are treated.
173. Looked after children and young people have been involved in recruiting foster carers and social work appointment interviews. They have also carried out training for elected members.
174. In the recent fostering inspection (November 2011) the specific work done to ensure looked after children and young people was making a positive contribution was judged to be outstanding. It highlighted the encouragement received by the children and young people and they reported that they were listened to and feel part of a family.
175. Young people report very positively about the impact of the advocacy service they receive from the Participation Rights team, which, through 35 trained independent visitors, offer support, mentoring and advocacy; young people describe the services as 'excellent'. Among the wide range of work the team carry out, they ensure that, at the point of entry into the care system, all children and young people are provided with information about the advocacy service. Where English is not a first language this information is provided through the use of an interpreter and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have access through their preferred method of communication. This ensures that all of East Riding's looked after children and young people know about and have access to this service and take advantage of all it has to offer.
176. Multi agency action to prevent looked after young people offending and re-offending has improved significantly over the past twelve months and is helping to reduce the number receiving final warnings or convictions. Actions include a 'triage arrangement' which includes a joint approach between the youth justice service and youth support services. The number of young people repeating offending activity has reduced well, as has the proportion convicted for serious offences. Good action plans are developed to reintegrate young people on release from secure institutions and to secure suitable accommodation, education, training or employment opportunities for them.

**Economic well-being****Grade 1 (outstanding)**

177. Multi agency partnerships to improve the economic well-being of care leavers are outstanding and outcomes for them are outstanding.
178. All council services view their corporate parenting responsibility very seriously. Corporate parenting is embedded and well understood and this is helping to increase the number of apprenticeships and work placements that care leavers can access within the council itself, supported by good mentoring arrangements. As a result, the proportion of care leavers who are in education, employment or training has been above average for a number of years in the context of a declining trend nationally.
179. An excellent range of programmes have been developed to broaden care leavers' opportunities for education, employment or training; this includes employability conferences and visits to the University of Hull to widen aspirations. Such actions have helped to increase the proportion moving on to university. Three students have recently graduated and six are currently moving through their chosen courses. The care and support offered to university students is exemplary. Virtually all return to supported lodgings with their foster carers in holiday times and members of the pathway team visit them regularly and this provides continuity of care and support. A programme of events on the theme of 'how to get a job and keep it' is further widening care leavers understanding of their future options and helping them enter the world of work or training successfully.
180. Good accommodation support for young people is ensuring that a higher than average proportion access suitable accommodation. An increasing number of supported lodgings are available and around half of the young people are choosing to use the council's 'staying put scheme', which is working well and is valued by care leavers. Training flats and council accommodation are also highly regarded and secure their safety. Those who access private housing say they are safe because the pathway team's dedicated officer ensures suitability of placement.
181. Transition planning into the pathway team to prepare care leavers for their lives as adults is good and plans are reviewed thoroughly. Transitions are also well managed for young people supported by the Children's Disability Team. In order to ensure more students above the age of 16 who have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities can remain in their local communities, the council has developed new residential provision within a local special school.
182. The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people is low, and a good package of timely care and support is provided or commissioned for them. This includes a range of bespoke services to meet their educational, individual, cultural and religious needs as well as supporting them to understand the culture and customs of Britain and

their local area. Case studies provided showed some high quality work with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people. A good example seen was the placement of one unaccompanied asylum-seeking child with young people from a similar cultural heritage, close to the local mosque, and the timely provision of a prayer mat and copy of The Koran so that the young person could quickly continue to observe his religious customs.

## Quality of provision

## Grade 2 (good)

183. The quality of provision for looked after children is good. Effective partnership arrangements ensure that families with children and young people at risk of coming into care have access to a range of identified, targeted support services. Parents who spoke to inspectors were full of praise for the difference made by children's centre staff to their own development, parenting skills and ability to maintain positive relationships with their children. Good and established procedures for assessing risk and decision making by senior managers are utilised to identify whether a child or young person should be looked after.
184. The council's strategy and planning to improve placement choice is progressing well. This includes strategies to recruit more adopters and foster carers to increase capacity and broaden the range and diversity of carers within the county. The 'Stay Put' scheme supports stability for young people to remain in their placement up to and beyond the age of 18 and can therefore ensure an effective transition to independence. Young people expressed satisfaction with these arrangements and said that this is the best option for them until they are ready to move to live independently.
185. The council and its partners have a good understanding of the needs of looked after children and young people. There are clear strategies in place to address an increase in the number of looked after children in the 0–4 age group which has placed pressure on foster care placements. Clear analysis of need has led to a shift in resources to address identified gaps in services. Two integrated looked after children teams have recently been developed and these ensure delivery of coordinated services to children and young people and their families. This is having an impact: for example, children and young people reported that contact with their social workers has improved with more regular visits taking place. One young person said "before the two teams, visits by social workers did not take place as often as they should but now I see my social worker regularly."
186. Assessment and direct work with looked after children and young people are adequate. All looked after children and young people have an allocated worker, and young people who were spoken to say that they have good relationships with their social workers. Care plans generally identify children's needs and the support that they require. Good



outcomes are supported by effective direct work with children and young people, for example the support for children with disabilities and young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system. However, the quality of assessments does not always provide robust analysis and evaluation of risks prior to decisions being made for children to be looked after permanently, and prior to cases transferring to the two specialist teams. Social workers receive regular supervision although management oversight is not always well recorded. The quality of case recording is variable: some examples seen by inspectors were excellent; however in most cases they were poor.

187. Overall, case planning and reviewing are good. Good action is taken to ensure that children and young people do not remain looked after unnecessarily, including the use of family placements and through Special Guardianship and Residence Orders. Where children and young people are subject to Public Law Outline and court proceedings, timely legal advice is provided and social workers receive good support from the legal team to avoid unnecessary delay.
188. With 95.8% of looked after children reviews being held within timescales, performance is better than statistical neighbours. Children and young people reported to inspectors that they are engaged in their reviews, with some chairing them. They value the opportunity to say how they feel and to influence decisions about the plans for their care.
189. Placement agreements seen provide the necessary information to carers of looked after children. Children and young people in council-managed services report that they are treated with respect and dignity, their privacy maintained, and that they are fully engaged in the planning of their care.
190. The two council children's homes are judged by Ofsted to be good and adequate. In 2011 the council was placed in the worst performing 5% of local authorities in the country for ensuring that children in need of adoption were found timely placements. However, this was investigated by inspectors who identified that amongst the small cohort of children this year included children with more complex needs. The council has made rigorous efforts to find suitable high quality placements to meet these children's long term placement needs and this had resulted in delays against national targets.
191. The pathway team and partners provide high quality and outstanding services to care leavers and this has made a positive difference to outcomes for them. In order to better meet the needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people, the council has commissioned services from the independent and voluntary sectors to ensure a good level of service provision and to ensure that services are culturally sensitive to meet their needs. Children with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities are receiving services that are tailored to meet their complex needs.

## **Ambition and prioritisation**

**Grade 2 (good)**

192. Ambition and prioritisation are good.
193. A vision of a robust multi agency partnership working to provide preventative services runs through all of the relevant plans and is articulated at every level of the local authority, from councillors and the Chief Executive to front line managers and workers. Staff and managers from other children's services organisations, including the voluntary sector, also report that this is a priority for their agencies. This has ensured that the council and its partners focus on good quality preventative services aimed at keeping children out of the care system while ensuring that children and young people are protected and have their needs addressed. Between March 2010 and 2011 the numbers of looked after children and young people has increased by 11%. However this is a smaller increase than that experienced by most local authorities.
194. The Looked After Children Strategy focuses strongly on improving outcomes; it is clearly linked to the Pledge and sets out the council's, and its partners' commitment and priorities for children and care leavers mapped against the five outcomes and this is good. Looked after children, young people and care leavers can challenge the council on its performance through the complaints and children participation group.
195. Partner agencies are clear about their role and priorities for looked after children and young people and improvements have been made in outcomes for most looked after children and young people in the East Riding of Yorkshire.
196. There is strong commitment by members to services and to improving the life chances of looked after children and young people across the East Riding of Yorkshire. Council services are well resourced and all social work posts are filled by suitably qualified and experienced staff. There is a rigorous training programme of building confidence within the council ensuring the continued development of social worker skills. This year members found additional resources to meet the increase in number of looked after children age 0–4.
197. Commissioning arrangements are good, with an excellent example of joint arrangements for children with complex needs. Workforce management is good. Training is well resourced and highly appreciated by staff. Morale is reported by staff to be high and staff turnover and sickness absence is low.

## Leadership and management

## Grade 2 (good)

198. Services for children are a key priority for the council and the local strategic partnership. Political and senior management commitment is clearly stated and underpinned by the allocation of resources to ensure joint objectives, priorities and targets are met. Leadership and management are good. Ambition for looked after children and young people in East Riding is good and is reflected in the priorities for service delivery set by the partnership as a whole. Financial management is robust and there is a commitment to maintain resources for children's services over at least the next three years.
199. Partnership working, including voluntary organisations, is good at both strategic and case levels with good examples of effective collaboration to meet assessed needs and to promote the welfare of looked after children and young people. The multi agency Children's Trust has a good understanding of the challenges of providing a service across the largely rural county and is targeting services accordingly.
200. The council and its partners, through the Corporate Parenting Group, provide a strong leadership to deliver high quality services for looked after children and young people. The council has made a Pledge to continue to develop services and this is resulting in improvements in the opportunities and achievements of this group of children and young people. As a result of the work by the council and its partners, there have been significant improvements in the quality of the services, for example the adoption and fostering services and in the outcomes for looked after children and young people including educational achievement, apprenticeships and placement stability.
201. There is strong local councillor commitment to the services and improving the life chances of children across the East Riding of Yorkshire. Local authority services are well resourced and all social work posts are filled by suitably qualified and experienced staff. Additional resources have also been found by the council to meet the increase in numbers of looked after children.
202. Commissioning arrangements are good with a rigorous programme of reviewing, monitoring and ensuring placements are safe and meet the needs of children. There is an excellent example of joint planning of placements for children with the most complex needs.
203. The promotion of equality and diversity are good. Detailed equality assessments are completed by all services and included in service planning. Regular reporting to managers on progress towards targets within resulting action plans for improvement ensures a continued focus on meeting the diverse needs of the local area. All placements ensure they meet the needs of the child or young person.

204. The workforce is committed to continuous improvement and there is an ambitious programme of training across the council and its partners ensuring partnership working remains focused on the needs of vulnerable children and including those looked after.

## **Performance management and quality assurance**

### **Grade 3 (adequate)**

205. Performance management and quality assurance arrangements are adequate.
206. Good strategic performance management arrangements are in place across the council. Progress towards targets is monitored tenaciously each month to make sure that any areas of underperformance are tackled decisively. As a result, there is a trend of continued improvement in virtually all outcomes for looked after children and young people. For example this is demonstrated in the completion of PEPs, which previously was an area of weakness in April to June 2011. Subsequent decisive action ensured that by the end of October 2011 virtually all plans had been completed in time.
207. Self-evaluation of what is working well and what needs to improve is accurate and is reflected within the updated CYPP and the Looked After Children Strategy. A self-assessment produced for this inspection was generally accurate in its identification of strengths and areas of development within the looked after service. Workforce planning and development is clear, and changes in the way services for looked after children are delivered are now resulting in a more focused and better quality service. Looked after children and young people themselves report on how the changes have improved their lives.
208. At an operational level management oversight is not robust. Areas of concern are not always picked up by managers or used to tackle poor performance. There is only limited evidence on case files or in the electronic records of auditing and no evidence of improvements being made as a result of case work issues being identified. Service-wide quality assurance arrangements are under developed and do not enable managers to be aware of the quality of casework and to take timely corrective action.

## Record of main findings:

Safeguarding services	
Overall effectiveness	Adequate
Capacity for improvement	Good
Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people	
Children and young people are safe and feel safe	Adequate
Quality of provision	Adequate
The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe	Good
Ambition and prioritisation	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Performance management and quality assurance	Adequate
Partnership working	Good
Equality and diversity	Good
Services for looked after children	
Overall effectiveness	Good
Capacity for improvement	Good
How good are outcomes for looked after children and care leavers?	
Being healthy	Adequate
Staying safe	Good
Enjoying and achieving	Good
Making a positive contribution, including user engagement	Outstanding
Economic well-being	Outstanding
Quality of provision	Good
Ambition and prioritisation	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Performance management and quality assurance	Adequate
Equality and diversity	Good