

Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council – Inspection of child protection

3 – 12 December 2012

Summary report for children and young people

The purpose of the inspection is to look at how well the council and other organisations help and protect children and young people to be safe from harm and to be well cared for.

Overall we rated Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council as **inadequate** for how effective child protection services are. All of our grades are explained in the table below:

Outstanding	A service that is significantly better than required at keeping children and young people safe
Good	A service that is better than required at keeping children and young people safe
Adequate	A service that is doing what is required to keep children and young people safe
Inadequate	A service that is not doing what is required to keep children and young people safe

Here is a summary of the things we found at the inspection that were generally **adequate or good** and the things we told the Director:

The people who run the council want to do the very best for the children and young people in the area. They have made improvements to services but there is still more to do to keep children safe.

We did not find any children who were in immediate danger of being harmed. Children who are at risk are given the right kind of help straight away.

Children’s centres, nurseries, family support workers, health workers and other services make sure that children are given a good start in life.

The council has set up a clear system for making sure that services share information and work together to give extra help to any children and families who need it. But this is very new.

Most parents and children are happy with the help and support they have been given, although some say that there have been too many changes of social workers.

Here is a summary of the things we found at the inspection that **needed improving** and the things we told the Director:

We have asked the council to make sure that, if there are any worries about the safety of children, even those who have not yet been born, social workers should have very clear plans to help them. When children need extra help to keep them safe, they should be given this straight away and by social workers with lots of experience. This extra help should not be taken away until everyone is absolutely sure that those children are safe.

We have asked social workers to keep up to date records of what has happened to all the children they are dealing with, so that it is clear what help they have been given, who gave it and when.

Children who are being given extra help to keep them safe should be involved in planning what is going to happen to them. They should have someone who is not a social worker to listen to any problems they have and to speak up for them.

We have asked the council to make sure that social workers are not overloaded with work, especially if they are new to the job, and that their bosses check on how well they are doing, help them and work alongside them if necessary.

We have asked all the services in the area to work very closely together to make sure that all children are kept safe and that any adults who are a danger to them are dealt with immediately.

We have said that councillors need to have a better understanding of what help children and families need when they are going through difficult times. Councillors should make sure that the right kind of help is available to all families in Calderdale.

The full inspection report was published on 21 January 2013. The council will now prepare a plan to show how they will improve things. It will also say when they are going to talk to children and young people about what they are going to do and which groups they are going to talk to.

If you would like to look at the full inspection report you can find this at

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/calderdale>