

Cornwall – Inspection of child protection

4 -13 February 2013

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 Cornwall as adequate 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 council and other organisations have worked together well to improve services which help keep children and young people safe and protect them from harm. Inspectors did not find any children or young people at immediate risk of harm during the inspection.

There are many services for children young people and families to help sort out problems early. Information about the needs of families is used well to put services in place where they are most needed.

A new referral unit looks at all concerns about children and young people and ensures that concerns are responded to appropriately. Professionals in, for example, schools and children's centres who have concerns about the welfare and safety of children receive good advice. The decisions made by the unit are reliable and sound.

Assessments of children's needs carried out by social workers and others are satisfactory and almost all children are seen regularly. There are many examples of youth workers, family support workers and social workers doing good targeted work with children, young people and families.

In most cases the help and protection provided to children and their families reduce risks to children and young people effectively. Child protection plans prepared by social workers identify risks to children. Most parents, children and young people seen by inspectors felt that they had been helped.

Managers and supervisors look at the work of staff to make sure that everyone is doing what they should be doing. There is a lot of information about the quality of work to help children and keep them safe. But all this information is not used as well as it could be to give a fuller picture of the quality of the work carried out with children and young people by staff across Cornwall.

A lot of staff training has been carried out which is appreciated by staff and it is improving the quality of their work.

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

When children need help the people working to support them do not always get together early with the child and family and other professionals to agree what help is needed and what needs to be done to make things better for the child. This is because some professionals are not all confident about how to do this.

In a small number of cases the inspectors examined there were delays in children being seen by social workers and in children being seen regularly in their homes.

Sometimes what children think about what is happening in their lives is very clear and makes a difference to the plans and the work done with them. However in other cases children's views are not very clear. Not enough attention is given as to how children's different backgrounds, religion, culture and diversity affects the help and protection they might need.

Children and young people have up to date child protection plans but sometimes it is hard to see what difference the plans and the work done is making to keep children safe. The plans are not always clear enough about what needs to change and how this will make things better for the child. Sometimes there are delays in taking the right steps to stop children being neglected.

Although the way managers look at the work of staff to help them work well has improved the way this supervision is done is not the same across all teams of staff and some managers do this better than others.

The full inspection report was published on 15 March 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/cornwall>