

Kingston-upon-Thames – Inspection of child protection

3 – 12 June 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 Kingston-upon-Thames 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:

When the council get clear information about a child that needs protection they do something straight away and this is much better than before.

Professionals that work with children have a better understanding of when and how they should report their concerns to the council.

Recently social workers are making sure the work they do with the families is recorded quickly and that their notes are up to date.

There is some good direct work being done by social workers, family support workers and key workers with children and families.

The work done by social workers to understand children's needs and make sure they are protected is improving overall. They are making sure they get all the information

they can from other professionals that know the children.
Social workers are positive about their jobs and can talk to senior managers easily.
There is a wide range of early help services available and these are now working together to ensure families get a better service than before.
Good work ensures that children attend school, exclusions are rare and very few children are missing from school. When children are missing from school or educated at home the council does all they can to make sure they are safe.

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

Inspectors found that some information that comes into the council about children who may need help and protection is not always clear. When this happens it is not always passed to the right people quickly, which means some children are left at risk. The council has put plans in place to improve this straight away and make sure that families move in and out of the right services at the right time.
Children and young people’s views are often not heard at important meetings about their future because very few children attend and they are not always offered the support they need to attend.
The council are making sure they often check the quality of the work of social workers by looking at children’s case files. But, they do not always make sure that the social workers use what the council has learnt from the cases to improve their work in the future.
Social workers do not always have good chances to think about their work with their managers and make sure that what they are doing is really improving things for the children and young people.
The council does not have enough permanent social workers and need to make sure they are doing all they can to make sure they do.
Not enough children who are living with an adult who is not a close family member are known to the council. This is called private fostering.

The council and police in Kingston are not working closely enough to ensure children are protected.

The council need to make sure they do the right things when a child goes missing from their home.

The children who are not at immediate risk of significant harm, but still need the support of a social worker do not always get one quickly enough. When they do get a social worker there is not always a clear plan to make their situation better.

The council do not know whether early help, such as support from family support workers and key workers is really making a difference to the families they are working with yet. They have put in place ways to measure this in the future.

The full inspection report was published on **12 July 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/kingston-upon-thames>