

East Riding of Yorkshire

Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

and

Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board¹

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

¹ Ofsted produces this report under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This report includes the report of the inspection of local authority functions carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the report of the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.

Executive summary

Vulnerable children in East Riding receive good-quality, well-coordinated support that safeguards them well and improves their lives. This is as a result of strong leadership by the local authority's chief executive, council members, the director of children's services (DCS) and the head of safeguarding, who have prioritised the improvement of services in the council and across partner agencies. High-quality social work is evidenced in most cases and from the positive feedback received from children and their families.

There has been excellent work first to introduce and now to embed a well-respected social work model of practice across all services. This has provided a clear framework for the consideration of risks that children may face and the identification of any protective actions that need to be taken. Social workers visit children and their families regularly, listen to them and ensure that their voices are integral to work undertaken.

The local authority's early help work is of a high standard. Support services are provided and coordinated well across the geographically large county that includes rural, urban and coastal areas. Wherever families and children live, availability and access to early help support is consistently good. Step-up and step-down arrangements between early help services and statutory services are highly effective, and this has resulted in a significant reduction in the numbers of children and families needing to be dealt with through formal social work support. A multi-agency early help and safeguarding hub (EHaSH) screens and coordinates support services well.

In the vast majority of cases, high-quality assessments and direct social work support are demonstrably improving children's and families' lives. Multi-agency coordination and actions are a strength, although the quality of written plans is not consistently of a high quality.

Urgent child protection issues are identified, and appropriate actions are taken promptly to ensure that children are safe. In the main, strategy meetings are attended solely by social workers and the police, although discussions do occur with other agencies. In the cases looked at by inspectors, there was no impact on the children's outcomes due to this gap. Child protection conferences and subsequent multi-agency meetings are timely, identifying work required to reduce risks and support families effectively. Multi-agency work to address child sexual exploitation, children who go missing, radicalisation and child safety are all of a high standard. Support to children who are privately fostered is good. When there are concerns about professionals who may have harmed children, appropriate actions are taken by agencies. However, these are not always concluded in a timely manner.

In the vast majority of cases, when children need to be looked after this is identified, and prompt, appropriate action is taken. Support for children looked after and their families is of a high quality. The local authority has a good reputation with the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) and the local

judiciary for the quality of its court work. Permanency work, including support to return home, adoption and special guardianship, is well considered and tracked by looked after reviews and management panels. Placements for the majority of children are of good quality and meet children's needs. The local authority is aware that more needs to be done to increase the volume and range of local accommodation, and, despite much work to accomplish this, it is yet to deliver desired progress. Overall, regardless of where they live, children are supported very well in their education, have their health needs met and are involved in leisure activities and hobbies. The majority of personal education plans are of a good standard. Too many children have placement moves that might be avoided if mental health services to support the management of children's behaviour that is related to their early life experiences were more readily available.

Corporate parenting support is excellent, and the achievements of children looked after are celebrated well. The Children in Care Council (CiCC) is a real strength and ensures that the voices of children looked after are heard and taken account of across the council. Advocacy support is accessible and well used. However, there are insufficient independent visitors for those identified as needing this support.

The quality of adoption support provided by a specialist team is good. Children who may be in need of adoption are identified at an early stage in the planning process, and decisions to pursue plans for permanence through adoption are timely. Family finding is purposeful, and effective regional and national links ensure that a wide pool of adopters can be carefully considered for all children. The majority of children are well matched with suitable adopters. Most adoption work is completed to the children's timescales, and there are no children waiting to be matched with prospective adoptive families.

The service for care leavers is outstanding. The Pathway team makes tenacious efforts to keep in touch with all care leavers. Further, care leavers receive excellent support and speak very highly about the contribution that the team has made to improving their lives. They benefit from high standards of accommodation and a very good quality of individualised support in education and work.

East Riding council members and the chief executive have prioritised services for children across the council. The director has used that support effectively to create a learning environment where good social work can thrive. New management panels, combined with an integrated quality assurance and audit framework, have ensured that work to safeguard families and support children looked after is good.

Recruitment and retention have been prioritised, resulting in most social work teams being fully staffed. This means that children and their families are being supported by social workers whom they know well and who have a good understanding of their individual circumstances. The quality of recording supervision by managers is too variable. In the main, this is due to the current electronic case recording system, which is currently being recommissioned.

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The local authority

Information about the local authority area

Previous Ofsted inspections

- The local authority operates two children's homes. Both were judged to be good or outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspections.
- The previous inspection of the local authority's safeguarding arrangements was in November 2011. The local authority was judged to be adequate.
- The previous inspection of the local authority's services for children looked after was in November 2011. The local authority was judged to be good.

Local leadership

- The DCS has been in post since December 2013.
- The chair of the LSCB has been in post since December 2007.

Children living in this area

- Approximately 63,000 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in East Riding. This is 19% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 12% of the local authority's children are living in poverty.
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
 - in primary schools is 11.6% (the national average is 14.5%)
 - in secondary schools is 10% (the national average is 13.2%).
- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 3.3% of all children living in the area, compared with 21.5% in the country as a whole.
- The largest minority ethnic group of children and young people in the area is White Eastern European children.
- The proportion of children and young people who speak English as an additional language:
 - in primary schools is 3.8% (the national average is 20.1%)
 - in secondary schools is 2.2% (the national average is 15.7%).

Child protection in this area

- At 31 October 2016, 1,194 children were identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service.
- At 31 October 2016, 203 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. This is a decrease from 216 at 31 March 2016.
- Since the last inspection in 2011, seven serious incident notifications have been submitted to Ofsted and four serious case reviews have been completed or are ongoing at the time of the inspection.

Children looked after in this area

- At 31 October 2016, 280 children were being looked after by the local authority (a rate of 44.6 per 10,000 children). This is an increase from 260 (42 per 10,000 children) at 31 March 2016.

Of this number:

- 74 (or 26.4%) live outside the local authority area
 - 16 live in residential children's homes, of whom 43.8% live out of the authority area
 - 11 live in residential special schools, of whom 72.7% live out of the authority area
 - 171 live with foster families, of whom 19.5% live out of the authority area
 - 19 live with parents, of whom 21.1% live out of the authority area
 - two children looked after and four care leavers are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- In the last 12 months:
 - there have been nine adoptions
 - seven children became subject of special guardianship orders
 - 103 children ceased to be looked after, of whom 11.7% subsequently returned to be looked after
 - 25 young people ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living

- two children and young people ceased to be looked after and are now living in houses in multiple occupation
- The casework model used in this area is Signs of Safety.

Recommendations

1. Ensure that when children's plans are recorded all of them are clear about actions to be taken, who has responsibility for them and the timescales they must be completed in, and that they are regularly updated.
2. Strengthen child protection strategy discussions and meetings by ensuring that they are more consistently informed by the involvement of all relevant professionals.
3. Improve the timeliness with which the designated officer service resolves allegations while ensuring that this work continues to be of a high quality.
4. Ensure that high-quality emotional and mental health support is available to meet the needs of the children looked after population.
5. Ensure that personal education plans are of a consistently good quality.
6. Increase the capacity in the independent visitors' service and ensure that children benefit from such support in a timely manner.
7. Ensure that supervision for all social workers is reflective, challenging and well recorded.
8. Ensure that the recommissioned children's services' electronic database supports social workers to record their work and enables management oversight.

Summary for children and young people

- Services for children and young people in East Riding are good.
- When children need help to feel safe and protected, social workers, police and teachers work well together to provide support quickly to families. This means that children and their families receive help without having to wait too long or before problems become too large. Social workers know the children whom they work with very well and want the best for them.
- Sometimes the written plans for children are not as clear as they could be. Children and their families should always know when things should be done, who should do it and what should happen next if there is a problem.
- If children cannot remain at home with their families, social workers make sure that they live in stable, caring foster families. The council is working hard to find more foster carers who live locally for children of all ages. When it is safe for children to return home, they are helped to do so with lots of support to make it work.
- When children need to remain looked after, their plans are reviewed regularly by an independent reviewing officer (IRO), who visits them between review meetings. Children are helped to say what they think in these reviews, either in person or online. Some children express their views by joining the CiCC, which works hard to give children looked after a voice by speaking to councillors and senior managers about how things could improve.
- Children can stay with foster carers when they reach the age of 18 if this is what they want. They receive help with education and all of them have a personal education plan. For a small group of children, these could be improved to ensure that all children receive the right support in school and college. Good support is available to stay healthy.
- Children who need permanent new families, including through adoption, are well supported. They are helped to feel safe and secure by having good life-story books and lots of support. Children are usually adopted with their brothers and sisters.
- Social workers and personal advisers for care leavers develop very good relationships with young people. They work hard to make sure that they feel safe and happy with their accommodation and have a pathway plan that is right for them. They are helped very well to find apprenticeships, university places or employment. There is a lot of effort made to keep in touch with them and to provide a range of activities.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
<p>Summary</p> <p>Children who need help and protection are supported by good services that improve their welfare and help to keep them safe. Social workers see children regularly and know them well. This means that children are able to build trusting relationships with them. The adoption of a consistent social work model of practice helps workers to focus on children’s lived experiences and on what needs to change to improve their outcomes. Social workers are tenacious and creative in engaging with and understanding the wishes and feelings of children, and make good use of a range of direct work tools.</p> <p>Early help services make a positive difference for children. Services are flexible, offering evening, weekend and intensive support. The quality of this work has enabled many more children to be supported through the early help service and has resulted in a significant reduction in referrals being made to social work services. Early help assessments are focused on children’s needs, and good communication ensures smooth transitions when children do need to receive statutory services. When concerns about children are referred to the multi-agency early help and safeguarding hub, decision-making about next steps is swift and appropriate. Decision-making in child protection strategy discussions is timely and well matched to risk, but partners other than the police do not routinely attend. Although they share information, health and other partner agencies could more helpfully contribute to decision-making and action planning by attending in person.</p> <p>Assessments have a strong child focus, clearly identify what needs to change and are updated to reflect children’s changing circumstances. Direct work is also of a very high standard and benefits children’s lives. Written plans, however, are not consistently clear. Historically, for a very few children suffering from chronic neglect, the cumulative impact of this has not been recognised sufficiently quickly and this has delayed service provision for some. The recent introduction of new multi-agency approaches to address long-standing neglect is starting to show a positive impact by improving the timeliness of recognition and appropriate action being taken.</p> <p>Child protection conferences and core groups are well attended, focusing well on the management of risk and enhancing protective factors in families. Services for children at risk from child sexual exploitation or going missing are strong. The local authority and police work well together to share intelligence and to track and reduce risk to children. The designated officer service has strong links to schools and the co-location of this service with the EHaSH has enhanced identification and feedback to agencies that require guidance. Multi-agency actions are undertaken when required, although too many cases are not concluded promptly.</p>	

Inspection findings

9. Children who need help and protection in the East Riding receive services that reduce risk effectively and improve their welfare.
10. Children and families have access to high-quality early help services provided by the local authority's early years, children's centres and youth and family support services. This provision, which includes both universal and targeted services, supports children and families across a wide range of needs and vulnerabilities. Early help assessments are well focused on children's needs and are completed promptly.
11. Intensive support is provided when this is needed, including during evenings and at weekends, which are best for families. For many children, the support they receive addresses their needs very well and prevents problems from escalating to a level at which they would need statutory services. The local authority continues to broaden the range of early help services available. For example, the prevention and education team has developed an innovative 'Pathways' group work programme, aimed at addressing emerging emotional support needs in schools linked to low self-esteem and self-harm. This service is beginning to have a positive impact, addressing children's needs at their earliest point before they escalate and need more formal interventions.
12. When children need to step up from early help to statutory services to ensure that their needs are met, or when progress resulting from the intervention of statutory services means that children can step down to early help services, these transitions are well managed because of the close working arrangements and good communication between services. As a result, children and their families experience a relatively seamless handover between key workers and the continuation of a package of support matched to their needs.
13. When professionals and members of the public contact EHaSH with concerns about children's welfare, these are progressed promptly. Well-managed allocation processes, within both early help services and the local authority's locality teams, mean that children do not have to wait to receive services or further assessment. When urgent or emergency situations arise out of normal office hours, these are dealt with effectively by a team of experienced children's social workers. Handover arrangements with daytime services are robust, and effective transfer of information helps to keep children safe. Appropriate, well-considered decisions are made in response to presenting risks and needs at the point of referral. This holds true across a spectrum of need from signposting to a universal support service to a child protection investigation.

14. Strategy discussions are timely and provide a good consideration of levels of risk. The presence of a detective sergeant in the EHaSH means that joint working and decision-making between police and the local authority are well aligned. However, health and other agencies do not routinely attend, although they share information via telephone calls. In all of the cases sampled by inspectors, there was good coordination and no negative impact from this deficit. (Recommendation)
15. The local authority uses an established social work model throughout its services to assess children's needs, and this ensures consistently high-quality support for the most vulnerable children and their families. The vast majority of assessments are good. The voices of children are clearly articulated, and the analysis gives a clear sense of what needs to change to reduce risk and meet children's needs. Assessments are updated regularly, to reflect changing circumstances and needs, and, as a result, social workers are clear about what needs to happen to improve children's welfare and to reduce risk. Children who have disabilities receive high-quality assessments of their needs, whether these relate to their disability or to safeguarding, and they are supported with packages of care that are well tailored to their individual needs.
16. A small minority of children, who historically had been living in situations where neglect was chronic, experienced delays in having their needs comprehensively identified and met. Prior to the inspection, senior managers had identified, through practice audits, that where the 'toxic trio' of domestic abuse, parental mental ill health and parental substance misuse was found, a small number of children had waited too long for decisive action to be taken. The recently launched neglect and domestic abuse strategies are beginning to demonstrate desired improvements to both practice and children's outcomes. The graded care profile, an approach designed to support the identification of chronic neglect, is also being piloted in part of the county, but it is too early to demonstrate measurable impact.
17. Multi-agency public protection arrangements and multi-agency risk assessment conferences are strong. These fora provide an effective framework for supporting and protecting children living in higher-risk domestic abuse situations. Children benefit from this and receive good support and services to reduce their exposure to risk and to help them to deal with their experiences. Good-quality multi-agency coordination, combined with focused, direct work, ensures that these issues are robustly addressed.

18. Initial and review child protection case conferences are timely and well attended. They make decisions and develop plans that are evidence based and match children's needs. Children are involved well in conferences and many attend or share their views with the support of the participation and rights service. The established social work model is also used to good effect to engage parents and to help them to understand what needs to change. When child protection actions do not effect sufficient change, the local authority makes good use of 'letters before action' under the Public Law Outline to prevent drift.
19. Assessments clearly highlight what needs to change to improve children's welfare. However, not all of the resultant written plans are sufficiently specific to drive and measure progress. Any adverse impact of this is limited due to the good understanding and relationships that social workers have with the children and families they work with. High-quality direct work ensures that children's needs are met and that their plans are implemented within agreed timescales. Workers spend too much time inputting to the cumbersome local authority electronic case recording system, although this is currently being recommissioned to better support contemporary social work practice. (Recommendation)
20. Schools speak highly of the helpfulness of the dedicated education and schools designated officer. The co-location of this service with the EHaSH allows for swift identification and feedback to schools or other agencies that may require guidance in discharging their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. The designated officer coordinates effective multi-agency actions, ensuring that children are safe. However, the service takes too long to conclude some complex cases. (Recommendation)
21. When children are at risk of child sexual exploitation or going missing, effective partnership working is making a positive difference in ensuring that they are safe. Social workers confidently complete risk assessments that accurately identify levels of risk that individual young people face. Monthly multi-agency child sexual exploitation meetings work effectively to share intelligence, plan and oversee activity. A well-established child sexual exploitation team provides good advice and support to professionals and undertakes effective direct work with children, their families and social workers. One team member is located in EHaSH, providing valued expertise at this crucial first point of contact. The approach of the local authority and its partners to awareness raising and prevention is strong. The 'Not in our community' programme is a well-considered initiative that uses both social media and face-to-face work in engaging both schools and significant numbers of children and young people in raising awareness of child sexual exploitation and where to seek help. Good joint working by the police and the local authority is supporting regular use of both civil and criminal sanctions to prevent and disrupt the activity of perpetrators.

22. The child sexual exploitation team makes good use of intelligence gleaned from missing and found notifications, ensuring that risks of sexual exploitation and information about 'hot spots' are not missed. All children who go missing are offered a return home interview (RHI).
23. Well-established and thorough procedures for monitoring children who are missing from education or missing out on full-time education are used effectively. Headteachers are fully aware of the processes for reporting children missing from education and say that the local authority responds swiftly when they report a missing child. The local authority is in touch with all of the 212 children who are currently electively home educated. Monitoring of how well children progress in their learning and whether they are safe is effective and is supported by home visits to children and their parents.
24. Work with children who are privately fostered is of a high standard. It is timely, compliant with the requirements of statutory guidance and well focused on children's needs. Updated training has recently been undertaken by local authority staff.
25. The local authority and its partners have appropriate procedures and service pathways in place for children who may be at risk of radicalisation. A programme of workshops to raise awareness of the 'Prevent' duty training has been successfully delivered. The local Channel panel and process, which are jointly administered with Hull City council, have been appropriately applied in the cases of the very small number of children when there are low-level concerns. There are up-to-date policies, procedures, guidance and training in place in relation to female genital mutilation and honour-based violence, although there are no current or recent cases of children for whom these issues have been a concern.
26. Support for 16- and 17-year-old young people at risk of homelessness is strong. The numbers of young people who presented as homeless is low, at five in the last six months. For these young people, the decisions to offer accommodation under section 20 were appropriate, and the support provided, whatever their legal status, was comprehensive, with good consideration of their broader emotional, practical and educational needs. This work is underpinned by a clear protocol that is consistent with statutory guidance.

<p>The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Summary</p> <p>Children looked after receive a good service, which supports improved outcomes. No children who were looked after unnecessarily or who returned home inappropriately were seen in the inspection. Management oversight is good, with direction and rationale for decisions evident in case recording. Thresholds for children entering care are appropriate and, in the vast majority of cases, timely.</p> <p>Children and young people have meaningful relationships with skilled social workers and IROs who know them well, and this enables them to receive the support that they need. Children’s and young people’s views are consistently sought, and the voice of the child is evident and taken into account in care planning. Placement matching is timely. The majority of children and young people live in homes that meet their needs and they feel listened to and supported by their social workers and foster carers. Foster carers have access to good support and training. Children and young people are supported well to attain educationally and make good progress at all stages. However, not all personal education plans comprehensively identify individual children’s needs. The majority of children’s health needs are assessed and met in a timely manner, although specialist emotional and mental health support is not always easily available. Good advocacy support is available, enabling children to be involved in decisions about their lives. However, not all children who are eligible have access to an independent visitor.</p> <p>Adoption performance is good, with adoption being considered for all children at an early stage. Parallel planning is effective, all permanence options are pursued and unnecessary delays are avoided. Good regional arrangements and the timely use of national systems ensure that there is a wide range of available adopters for children. Children are carefully matched with adopters and successfully remain with their adoptive families through responsive post-adoption support services. Currently, no children are waiting for a match to prospective adopters.</p> <p>Provision for care leavers is outstanding. The pathway team has excellent skills and is highly adept at helping care leavers in a variety of situations. Care leavers have a strong respect for the services that they receive and have a say in what they need and how the service can improve. Almost all care leavers are in suitable accommodation. They receive clear and effective advice and guidance from the pathway team on a range of educational options, through the many links that the local authority has, and a high proportion find employment or progress to further or higher education or an apprenticeship.</p>	

Inspection findings

27. Children and young people become looked after only when it is in their best interests. Thresholds for children entering care are appropriate and generally timely, with excellent senior management oversight and direction. A pre-proceedings panel considers high-quality assessments and detailed chronologies to consider the impact of historical issues and to ensure that risks to children are well understood. Pre-birth assessments are of an excellent quality and inform the early identification of the need for permanence planning. When children are on the edge of care, there is a range of effective support services to enable them to live safely in their families. Alternative support to extended family is also well considered. Viability assessments are timely and thorough, and there is a clear analysis of potential risks and strengths and the capacity to meet needs and protect children and young people.
28. Court work is of a good quality. The Public Law Outline is used effectively to work with families to avoid the need for care proceedings. Pre-proceedings letters appropriately identify concerns, clearly explaining the changes required and the course of action that will be taken to safeguard and protect children, should the required changes not be made. Legal planning meetings are used well to ensure that decisions to take proceedings are carefully considered. In addition, robust tracking of cases means that children do not experience unnecessary delays. The district court judge and Cafcass report good working relationships with the local authority.
29. Children have good and meaningful relationships with their social workers, whom they know well. All of the workers and managers who met inspectors spoke enthusiastically about the children in their care. They gave detailed accounts of the children's histories, current circumstances, assessed needs and how they were involved in supporting and improving their lives. Children are seen alone and often by their social workers, and their views and experiences are well recorded, informing assessments and plans. Children are helped to make sense of their life histories by excellent, sensitive and child-centred direct work.
30. Children and young people who have disabilities and who are looked after benefit from a specialist disability team, which has a wide range of knowledge and experience. Sampled cases demonstrated that the team's expertise leads to assessments of a high quality, and this in turn results in robust planning for children's care. Transition plans demonstrate strong working relationships with adult services. A joint commissioning panel considers tripartite funding of complex cases when needs are identified that can only be met outside of the county's resources. A particular strength of the panel system is its ability to construct and provide bespoke packages of care provision that 'wrap around' the individual needs of the child.

31. Children placed outside of the local area are well supported and have access to comprehensive services and advice. They have timely health assessments, and prompt access to primary health services. Educational attainment is monitored very well by the headteacher of the virtual school. IROs and participation and rights officers undertake regular visits to children to seek their views and support them in representing their needs and wishes. Children are supported to engage and contribute in their reviews directly or by using an internet-based tool. In 2015–16, 98% of children aged four years and over communicated their views either before or after their reviews, which represents excellent practice. Their views are used well to inform individual care planning. Reviews are timely, and children and young people are supported to maintain positive contact and links with their families and friends. As a result, children develop good relationships with IROs, whom they know well.
32. Although children are offered and make good use of the advocacy service, there are capacity issues in the independent visitors' service. At the time of inspection, eight children were waiting for a match with an independent visitor, with one young person having waited for five months. (Recommendation)
33. The risks to children who go missing from care are well understood and managed by social workers and managers. Children and young people are consistently offered return-home interviews. When child sexual exploitation concerns are identified, risk assessments are undertaken and appropriate safety planning and direct work with young people support them to minimise risk-taking behaviours.
34. Six unaccompanied asylum seekers are provided with looked after and care leaver services through the national dispersal scheme. Their health, education, faith and leisure activities are appropriately considered in visits and reviews. The lead professionals working with these young people have a good understanding of them and of the action that is needed to progress their care plans and to support them.
35. Partnerships between the virtual school and headteachers in primary and secondary schools are good. Headteachers are positive about how the local authority distributes pupil premium to support children looked after, to help them with their learning and about how it monitors the impact of it. Children spoken to by inspectors had a good understanding of their pupil premium and spoke of getting laptops and one-to-one tuition to support their learning.

36. Management at the virtual school has clear oversight of education outcomes. The virtual headteacher has a firm grasp of the quality of the education that each child receives across and outside the local authority, and works tirelessly to further improve the support available. There is a good focus on transitional arrangements, from pre-school, through the key stages of a child's education, to their progression to employment or higher education. The virtual headteacher risk rates the performance of each child to ensure that none falls behind with their studies or falls short with their attendance at school. Attendance for children looked after has been consistent at around 95% for the last two years.
37. The local authority assiduously monitors the attendance of children looked after. There have been no children looked after who have been permanently excluded from any school, inside or outside the local authority boundary, for several years. Good partnership working, for managing those children who find mainstream education too challenging or who get into difficulties in their schools, ensures that alternative education arrangements are effective. The virtual headteacher scrutinises carefully the progress that children make in this provision.
38. Two thirds of personal education plans seen by inspectors were clear and purposeful. The better plans are insightful in the use of all salient information, and this provides comprehensive, tangible personal and academic targets. The summary of a child's background information gives a clear picture of their circumstances, their strengths and the key issues that they face. In the weaker plans, targets were imprecise or too few in number or there was missing or scant information in some sections. (Recommendation)

39. The level of attainment at key stage 2 is excellent and well above the average for reading, writing and mathematics, compared with other similar authorities or nationally. In 2014–15, the period covered by the most recently published data, 93% of children looked after attained the expected standard for mathematics against an average for similar local authorities of 61.5% and 64% for England as a whole. In reading, 80% of children reached the expected standard compared to 69.8% in similar authorities and 71% for England as a whole and, for writing, 73% reached the expected standard compared with 55% in similar authorities and 61% for England. The proportion of children looked after who do well in all three subject areas was 67% compared with 49.4% in similar authorities and 52% for England as a whole. Most children make the expected progress between key stages 1 and 2, according to published data and data held by the local authority. The most recent published data for 2014–15 shows that 79% made the expected progress in mathematics and writing and 84% in reading. The proportion of children looked after who made at least the expected progress, in 2014–15, in developing their English and mathematics skills from key stages 2 to 4, and the proportion gaining five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, was much higher than the low averages for similar local authorities and nationally. The attainment data for key stages 2 and 4 nationally changed in 2016. The virtual school has included the new way of measuring the progress and attainment of children looked after in its virtual school report. The numbers of children eligible for inclusion in the statistics are very small this year. However, attainment at key stage 2 and key stage 4 for children looked after remains consistent with that in previous years.
40. Children and young people are supported effectively to take part in social and leisure activities. This support includes children and their foster carers having free access to leisure provision through the Max card. In addition, activities such as jazz dance, ballet and football classes were funded and valued.
41. The health needs of children looked after are met well through a dedicated team. 95% of initial health assessments are completed within statutory timescales, and the effective monthly tracking of annual health assessments ensures that needs are identified promptly. There is also a focus on promoting healthy lifestyles among children, including diet, physical activity and the risks of substance misuse.
42. Some children who have complex emotional difficulties do not receive timely access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). As a result, there are a small number of cases in which children's and young people's challenging, risk-taking behaviours have resulted in recurring placement breakdowns. Inspectors heard several times that CAMHS are not available until children are stable and settled in their placement. This is an unacceptable criterion for restricting help for some of the most vulnerable children looked after. The local authority identified these concerns prior to the inspection and is currently reviewing children looked after CAMHS provision with health partners. (Recommendation)

43. Children are not waiting unnecessarily for decisions about their futures. Plans for permanence are fully considered and decisions are set out for permanence to meet their needs in a timescale that a child can understand and cope with. Their journeys to permanence are monitored effectively through robust tracking systems. The majority of brothers and sisters of children looked after live together and, when this is not the plan, the decisions to separate them are informed by good assessments and a clear rationale. The permanence panel is rigorous and ensures that information is tested to make well-informed decisions, including those in respect of special guardianship orders and long-term fostering. The local authority had been slow to promote special guardianship orders, but the number is increasing each year and a good support package is now offered.
44. When children return to live with their parents, thorough assessments, appropriate management decision-making, careful planning and good support packages inform and underpin this. Robust arrangements are put in place to ensure that children continue to be safeguarded and protected.
45. The local authority has made considerable efforts to increase the availability of placements within East Riding, but has not yet managed to do this. It is difficult to see what else the authority might do to achieve its aim. A new initiative to recruit foster carers from across East Riding council employees has recently been launched, but it is too early to demonstrate impact.
46. The majority of children and young people benefit from stable, settled placements, which meet their needs well. Children are placed appropriately in foster or residential care to meet their needs and, when placed away from their family locality, this is due in the main to the benefits of a specialist placement being able to best support their additional needs.
47. Foster carers are very positive about the support that they receive, the relationships with their workers and wider partners. They report that the training offer is good and reflects the needs of children and the challenges of the role. There is an excellent rate of foster carers gaining relevant qualifications. Annual reviews of foster carers, which include consultations with children and relevant professionals, such as teachers, are of good quality.

The graded judgement for adoption performance is that it is good

48. Adoption performance is good and considered at an early stage for all children. Decisions to pursue plans for permanence are timely and well considered in all children looked after reviews. The adoption team also tracks children through high-quality parallel planning until permanence arrangements are satisfactorily concluded.
49. The adoption reform grant has been well utilised to increase capacity and strengthen arrangements for identifying and supporting parents at an early stage. When significant concerns indicate that it is not safe for them to remain at home, babies are cared for by experienced foster carers who support their return to their families effectively, or skilfully and promptly support the move to their new families. Fostering to adopt is a recent initiative, and, to date, four babies have benefited from being placed with foster carers who were then able to become their adopters. This has ensured that there are good early attachments for some very vulnerable children.
50. Support for children needing adoption is good. The timeliness for children entering care, moving in with their adoptive families and being adopted has improved considerably. Year-on-year data show a reduction from 613 days in 2013–14 to 567 days in 2014–15. The latest data provided by the local authority shows that this has improved further to 554 days, ensuring that the needs of these vulnerable children are met well.
51. The adoption service has well-established and collaborative working arrangements as part of the 'Being family' campaign in the region. This promotes the pooling of resources across the region for raising the profile of adoption, recruitment and adopter training. This continues to generate interest and a steady number of adopters. Eight adopters were approved last year, and this has risen to 11, so far, in 2016. The local authority is working with other authorities to establish a regional adoption agency and this is on target for April 2017.
52. Due to robust, high-quality support and planning, no children are currently waiting for adoptive placements. This is excellent performance and is a result of the work done to recruit a wide pool of adopters who are then carefully considered for all children. Currently, four adopters are waiting for a placement, and their profiles have been promptly shared both regionally and nationally.

53. Children are skilfully and appropriately matched with their potential adopters. Detailed meetings between all parties are held prior to placements, to fully discuss children's immediate and long-term needs, and this minimises risks of disruption to placements. On the rare occasions when plans fail and there are lessons to learn, the adoption service identifies whether there is any thematic learning that needs to be disseminated across the workforce, for example, following a match which did not progress after the child was introduced to their potential family.
54. The local authority has made steady progress to ensure that only the right children are identified for adoption. In the 12 months to the period of the inspection, there was one child for whom the decision to adopt had been reversed. This is an improving picture, compared to 15 children who had adoption plans reversed over the previous three years.
55. All children live with their brothers and sisters when this is their plans. Over the last two years, 21 brothers and sisters were placed together and a further two children were successfully placed with a brother or sister who was already adopted. When an assessment and plan determine that it is not in children's interests to live together, their adoption plans outline how they can maintain their relationships positively.
56. The quality of life-story books is excellent. These highly individual and sensitive books add effectively to the very good quality of support provided by foster carers who prepare children to move to their adoptive placements.
57. Adopters report very positively on the welcome that they receive from the adoption service, the visits from workers and the training received. The majority of prospective adopter assessments are timely, of good quality and give thorough consideration to what prospective adopters can offer a child, alongside a clear analysis of their strengths and circumstances, which supports the eventual recommendation.
58. The adoption panel robustly considers the quality of matching for children with adopters. In particular, it carefully considers what services are available to support children once they are placed, if they are being matched to families living outside of East Riding. The agency decision-maker makes timely decisions, with the rationale well recorded and considered. Medical adviser input is integral, thorough and clear on any potential issues for unborn babies, to inform matching. These solid foundations positively support lasting adoptive arrangements for children. This is demonstrated in there having been no recent placement disruptions.

59. 35 children are currently receiving post-adoption support, and one child is currently being assessed. Specifically trained and experienced workers within the service deliver good-quality support and assessments. For families seeking adoption support, the pathway is through the central contact team rather than through the specialist service. Although there is some confusion in the wider workforce about what post-adoption support services are available, children receive good and individually targeted services. The use of the adoption support fund has been utilised effectively and supported 19 families to access a range of tailored interventions. Older adopted children enjoy a range of organised activities and group events, which support them in forming relationships and in building resilience and self-esteem. This is extending to a group for younger children in early 2017. Adoptive families are invited to attend organised events throughout the year, enabling them to share experiences and access informal support from the adoption team. Overall, adopters are well informed of their entitlements and have ready access to information to keep them up to date.

The graded judgement about the experience and progress of care leavers is that it is outstanding

60. The pathway team tirelessly supports care leavers, ensuring that young people have the best possible advice, support and help, to enable them to become individuals who can contribute positively to their communities. The team has a strong professional empathy with the young people whom they support and uses excellent skills to make the right decisions for them. This ensures that young people know and trust the staff to do all they can to make sure that they move forward in their lives, or help them when they make mistakes.
61. Managers work diligently and highly effectively to make sure that all care leavers are in suitable accommodation. The local authority has sustained the quality of this service over time. It has ample accommodation available, and staff provide it swiftly, whether allocating it for the first time or finding alternative safe accommodation, when a young person's tenancy breaks down. Care leavers who spoke to inspectors reported that they feel very safe and are extremely happy with their accommodation. They said that staff support them exceptionally well to help them to learn how to treat their accommodation and live independently in it.
62. The proportion of care leavers living in suitable accommodation is considerably higher than that for similar authorities and nationally. Almost all (95%) of the care leavers in the local authority were in such accommodation in 2014–15, and managers have ensured that a similarly high proportion of care leavers are in suitable accommodation in 2015–16.
63. Care leavers receive highly supportive mentoring from staff in the team and good specialist advice and guidance about potential options for them to progress into further or higher education, training or employment. The authority is highly aware of the local economy and potential training opportunities, and has good partnerships with its local colleges.
64. The proportion of care leavers going on to further education or higher education or employment is higher than that of similar authorities and nationally. In 2014–15, 68% of care leavers went on to further or higher education or employment, and 11% of these went on to higher education. In 2015–16, the proportion had risen to 69%. 10% of these care leavers are studying in higher education and 11% are apprentices. In some cases, the pathway team has supported young people who have left school, having failed to achieve their qualifications, to a situation in which they are thriving in their learning in a university or on an apprenticeship. A low proportion of care leavers (31%), compared to similar local authorities or nationally, were not engaged in education, employment or training in 2015–16.

65. Pathway planning for care leavers is comprehensive and ensures that managers and staff meet the variety of essential needs of each individual care leaver. Care leavers have had a strong voice in the shape and format of pathway plans. Staff review their plans regularly, and visits to support care leavers are frequent. Care leavers' plans are accurate, up to date and show clearly how staff help to meet their needs. Issues considered include records of young people's health assessments and of any learning they have undertaken. Plans usefully indicate whether these experiences present challenges for young people or whether they are viewed positively.
66. Social workers and personal advisers are in touch with all care leavers, know them well and keep a close eye on them. The team adeptly assesses risks to young people, listens carefully to care leavers' life situations and helps them to understand when they have concerns and when to consider a different and safer life option. They monitor closely any young person at risk and, when the risk increases, regularly update pathway plans and increase visits, alongside thorough discussions at the excellent and innovative care leavers' risk panel.
67. Managers provide care leavers with excellent advice and support, for example to stay with their carers when this is in their best interests. Some 75% of young people remain with their foster carers until they are 18 and 15% stay with their carers when they become young adults.
68. Care leavers are extremely positive about the services that they received. They told inspectors that they understood what the local authority should provide for them and their entitlements. They received financial support to help them in their lives. They fully understood what the local authority pledged to give them, and added that it followed through with these promises. Care leavers who met with inspectors summarised the care leaving service with extremely positive comments, such as: 'I would not be where I am now', '... more like a friend past and present', and 'Occasionally I feel lost, but now I feel like living again.'
69. The staff and managers provide a range of successful activities to build a positive ethos among care leavers who use the service. For example, care leavers enjoy team-building events such as 'go ape' to help them to get to know each other. Staff and carers assess the development of care leavers' skills to live independently, such as their ability to live within a budget and to cook and eat healthily. The pathway team supplies care leavers with mobile phones, which provide additional ways to help them to keep in contact.

70. The pathway team ensures that care leavers receive comprehensive health history documents after the age of 18, which build on the accurate health records in pathway plans and ensure that young people fully understand their health histories, such as births, immunisations, any health checks, illnesses or injuries, or their mental health needs. The team also ensures that the young person's general practitioner has a copy of the health history so that they have a full understanding and are ready to help the young person when needed. They help young people to understand about, or get support with, their sexual health and support them effectively if they become pregnant.
71. Staff have received an excellent range of training that enables them to understand the different types of issues that young people face locally and nationally. For example, they have received training in child sexual exploitation, the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, female genital mutilation and self-harm and have gained a deeper understanding of how to spot the signs when a young person may be fabricating an illness. This adds value to their skills to help care leavers.

Leadership, management and governance	Good
<p>Summary</p> <p>Leadership, management and governance of services in East Riding are good. Senior leaders and elected members have worked well to deliver services that improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people. The DCS leads a strong and stable management team, which has overseen the design and delivery of a robust range of children’s services. The role of the principal social worker supports high standards of social work practice. As a result, there has been evident improvement in all services since the last Ofsted inspection in 2011, which means that the most vulnerable children receive good support and benefit from improved outcomes.</p> <p>Elected members play a prominent role in sustained service improvement through effective delivery of their governance responsibilities. These include a knowledgeable lead member for children’s services, a highly effective scrutiny committee and a dynamic corporate parenting panel. Elected members’ significant relationships with children, such as through the excellent CiCC, ensure that the voice of the child is central to everything that they do. The chief executive, through a corporate safeguarding assurance panel, has ensured that the relentless drive for service improvement has been well resourced and owned by the whole council. In an environment of limited resources, the council has invested prudently in its children’s services, and an important factor in the success of the council's approach has been its robust workforce strategy. An offer to newly appointed staff of rigorous but achievable practice standards within a manageable workload means that the council has attracted and retained a talented workforce, whose staff are dedicated to pursuing their careers within the local authority. The embedding of a robust model of social work support across children’s services has provided an excellent tool to enable good work to thrive.</p> <p>Managers fully understand and routinely use performance information in managing services. They are well connected with the frontline, through such formal processes as supervision sessions, resource panels, or informally through regular contact with social workers. However, decisions resulting from these conversations are not always well recorded, and this does not aid review of any actions arising. Day-to-day social work management could be further improved by ensuring that all written plans are of high quality. The children’s services electronic database takes too much time for social workers to complete. The electronic database is currently being recommissioned to facilitate better management oversight.</p>	

Inspection findings

72. Leadership and governance arrangements are of a high standard. Good integrated learning systems, the use of a respected social work model and the support to staff at all levels greatly contribute to the positive outcomes achieved by many vulnerable children in East Riding.
73. The last Ofsted inspection of East Riding, in 2011, judged services for help and protection to require improvement and those for children looked after to be good. The local authority's capacity to improve was judged to be good. To progress the post-inspection development plan, the chief executive formed the safeguarding assurance panel as a corporate board to improve services. The panel has met regularly since that time, and has resulted in support across the council to raise the quality of services for vulnerable children.
74. There is clear evidence that the focus on improvement, introduced by the previous director, has been sustained. Since his appointment, in 2013, the current director of children's services has championed children's issues exceptionally well within inter-agency partnerships. For example, his role in the children's trust arrangements provides effective governance to a range of multi-agency agendas. He and his senior management team also provide motivational leadership to staff, to whom they are visible and engaged. He has ensured that managers are well connected with frontline services through formal processes, such as panel systems, and through participation in casework quality assurance.
75. The local authority is a learning organisation, and the role of principal social worker (PSW) adds significant value to an excellent culture of learning in children services. The PSW role is at the centre of learning drawn from a variety of quality assurance processes, such as case audit and evaluation of training courses. Additionally, the role maintains a high level of awareness of the views of children, young people and their parents from a wide variety of sources, such as the outcome of complaints investigations. An example of the good work of the learning organisation is the regular threshold meetings. These retrospectively sample cases that have come through EHaSH, review management decision-making and ask key questions about children's services actions. Valuable learning from this process is captured and used constructively for the purposes of both service and workforce development and in individual supervision sessions.
76. The commitment of elected members is evident across bodies, such as the corporate parenting panel and the scrutiny committee, for example, in the scrutiny committee's sharp focus on improving practice to address child sexual exploitation and those who go missing. Elected members' relationships with the CiCC is a particular strength. They listen carefully to the voices and experiences of children and ensure that they are incorporated into all of their activities.

77. The CiCC is a vibrant and well-established group, whose contribution and impact on improving and developing services are well evidenced through a range of work undertaken. The CiCC contributed to the development of the Pledge, revamping of the personal education plans form and designing of the life-story folder. Members of the group deliver training to foster carers, take part in recruitment of staff and have produced information for designated teachers. Children spoken to by inspectors talked very positively about visits by and with senior managers and councillors. Corporate parents recognise and celebrate the achievements of children well, and this includes holding monthly celebration events when the children are awarded vouchers and certificates.
78. A comprehensive and highly successful workforce strategy has led to the recruitment of a stable and skilled workforce. Good support of newly qualified members of staff, together with manageable workloads and a comprehensive staff development programme, has resulted in the local authority attracting and retaining a well-motivated and skilled group of staff. Managers have regular informal contact with their staff and know their caseloads well. One-to-one supervision by managers with staff is mostly regular and, although at its best it can be reflective, it is not always so. Supervision work is not well recorded and particularly the scrutiny of decision-making and whether actions have been taken. The recording of some children's plans is not yet of good quality, but this is mitigated by the good-quality work and understanding of practitioners and frontline managers. The current children's services electronic database does not aid management oversight, and this is currently in the process of being recommissioned. (Recommendation)
79. Skilful workers are encouraged to take up the role of advanced practitioners, and, additionally, the service has developed its own cohort of frontline managers. The workforce strategy's successful implementation results in a virtuous circle of dedicated and stable staff being recruited effectively, developed and retained. As a result, most social work teams are fully staffed, and the use of agency workers is minimal, leading to secure relationships for children and young people with social workers who know them well.
80. Commissioning processes for services to individual children and young people are strong. A dedicated team deals well with all commissioning activity and has developed intelligence and expertise in meeting diverse needs. All care packages for children who have a disability are commissioned individually. Evidence was seen of strong, wrap-around packages of care creatively built, using existing resources. Specialist resources for children looked after are accessed through a robust joint commissioning panel and procured through regional participation in the 'White rose' purchasing partnership. Quality is monitored through visits by the dedicated team and monitored by the panel. The assurance process also includes intelligence drawn from social workers, IROs, parents and young people themselves. A quality monitoring framework is currently being introduced to standardise this process, but it is too early to judge its impact.

81. The Health and Wellbeing Board has focused on local priorities across the whole life course, including issues that impact on the lives of children and young people. Some features of the joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) are strong. For instance, the parenting needs assessment is comprehensive, and information on children's emotional well-being is detailed and is informing the recent review of CAMHS provision in East Riding.
82. Performance management is embedded well, and data is used constructively, for instance as part of a sophisticated case allocation process by team managers, which ensures that workloads for social workers are manageable. A dashboard of performance metrics is discussed at a cycle of quarterly management meetings and is well understood by managers who use it extensively to understand and monitor the services that they manage. The performance and quality board takes up any individual performance matters. When information is required that is not on the dashboard, bespoke performance reports can be pulled together to inform service development. Senior managers are highly aware of, and routinely use, comparative performance information, such as performance against statistical neighbours and national averages.
83. In 2015–16, East Riding Children's Services received 81 compliments and 23 complaints. Most compliments were about the quality of service and staff attitudes, while the majority of complaints were about decision-making. In the main, complaints are dealt with well. A new alternative resolution process has been introduced recently and, as a result, there was a reduction of 28% in the number of formal complaints in the last year. Learning is identified and disseminated when identified. For instance, a young person expressed concern about access to their saving account when they had moved from a foster placement, and this resulted in clearer guidance being issued to carers.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

The Local Safeguarding Children Board is good

Executive summary

Effective governance and mature partnership work by East Riding Safeguarding Children Board (ERSCB) is increasingly ensuring that services deliver good outcomes for children.

Clear priorities that reflect the needs of children in East Riding inform the Board's business plan, actions from which are making good progress in coordinating the work of agencies to safeguard children. The work of the Board would be further strengthened if it directly engaged and took account of the voices of children in its work.

A highly effective audit programme, involving partners, ensures that the LSCB has a strong overview of frontline practice. Partners are held to account effectively and board challenges are making a difference through service improvements. High-quality strategy documents and guidance, including a recently revised threshold document, support early help and improving practice in areas of neglect and domestic abuse. The Board was instrumental in the work to develop multi-agency front-door arrangements (EHaSH). Multi-agency oversight supports consistency of thresholds effectively.

The LSCB has made some considerable progress towards a multi-agency data set to oversee performance. An excellent learning and improvement framework enables the Board to monitor and review training to ensure that children's safeguarding needs are met and emerging issues are well supported. A high-quality newsletter ensures that developments are shared.

The Board's oversight and coordination of children missing and at risk of child sexual exploitation are well developed and highly effective. Partners support the operational structures in place, and there is good oversight of themes and issues.

Effective challenge events support safeguarding compliance for partners, although this is less effective with schools. Although the virtual headteacher and the schools' safeguarding officer provide robust reassurance, the Board's direct engagement with schools needs to improve.

The learning from some serious incidents has not been sufficiently timely, and the Board has not ensured that all key messages from reviews are shared promptly or disseminated widely.

Recommendations

84. The Board should strengthen its engagement with children to ensure that their voices and experiences directly inform its work.
85. The Board should develop a formal mechanism for engaging with schools and education settings and timely ways of assuring itself of their safeguarding compliance.
86. The Board should ensure that the learning from serious case reviews, management reviews and child deaths is disseminated widely and promptly to drive improvements for children.

Inspection findings – the Local Safeguarding Children Board

87. The Board is appropriately constituted and complies with its statutory responsibilities. The involvement of two lay members and a representative from East Riding Voluntary Action Services ensure that the Board has a community focus that provides visibility and is connected to local issues. The experienced independent chair is a member of the Children's Trust so there is good overlap between the LSCB and the Trust, and mature partnerships allow challenge to improve outcomes for the children of East Riding. Partner commitment to the Board is evident, and all agencies have maintained sufficient funding levels for the ERSCB to carry out its work.
88. There has been significant progress in appropriately focusing the work of the Board and its sub-groups in the last 18 months, as a result of the appointment to a new Board manager post. Clear priorities are now evident, which reflect the needs of vulnerable children supported by children's services. The LSCB's detailed business plan keeps the Board updated and evidences good progress with actions. The sub-groups are clear about their responsibilities, and the management, evaluation and effectiveness group, chaired by the independent chair, oversees progress well.
89. Regular meetings between the chief executive, DCS, lead member and chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board with the chair of the LSCB ensure good scrutiny and governance of children's safeguarding. The work by the children and families overview and scrutiny panel and its review of the LSCB's annual report provide further assurance.

90. Thorough needs analysis and evaluation of the vulnerabilities of children and families through the LSCB have influenced the commissioning and planning of services to support parenting skills. Extensive and high-quality early help services are evident and improving outcomes. Considerable work has resulted in recent neglect and domestic abuse strategies, and there are measureable plans in place to evaluate progress. The work of the Board would be further strengthened if it directly engaged children and their voice was more clearly evident throughout the work streams. (Recommendation)
91. The Board holds partners to account very well. External inspection reports are presented to the Board to allow scrutiny and oversight. There is considerable multi-agency audit activity to review frontline practice. Any reduction in attendance at sub-groups is challenged effectively to improve multi-agency involvement in all of the Board's work.
92. Performance is monitored through an improving multi-agency data set. There is also a good challenge log, which captures the Board's shared and individual challenges to partners. This demonstrates well how the Board has supported service development. For instance, improvements to frontline practice include better timeliness of information sharing for child protection conferences and better responses to children who go missing.
93. Quality assurance arrangements give the Board an excellent overview of frontline practice. Board members take part in audits, including thematic multi-agency audits, as well as the more recent 'walk the floor' initiatives, introduced in September 2016. Four members of the Board visited the police and domestic violence abuse partnership to gain assurance about support for children. This opportunity meant that members were up to date on current challenges to inform the discussions at the Board.
94. Board members, through the audit work, are able to speak directly to practitioners and managers, and reflect on practice together, as a multi-agency group. This is good practice. Key learning feeds back into the priorities for the Board as well as the training programme. The LSCB is appropriately focused on ensuring that children's outcomes improve, and re-audit is included in the planning cycle to show the impact on practice.
95. Audit findings also shape the Board's work very well, with policies and procedures influencing the quality and consistency of practice. For example, pre-birth guidance was created after an audit in January 2015, and self-harm and parenting needs assessments are currently being progressed as a result of learning lessons reviews. Piloting of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) graded care profiles is being led by the Board to influence stronger practice in cases in which neglect is a feature.

96. The arrangements for children missing and child sexual exploitation are mature and effective with strong partner engagement. A comprehensive multi-agency strategy includes a wide range of actions to identify and disrupt child sexual exploitation. There are clear service pathways with effective links to other related vulnerabilities, such as children missing, gang affiliation and neglect. Partners are appropriately engaged, including schools, police and licenced providers. Progress is reviewed effectively by the Board, and there is a range of resources to support schools and victims directly.
97. The Board has an excellent overview of issues relating to children who go missing and makes good use of escalation processes when issues arise. Return home interviews for children are collated by the Board manager who reviews themes and trends with a monthly report to the service leader. For those children whose return interview suggests that they have complex issues, the operational group is used to provide support. There is an appropriate response for children looked after who are placed in East Riding and remain the responsibility of other local authorities. Information about children missing education is also cross-referenced for completeness.
98. The LSCB has a strong section 11 challenge process, which oversees partners' safeguarding compliance. The dialogue at the challenge panels provides good opportunities for the Board to engage in emerging concerns, such as the 'Prevent' duty. Action plans are updated by members, ensuring that the Board has a detailed overview of partners' progress against its key priorities.
99. There is a gap in the Board's formal oversight of education's safeguarding arrangements, although oversight by the virtual headteacher's team and the schools safeguarding officer's excellent links with schools provide assurance. An education reference group that is under development to provide more formal links with schools has not been given the priority needed, and an acceleration of pace is required. (Recommendation)
100. Learning reviews are appropriately commissioned for serious incidents. Immediate actions are taken by agencies, but the wider learning is stalled by the delays in completing reviews. More needs to be done to ensure that practitioners understand the Board's priorities and that learning from serious incidents is shared. For example, a serious case review published in November had important lessons about the vulnerability of non-mobile babies, which the majority of staff met with during this inspection could not recount. (Recommendation)
101. Rapid response teams immediately respond to child deaths, and information sharing results in appropriate crossover with the serious case review panel. There is greater confidence for practitioners who support bereaved parents as a result of the multi-agency training provided by the rapid response team.

102. A high-quality learning and improvement framework enables the LSCB to monitor and review training and provide an arena for the escalation of challenge. For example, a shortage of partner participation in training was successfully addressed by the Board. Excellent newsletters capture practice issues and new developments, and these are shared widely.
103. The LSCB is effective at identifying emerging risks, and uses national and local resources well to ensure that practitioners have the training and support needed. A new guidance document has been produced to support practice in tackling female genital mutilation. Recent work on hidden harm resulted in multi-agency workshops reaching 400 participants and contributed to more effective working relationships across services. The annual report for the LSCB for 2015–16 was published in November 2016.
104. The multi-agency training by the Board’s training officers is good. It is responsive to emerging issues and valued by staff. In total, 26 courses were provided in the last financial year, with over 2,100 participants. A further 4,346 e-learning activities were also accessed. The scheduling of training activities is flexible. For example, ‘learning bites’ provide opportunities for twilight sessions to support access to training by the early years sector.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children and young people who have needed or still need help and/or protection. This also includes children and young people who are looked after and young people who are leaving care and starting their lives as young adults.

Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children, young people and families. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with families and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the local authority knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

The inspection of the local authority was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was carried out under section 15A of the Children Act 2004.

Ofsted produces this report of the inspection of local authority functions and the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The inspection team consisted of seven of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted and two additional inspectors.

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