

14 July 2023

To the children and young people in Worcestershire

Inspection of children's services

In May 2023, Ofsted inspectors visited your area. They looked at children and young people's experiences of the help, protection and care given to them by workers at the local authority. They also looked at what leaders at the local authority do to make these services better.

We have asked the workers at the local authority to share this letter with you. It tells you the main things that inspectors found. There is a more detailed report on our website that you can read if you want to.

What grades did inspectors give the local authority

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
The experiences and progress of children in care	Requires Improvement
The experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

What did the inspectors find

- Since the last inspection in 2019, when services for children and families in Worcestershire County Council Services were judged to be requires improvement to be good, progress has been made across many areas in need of development.
- In October 2019 Worcestershire Children First took over the responsibility of children's services on behalf of Worcestershire County Council. At this inspection Ofsted found children's services to be good overall.
- Leaders have tried new ways of working to help children and families get the best help they can when they are in need. Social workers have improved the way that you and your families get the support and help you need at the right time. This includes how social workers help children aged 16 and 17 years old when they cannot return to the care of their families. Social workers now make sure that these children understand all options available to them.
- If you are at risk of serious harm, social workers, police, teachers, and other professionals work closely together to make sure that you are safe and quickly get the right help.
- Your social workers get to know you and your families and work hard to understand what is important, writing good assessments and plans. This means the support you receive is right for you.
- If you are unable to live with your parents or carers, social workers make sure that they find the home that is best for you. When children come into care their carers support them to stay healthy and do well in school.
- For some children in care, plans are not made permanent quickly enough. Some children have changes in social worker or social workers who have too much work to do. This means that they don't always have the same chances to progress as other children in care.
- When young people leave care, most feel well supported by their personal advisors. Not all young people are fully aware of their rights and entitlements.
- Children need to be more involved in the corporate parenting board. Leaders have more work to do to ensure that the voices of children are listened to and use this information to help improve services for children.
- Social workers like working for Worcestershire, they feel that their managers support them, and they want to do the best job that they can to help children and families.

I would like to thank all the children and young people who spoke with inspectors. We valued your views and the time you took to meet with us. It really helped us to understand what it is like to be a child or young person receiving services children's services in Worcestershire.

Yours faithfully

R. A. Quested.

Rebecca Quested
Lead inspector
His Majesty's Inspector