

Chief Officer for Childrens Services

Room 140, County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
EX2 4QD

Tel: 01392 383212
Email: jo.olsson@devon.gov.uk

16 March 2020

Dear Colleague

I am writing to update you on the outcome of the recent Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS).

It is with great regret that I must inform you that the outcome is adverse. The report will be published on the Ofsted website on 17th March 2020.

On the penultimate day of the inspection, inspectors found two very vulnerable young adult care leavers, who were homeless and living in completely unsatisfactory circumstances. The inspectors judged, quite rightly, that this was unacceptable and evidence of inadequacy. Further, because senior leaders did not know the circumstances of the young people and they should have known; they judged the impact of leaders to be inadequate. The overall judgement for Devon's Children's Services is therefore inadequate.

Inspectors also found weakness in the social work response in some serious neglect cases, though their concerns in that area were not of the same order.

It would be a travesty if the overall judgement completely obscured the areas of strength that were identified in the inspection, in particular; Early Help, Team around the Child and Team around the Family response, MASH, the response to exploitation and Adolescent Safety Framework, Local Authority Designated Officers, the fostering service and private fostering, responding to Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education, the Virtual School and young people's involvement. Partners are at the heart of much of this very positive work and I am very grateful for the enormous contribution you continue to make in these areas

As you would expect, work is already underway to address the areas identified. We will bring-in additional capacity to accelerate improvement and some key new appointments will be made over the coming weeks. Ofsted and the Council continue to have confidence in the senior leadership and there are no planned changes that would risk further destabilisation.

I will be very happy to meet with colleagues to discuss the ILACS in more detail

Yours Sincerely



Jo Olsson
Chief Officer for Childrens Services