

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

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

Inspection date: 18 Feb 2014 – 12 March 2014

The overall judgement is **requires improvement**

There are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. However, the authority is not yet delivering good protection and help for children, young people and families.

It is Ofsted's expectation that, as a minimum, all children and young people receive good help, care and protection.

1. Children who need help and protection		Requires Improvement
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence		Good
	2.1 Adoption performance	Good
	2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
3. Leadership, management and governance		Good

The effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is **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 Inspection 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.

Contents

Section 1: the local authority	3
Summary of key findings	3
Information about this inspection	6
Information about this local authority area	7
Inspection judgements about the local authority	9
What the inspection judgements mean: the local authority	28
Section 2: The effectiveness of the local safeguarding children board	29
What the inspection judgments mean: the LSCB	33

Section 1: the local authority

Summary of key findings

This local authority requires improvement and is not yet good because

1. Social workers and their managers do not regularly hold strategy discussions with the police before starting to carry out a child protection investigation. This means that any relevant information the police may have is not shared right at the beginning of an investigation, which could lead to some risks not being fully taken into account. Senior managers have known about this for some time, and during the inspection remedied the situation by locating a police officer authorised to hold strategy discussions in the integrated assessment team (IAT).
2. Initial child protection case conferences to decide whether a child remains at risk of harm do not happen quickly enough. This means that children may not be protected in the best way possible as quickly as they should be. Senior managers have known about this for some time and, although they recruited more staff, the situation has yet to improve. During the inspection they committed to immediately employing staff and adding capacity to the administration of the conference system so that delays will be reduced.
3. Where conferences have been delayed, managers decided that children should be visited by their social worker every week to help protect them. This has not happened in every case, so social workers and managers could not be completely sure in every case exactly how safe children were.
4. In the very small number of cases where children have been neglected for a long time social workers and their managers must decide to take stronger action more quickly in every case to ensure that these children get better standards of care.
5. When allegations are made that professionals may have harmed children, cases are not progressed quickly enough on all occasions. Additional staff and management capacity are required to ensure that the service is always robust.
6. Private Foster Carers need to have their ability to care for a child and the place where they live thoroughly assessed by social workers.

The local authority has the following strengths

7. Stable, consistent leadership has resulted in good outcomes for children and high standards of practice in the vast majority of service areas.
8. Children are at the centre of social work and early help practice. Children's voices and opinions are clearly evident and taken account of. Direct work

with children is of good quality and routinely undertaken by social workers who know the children they work with very well.

9. A good range of appropriately targeted early help services, including Families First, are having a positive impact for children, helping to address concerns and support families well. Partners are fully engaged and contribute to improving outcomes for children.
10. The Integrated Assessment Team (IAT) is an effective front door to children's social care and ensures shared understanding and implementation of thresholds. Referrals are dealt with in a timely way and good account is taken of family history. Decision making is good and there is effective screening of domestic violence notifications.
11. The quality of assessments overall is good and demonstrates sustained improvement since the last Ofsted inspection in 2012.
12. The co-location of police, social care and Barnardo's within the CSE hub is a particular strength. It promotes effective and early information sharing across agencies where children and young people are at risk of or are suffering sexual exploitation. Timely and robust multi-agency involvement ensures that risks of CSE are identified and plans put in place to reduce these risks.
13. When children need to be looked after, they benefit from good quality services and care planning. Decisions and work to secure permanency avoid delay, and children live with their prospective adopters in a timely way.
14. Children looked after do well at school, have good attendance and are supported to engage with education at all ages.
15. Care leavers feel well supported, live in appropriate accommodation and are provided with the skills they need to become independent at a pace they can manage.
16. Social workers have well managed workloads, so they have time to see children often and build meaningful relationships that are long lasting.
17. The workforce is stable and well qualified, with over half of social workers at an advanced level of professional development.
18. Attention and sensitivity to the individual needs of children and their families is good. In a city of complex ethnic and cultural diversity, managers have integrated high standards of awareness and access to services.

What does the local authority need to improve?

Areas for improvement

19. Ensure that all strategy discussions include the police as a minimum standard. The outcome of the discussion and agreed actions must be clearly recorded in a child's case file.
20. Take actions to increase and sustain sufficient capacity in the child protection conference service to meet service demands. Ensure that initial child protection conferences are held in a timely way that minimises risks to children and meets statutory guidance.
21. Until improved performance in holding timely initial child protection conferences is demonstrated, ensure that all children have a robust plan, monitored by managers to minimise risk, and that they are seen at least weekly by their social worker.
22. Ensure sufficient capacity within the LADO service, so that allegations against professionals progress in a timely way and there is management oversight of all cases.
23. Ensure all children identified as requiring statutory assessment are visited swiftly following receipt of the referral which identifies the concern.
24. Where plans to reduce the impact of chronic neglect are not progressing sufficiently swiftly, ensure that assertive action is taken to escalate all such cases to a higher level of intervention.
25. Ensure that social workers and workers across all teams, particularly referral and assessment teams, receive regular supervision to support the complex work they are undertaking.

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 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 who 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 six of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted and one additional inspector.

The inspection team

Lead inspector: Lynn Radley

Team inspectors: Fiona Parker, Jansy Kelly, Ali Mekki, Graham Tilby, Margaret Farrow and Ros Walker (AI)

Information about this local authority area²

Children living in this area

- Approximately 137,000 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Bradford District. This is 26% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 25.8% of the local authority's children are living in poverty (taken from National Child Poverty Statistics 2011).
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
 - in primary schools is 20.5% (the national average is 18.1%)
 - in secondary schools is 22.6% (the national average is 15.1%)
- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 47.3% of all children living in the area, compared with 21.5% in the country as a whole.
- The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Pakistani and Bangladeshi; there are high numbers of dual heritage families.
- The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language:
 - in primary schools is 43.7% (the national average is 18.1%).
 - in secondary schools is 34.4% (the national average is 13.6%).
- The district is the fourth largest population area in England, and Bradford is the youngest city in England outside London.

Child protection in this area

- At 28th February 2014, 3,341 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service. This is an increase from 3,009 at 31st March 2013.
- At 28th February 2014, 551 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. This is an increase from 374 at 31st March 2013.
- At 18th February 2014, 8 children lived in a privately arranged fostering placement. This is an increase from 5 at 31st March 2013.

Children looked after in this area

² The local authority was given the opportunity to review this section of the report and has updated it with local unvalidated data where this was available.

- At 28th February 2014, 893 children are being looked after by the LA (a rate of 65.0 per 10,000 children). This is an increase from 877 (64.0 per 10,000 children) at 31st March 2013. Of this number:
 - 188 (or 21.1%) live outside the local authority area
 - 102 live in residential children's homes, of whom 19.6% live out of the authority area
 - 10 live in residential special schools, of whom 100% live out of the authority area
 - 617 live with foster families, of whom 17.3% live out of the authority area
 - 7 live with parents,
 - 5 children are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- In the last 12 months:
 - There have been 49 adoptions
 - 39 children became subject of special guardianship orders
 - 308 children have ceased to be looked after, of whom 8.4% subsequently returned to be looked after
 - 64 children and young people have ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living
 - No children and young people who have ceased to be looked after are now living in houses of multiple occupation.

Other Ofsted inspections

- The local authority operates thirteen children's homes. Twelve were judged to be good or outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspection.
- The previous inspection of Bradford's safeguarding and looked after children services was in May 2012. The local authority was judged to be good.
- LA Fostering 10 Nov 2011 Good
- LA Adoption 4 Dec 2010 Good
- Private Fostering 20 Mar 2009 Satisfactory

Other information about this area

- The Director of Children's Services has been in post since April 2007.
- The chair of the LSCB has been in post since January 2010.

Inspection judgements about the local authority

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection require improvement

26. When children and their families need help before a crisis occurs, good work by a range of services makes a positive difference in their lives. Impact can be seen clearly in improved attendance and behaviour at school. Fixed term exclusions from school have reduced by an impressive 49% in the last year. Effective team around the child work is supported by timely information sharing by partners.
27. Partners such as school staff and health visitors speak powerfully about how the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is having a positive impact for children by helping to address concerns and provide valued support. CAF and family support action plans are completed without delay and clearly identify the range of actions needed to support children and improve their outcomes. High quality advice and guidance provided by parental support engagement officers helps to secure the support of agencies that can help individual families in times of need.
28. The Early Help Strategy is well planned and targeted to meet local needs. The local authority has wisely used their 'local discretion' within the troubled families initiative (Families First) to include children subject to a CAF, children of concern to schools or families and children where there are domestic violence concerns. This means that they can work with families before they reach crisis point, and act as a good bridge between family support, children's centre services and statutory services. Staff working in early help report that information sharing is effective and timely. This supports good team around the child plans or stepping up arrangements into social care.
29. Good, easily accessible advice and information is provided to partners by the Integrated Assessment Team (IAT). This ensures a shared understanding and implementation of thresholds. All referrals are dealt with in a timely way and Duty Social Work reviews undertaken on referrals take good account of family history. Risks and protective factors are well considered and support robust decision making. Communication between the out of hours service and the IAT is timely and robust. Domestic violence notifications are screened and assessed well, and a police officer located within IAT ensures a joint agency perspective.
30. Very good partnership work enhances assessment, planning and intervention with children and their families. This includes timely information sharing to identify need and risk, and to contribute to effective assessment of children's needs.

31. Where an immediate response is needed to investigate risks to children, social workers and managers promptly identify what actions need to be taken to protect children and reduce the risks they face. Actions taken are appropriate to the levels of identified risk, and statutory intervention is only taken when it is appropriate.
32. When strategy discussions are held they do not routinely involve the police. In over half of 27 cases seen, decisions to undertake a child protection enquiry were made by social workers and their team managers alone. Senior managers report that this practice developed over time in response to historical difficulties in accessing appropriately trained police officers. In addition, where the police are not involved, the recording of the discussion is not sufficiently detailed. No evidence identified children suffering as a result, but information the police may have is not being included at this important point. Avoidable potential for risk is present and this is an area for improvement. Senior managers took immediate and assertive action to remedy the situation during the inspection. A police officer with the relevant authorisation to participate in strategy discussions now sits within IAT, but it will take time to embed new and improved practice.
33. In complex, high risk cases there is evidence of effective strategy meetings that involve a good range of professionals, including the police. Where this is the case, recording of the meeting effectively details what actions are to be taken to protect a child.
34. Child protection enquiries are effective and services are provided immediately to support a family or reduce risks to a child. Social workers liaise appropriately with, and take account of information from, a wide range of professionals including the police. The recording of enquires is good and analysis takes account of family history as well as current events. Management decisions are clearly recorded and if immediate action is needed to protect children it is taken. In over two thirds of cases, lack of capacity within the child protection conferencing service has led to unacceptable delays of up to six weeks in holding initial child protection conferences. Difficulties in recruiting additional conference chairs and a negative impact of changes to administrative arrangements have combined to result in falling performance. Also, the number of children subject to child protection plans has increased.
35. Senior managers are aware of this issue and, to minimise and manage potential risks, they have directed that children are seen on a weekly basis by social workers while waiting for the conference to be held. For the large majority of children this is effective and ensures that risks are managed. However, in twelve cases reviewed four visits were less frequent than weekly, and in one case children were left at potential risk of emotional and physical harm from parental domestic violence for a period of six weeks.

36. Delays in holding initial child protection conferences mean that vulnerable children are not benefitting from prompt multi-agency decision making on whether they are at risk of significant harm. Where services are needed to support children prior to the conference being held, these are provided. Whilst senior managers have recruited additional staff, the envisaged additional capacity has not yet had the expected impact. During the inspection, managers took immediate action to remedy the situation and additional administrative and operational capacity has been resourced.
37. Children's voices and opinions are clearly evident in case records and their needs and feelings are at the heart of all social work activity. Social workers ensure that their assessments and interventions are informed by the child's wishes and feelings. Good evidence demonstrates that social workers engage in thoughtful, regular conversations and direct work with children. This results in children benefitting from meaningful relationships with their social workers.
38. The quality of assessments in the vast majority of cases is good. Children and their parents are effectively engaged to seek their views of their situation. In a very small number of cases social workers did not see children promptly enough. Children's views are fully considered and inform the eventual analysis of need. Family history and information from other agencies routinely inform assessments. Appropriate services are identified at the earliest point in many cases, with children and families benefitting from intervention while assessments are underway. Assessments lead to well considered offers of help, targeted to meet assessed need and reduce risk.
39. Plans for the full rollout of the Bradford Single Child Assessment (BSCA) in May 2014 are well under way and are underpinned by training for all relevant staff. Assessments completed during the pilot demonstrate a strong focus on all aspects of a child's development, with child-centred analysis. The template guides social workers to an in-depth child-focussed evaluation of family history and assessment of risks.
40. The majority of child protection (CP) and child in need (CiN) plans are of good quality. Children's needs are identified and well planned interventions reduce risks. Children's plans do not demonstrate any adverse impact from delayed child protection conferences. A small minority of plans are too long to enable parents to focus clearly on what needs to change to reduce risks for their children. A positive impact of learning from the HK serious case review is that more older young people are now subject to child protection plans, as well as cases of chronic neglect being appropriately escalated from child in need status.
41. In cases where the risk of harm remains the same or intensifies, robust action is taken to address this through escalation to either child protection processes or through legal proceedings. However, a very small number of

cases demonstrate delays in escalating cases for children who are experiencing chronic neglect and emotional abuse. Partner agencies routinely attend and make good contributions to a range of multi-agency meetings. Child protection conferences are chaired well and conference chairs demonstrate high levels of skill at managing complex, emotionally charged situations. Multi-agency meetings such as core groups and child protection conferences ensure that decisions are fully informed by comprehensive information and that well co-ordinated direct work with individual children and their families is delivered.

42. Social workers and early help teams are well trained and have a good understanding of the impact on children of parental domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health issues. Well considered assessment, planning and direct work reduce impact and risk associated with these issues. In households where domestic violence is a significant risk to children, the fortnightly MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conference) meeting provides an effective forum to share information. Risk-based decision making and good planning help to ensure that risks to children and their families are identified and reduced.
43. For children and young people involved in or at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) services in Bradford are good. Strategic planning and operational activity are well considered, informed by research and have visible impact. The co-location of police, social care and Barnardo's within the CSE hub is a particular strength. It promotes effective and early information sharing across agencies. Children are receiving timely and robust multi-agency consideration from dedicated and skilled professionals to ensure that risks of CSE are identified and plans put in place to reduce these risks. Intelligence is effectively shared across the multi-agency group to build local understanding of high risk areas and 'hot spots' in the district. Professionals know the children at risk well, and have a good record of disrupting perpetrator activities and using prosecution successfully. Social workers demonstrate an acute awareness of potential risks relating to CSE, and appropriately plan their work to both consider and reduce this risk for individual children and young people.
44. Good, effective systems ensure that missing and trafficked children are identified and that risks become promptly understood and minimised. 60 children have been missing from home in 64 missing episodes for 2013 to 2014. Children missing from home are routinely discussed at the CSE hub and their situations assessed to identify their vulnerability to exploitation while they are missing.
45. Procedures for children missing education are good. A wide range of work, including with parents who choose to educate their children at home and children in families who 'disappear', ensures that the whereabouts and welfare of children are known. Work with social care agencies in Eastern Europe has successfully located children who suddenly disappeared from

Bradford. Partnership working between behaviour support services and schools is reducing well the number of young people excluded either permanently or for short periods. In line with learning from the most recently published serious case review, improvements have been made to the recording, tracking and then visiting of families where there are missed appointments or where workers such as education social workers have been unable to gain access.

46. Work to support young people aged 16-17 presenting as potentially homeless is good and managed well within the leaving care service. To meet the needs of this group of young people, elected members secured additional funding to increase the service's capacity to include a dedicated team of workers who address housing needs.
47. Very few children are identified as being privately fostered. Much awareness raising work has been done, but managers acknowledge that ongoing work is required if the profile of private fostering is to be raised and maintained. Children receive a brief assessment and benefit from regular visits from their social worker, during which their wishes and feelings are actively sought. Carer assessments currently lack detailed consideration of the ability of the carers to meet the needs of the children in placement, and they do not consider the suitability of living accommodation.
48. Children's ethnicity, diversity, faith and cultural identity are routinely and sensitively considered. Children and their families consistently benefit from interpreting and translation services to ensure that they feel comfortable to participate fully in meetings and decisions that affect their lives. Social workers are highly motivated to continue learning about cultural norms and sensitivities to ensure that their work is respectful, whilst keeping the child's needs at the centre of what they do. The much valued Family Information Service provides links to support services such as helplines for Urdu, Punjabi, Czech and Polish speakers. The delivery of equality and diversity training to professionals by young disabled people is well received and has led to improving accessibility to some services.
49. Children and young people's views inform practice and are taken into account in the determination of priorities for services. For example, young disabled people conduct audits of community resources to determine the degree to which they are accessible for disabled people, and findings are followed through to ensure that improvements are made.
50. The planning and investigation of allegations against professionals is appropriate and includes relevant partner agencies such as the police. A lack of capacity combined with an increase in referrals has led to delays in progress and management oversight in some cases. The delays in progressing allegations could lead to unsuitable people working with

children for longer than is necessary, although no evidence was found of children being at risk of harm as a result.

The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence are good

51. The Group Service Manager for Social Work makes appropriate and proportionate decisions about children becoming looked after. No cases were seen where children needed to be looked after and this had not happened. Good performance has resulted in a 2.1% decrease in the number of looked after children over the last year, compared to the 2% increase nationally in 2012–13. The local authority has realistic and resourced plans to further reduce numbers by strengthening the early help offer, increasing use of special guardianship and further improving adoption performance. Thorough consideration of children on the edge of care at the weekly family support panel reviews their support needs, provides services and prevents care.
52. Where children may need protection through the courts, good use is made of the Public Law Outline. This means that children and families are clear about what needs to happen and the timescales involved. Legal proceedings are concluded in a timely way, with current performance down to 30 weeks, which is very close to the forthcoming national target of 26 weeks. The local judiciary and CAFCASS report that work is of a good standard, accepted by courts, and the use of expert witnesses is minimised.
53. In Special Guardianship cases, good and detailed support plans help the court make swift decisions so that children benefit from early permanency decisions. The valued appointment of a specialist case manager to oversee cases in proceedings has supported improvement in standards.
54. Good quality care plans are consistently clear about the importance of achieving permanence as soon as possible for those children who are not able to return to their birth families. Arrangements for finding permanence placements are strong, with good co-ordinated work by the family finding team and the placement co-ordination service. Where the plan is for children to return to their parents' care, comprehensive assessments balance the child's needs and the parents' ability to meet them safely and consistently. Social workers provide the support that families and children need to ensure that children can stay safely at home and the risks of a return to care are minimised.
55. The authority recruits carers and commissions placements to ensure that brothers and sisters stay together wherever possible. Children benefit from stable, good quality in-house foster homes and residential care. The vast majority of children do not move in an unplanned way and most are placed in their local district. When a child's placement ends suddenly, a meeting to learn lessons is held and effective sharing of the learning is taken forward through the regular placement stability meeting.

56. Where a child has specific needs, or no placement in Bradford is available, a multi-agency group oversees decision making and funding arrangements. Purchased out-of-authority placements are reviewed at regular intervals and a range of managers progress plans to return children to Bradford if this is in a child's best interest.
57. Good arrangements for meeting children's health and educational needs are in place if they are placed outside the district. Social workers visit children regularly, and contact with their families is supported and facilitated. Management oversight of the care of these vulnerable children is good. A recent audit confirmed that they are visited by their social workers more frequently than the minimum requirement and that they have clear plans for their future care. The local authority has good systems for identifying and responding to any emerging concerns about quality standards and use only providers who are rated as good or better. Arrangements to safeguard children where a provider's standard drops are robust, and the child's welfare is at the centre of quality assurance and monitoring visits. The authority works collaboratively alongside neighbouring authorities within the White Rose Framework to ensure consistent standards and contracting arrangements with private providers. Young people visited in the inspection are making good progress, see their families regularly and understand why they are placed in specialist provision.
58. The local authority and a range of partner agencies take thoughtful and appropriate action to deal with children who are missing from care. Comprehensive risk assessments for individual young people are routinely completed. Residential home records set out in detail the actions staff must take when a young person is missing. Valued work by organisations such as BLAST, which supports boys and young men at risk of exploitation, helps reduce risk-taking behaviours. Return interviews, conducted by a commissioned service, Voiceability, are available to all young people and those completed are effective and conducted sensitively. Young people have responded well to the opportunity to discuss their concerns and their behaviour with people who are independent of the authority.
59. Fostering service managers have well-informed plans to provide sufficient numbers and types of foster carers for children looked after. An identified shortage of long-term carers has resulted in appropriately targeted publicity and recruitment activity. Currently, 96 children are waiting for a range of permanence placements, but 60% are either formally linked to a potential carer or a plan is in progress. Senior managers meet monthly to track progress in finding placements for these children and to ensure that all work is efficiently coordinated to avoid delay or drift. The authority is forecast to achieve its target of 30 new carers for the year 2013–2014, and plans to recruit at least this number in the following year are realistic. Good use is already made of Special Guardianship, with 20 new arrangements last year, and additional resources are in place to increase this in the next

year. Elected members have effectively underpinned these plans with the necessary financial support.

60. Children and their foster carers benefit from the local authority establishing a protocol for delegated authority. This means that a great deal of children's social and leisure activities are not limited by the need to seek approval from managers before they can be agreed. Placement plans and contact arrangements take good account of children's interests and commitments. Foster carers encourage children to develop their interests and talents through organised activities in school and in the community.
61. Good work with the police has led to a very low rate of offending for children looked after, which is 2.8% compared to a national average of 6.9%. A recent joint-funded police officer with specific responsibility for children looked after will further strengthen work on offending and for those who go missing from care.
62. The team of six dedicated nurses for children looked after provide good support to the young people in their care. Health assessments take place where young people feel most comfortable and this works well in conjunction with regular drop-in sessions. Performance in this area is good, with 90% having an up-to-date health assessment compared to 87% nationally. Good partnership work with child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) enables prompt access to therapeutic services at times of acute need. Waiting times of 14 weeks for less urgent cases are too long. To mitigate this, the Looked After Nursing team carry out their own therapeutic work or signpost young people to services such as Off the Record, an advocacy service, or to independent counselling.
63. Children looked after make good progress from their individual starting points at age seven to the time they leave primary school at the age of eleven. In 2013 the percentage making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was above that of similar pupils nationally. This was especially the case for reading and writing, where there was a 10% and 8% point difference respectively. The virtual school team are targeting extra support for individual pupils and are supporting schools to ensure that writing is as good as other subjects for this group.
64. Good progress is evident for children from entering secondary school in Year 7 to Year 11, and has moved from below that of similar young people nationally in 2011 to above in 2013. Although there was a dip in the number of students gaining five good GCSEs including English and mathematics in 2013, good performance is projected for 2014. The proportion projected to gain these qualifications at 29%, will be well above the current national average of 20% for looked after children.
65. Routine and effective monitoring of pupils' attendance in school quickly identifies those at risk of not attending. Individual action plans are rapidly

put in place to ensure that young people do not miss out on their schooling. Absence rates continue to fall, and are below the average for all Bradford children. At 4.5%, they are also below that for similar pupils nationally. The service ensures that children attending Academies or schools out of Bradford are also tracked through a service procured specifically for looked after children, so that action can be quickly taken when concerns about pupils' progress and attendance are identified.

66. Care is taken to ensure that young people with very complex special educational needs or a disability are placed in the best provision for them. Most attend schools within the district but a small number, seventeen, attend specialist provision out of the area. All schools that these pupils attend have been judged good or better following their Ofsted inspection. Regular visits alongside statutory review visits ensure that young people are safe, their needs are well met and changes are triggered if things are not good enough.
67. Virtually all looked after children are in school, and none are permanently excluded. Only three are not in mainstream full-time education, and all three are receiving carefully planned bespoke provision that meets their complex needs. Fixed period exclusion rates are below average for similar groups nationally. They are falling year on year, and are also below those for all young people in Bradford.
68. A higher proportion of looked after children than their peers attend good or better schools in Bradford. The needs and wishes of the young person are carefully balanced alongside the continuity of school placement when home circumstances are either at risk or actually break down. As a result of such work, over 75% have either only attended one school or moved only at planned transition times such as from primary to secondary school.
69. Independent reviewing officers are skilled and experienced, which results in children's reviews being chaired effectively. 95% of children's reviews take place on time and IROs challenge workers, managers and the local authority appropriately. They ensure that children's views and assessed needs are central to the care planning process.
70. The requirements of the IRO Handbook are given a high priority and are met to a good standard overall. Due to capacity issues, IROs are not able to consult fully with all children before every review. However, children's views are sought and taken account of in all reviews where children are old enough to express them. Children are encouraged to use the Viewpoint electronic system to record their views but, although numbers are increasing, only a minority have used it so far. Young people are aware of their right to complain, and advice about how to do this is available in children's homes and in children's reviews. Additional management capacity is required to ensure that the IRO service can comprehensively fulfil its role.

Despite determined efforts, senior managers have not yet been able to recruit an additional manager.

71. The quality of case records seen is at least good. Children's voices are clearly present and taken account of in social work practice and recording. This is a real strength, and well-managed caseloads mean that social workers have time to get to know children really well.
72. This approach to valuing and including children and young people's opinions is also evident in service development and review. Both the corporate parenting panel and the children in care council are high profile groups. The confident and well-supported children in care council meets elected members and senior managers regularly and attends scrutiny committee. Examples of how the contribution of young people has been harnessed include the monitoring of the CAMH service and the design of a new residential home.
73. The fostering service attracts more applicants than other similar local authorities. 76% of Bradford's looked after children are placed with the local authority's own carers, which is better than neighbouring authorities and the national average. Foster carers are well supported and benefit from a generous payment for skills scheme. Carers are successfully recruited from all local ethnic communities, and of 225 households 70 are BME or from mixed ethnic backgrounds. This means that children have a good chance of being placed with a family from their own community.
74. Foster carers have regular reviews undertaken by their supervising social worker. This arrangement offers no independent view of carers' suitability and competence and this practice requires improvement. Good levels of engagement with professional development has resulted in 90% of mainstream foster carers having completed formal training. The rate for family and friends carers is much lower at 40%. Whilst this group are harder to engage, managers are reviewing the format of the training in an attempt to improve take-up.
75. Fostering panels are effective, challenging standards of practice appropriately. An effective quality assurance system measures all items against performance indicators and local authority targets. The panel chair, ADM (agency decision maker) and service manager work well together and have regular meetings. Appropriate arrangements are in place for appraisal of the chair and panel members. The chair is well informed and panel members have a good range of expertise and experience.
76. Good and wide ranging evidence demonstrates the authority's commitment to equality and diversity. A shared set of values are integrated into the practice and management of social work teams. Staff at all levels are articulate and knowledgeable about their community and about the importance of race, religion and culture to the population of children they

serve. In addition, young people are able to articulate the service's commitment to keeping them safe and to tackling discrimination and bullying, including cyber bullying.

The graded judgment for adoption performance is good

77. Adoption performance in Bradford is good. Performance on the adoption scorecard is broadly in line with or better than the national average. Children live with their adopters quickly. The percentage of children who wait less than 20 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family is 64% in Bradford, which is better than the England rate of 55%.
78. Adoption is considered for all children who need a permanent alternative home. Effective care planning provides thorough consideration of adoption early in the child's journey through care. For unborn children where there is a high likelihood of adoption, good work ensures early and proactive links with the family finding team. In line with the national picture, Bradford has a group of children for whom it is hard to find adopters. These children have foetal alcohol syndrome, uncertain health prognosis or high risks of hereditary mental ill health. Sustained efforts are made to profile the children nationally, but finding prospective adopters remains challenging.
79. Brothers and sisters are placed together wherever possible and where it is in their best interest. Decisions to split them are made by the child's social worker in close liaison with the family finding team. Specialist assessments by psychologists are used where issues are complex or a child's emotional welfare is causing concern.
80. Adoption work is characterised by an urgent yet considered approach to planning. Children benefit from parallel plans being progressed and reviewed regularly. Adoption workers routinely use the Adoption Register, and foster to adopt is currently being used in one case. Investment in a regional consortium will progress development of a region-wide foster to adopt recruitment scheme. At present there are no plans to develop concurrent planning locally.
81. Recruitment, preparation and assessment of prospective adopters is good. In line with national guidance, Stage 1 and 2 processes are established and are being used well. In the last six months, 29 adopters have commenced Stage 1, and only one of these completed the stage late due to agency delay. Good work is also being done at Stage 2, where six out of seven are on track to complete within the four month timescale.
82. The Agency Decision Maker (ADM) makes appropriate and well-considered decisions which ensure the right matches are agreed between prospective adopters and children. Children are quickly matched to their adoptive families, with 86% being matched within three months. Adopter-led

matching is successful, with 17 placement matches agreed at the same panel where prospective adopters are approved. The service has an open and creative approach to finding families, and an adoption activity day has already taken place. Where local adopters cannot be identified, Adoption Exchange days in London have been positive, particularly for children with complex cultural backgrounds.

83. The adoption panel is effective and has easy access to good quality legal and medical advice. Members are fully trained and reflect the cultural diversity of the district. Routine reports by the panel chair highlight any learning needed to maintain quality standards. A comprehensive annual review of the adoption service is provided for senior managers and elected members. Timely decision making by the ADM results in prompt progression of work for children where adoption is the plan.
84. Adoption support is good and easily accessible to all parties in adoption, including birth relatives. The service responds swiftly and practically to requests for help. Good quality assessments and plans effectively support children and families. A well-managed letterbox service is available to facilitate contact. The valued annual Adoption Celebration provides opportunity for brothers and sisters placed separately to meet up. Therapeutic work to support adopted children and their families is quickly accessible and provided by a specialist worker in the service.
85. From May 2014 adoption support needs will be assessed using the BSCA template, so findings can effectively contribute to court processes alongside all other assessments.

The graded judgment for the experiences and progress of care leavers is good

86. Care leavers speak positively about good support to help them understand how to keep safe, including risks from sexual exploitation, drugs and alcohol. They also speak highly of the support of the designated leaving care nurse, who conducts their health assessments, makes sure they understand their health histories and provides confidential advice through regular drop-ins or outreach in their homes.
87. A small proportion of care leavers, under 3%, are in custody. Evidence demonstrates that these young people receive a good individual package of support, including regular visits. The leaving care service and a range of partner agencies work effectively to enable these young people to return to their local communities successfully.
88. Pregnant care leavers and young parents receive a good range of support from the leaving care service, a dedicated nurse and services with which they work closely. For example, pregnant mums receive intensive support from Bradford's award-winning family nurse partnership that continues until

the child is two years old. One recent mum spoke eloquently of the great support she has received from the dedicated nurse, her worker and the family nurse partnership team.

89. The leaving care duty arrangements and good partnerships between the designated nurse, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and counselling services ensures that care leavers who need support in times of crises get help quickly.
90. Pathway plans evidence some consistent strengths. They are virtually all reviewed regularly, or updated earlier than the required six months when circumstances change. There is evidence of some good direct work, advice and support to young people in a range of different contexts. Young people know they have a plan but not all see it as an important document. Managers are aware that the actual proforma is not helpful and are working with services regionally and nationally to develop a process that is more succinct and useful to both staff and young people. The best plans seen clearly record the strengths and needs of the young person. Detailed, timely actions and targets are set out for both the young person and social worker.
91. Young people regard the LEAP service (Learning, Employment, Advice, Preparation) highly. When describing the LEAP team, words like 'amazing' and 'awesome' tripped off their tongues. The service was at risk because of funding cuts in the local authority. Young people canvassed corporate parents to save this service and as a result they continue to benefit from the support.
92. Care leavers speak of excellent relationships between themselves, the LEAP team manager and the rest of the team. This is encouraging positive attitudes to developing qualifications, accreditations, work experience, training and employment. Young people say they are engaging in qualifications and training because the team 'believe in you and you feel like you want to come'; 'it's not like school and you can have a second chance'. Care leavers also say they receive high quality advice and guidance from the dedicated university worker.
93. Collective work is impacting well on the number of young people in education, employment or training and in the number moving on to university. Currently 30 care leavers are at university and 10 more are planned to go in September. This compares very favourably to the national average and the number has increased well over the past three years. A good package of support is available to university students. This includes additional funding to the minimum required, regular contact with staff and continuity of living arrangements in vacations if wanted.
94. The local authority's own tracking data shows a significant increase in the proportion of 19–21 year old care leavers in education, training or

employment. At 87.6% this is higher than the previous year's figure of 76.2%, and of that found nationally. Virtually all post-16 year-olds have moved into education, training or employment.

95. The leaving care grant of £1,200 is below the level expected within the government's published 'entitlements for looked after children and care leavers'. However, a wide range of additional funds are provided to young people as they leave care, including £10 weekly top-up and lap tops for those in further education. This means that the combined funding provided is higher than the minimum required.
96. Young people consider that they are well prepared for their move into independence and say they get good support to help them manage budgets and develop additional skills if needed. They are particularly appreciative of the opportunities, through LEAP, to visit the Ministry of Food and develop their healthy eating skills there. Young people say they are safe where they live and are supported into the accommodation of their choice.
97. 'Staying put arrangements' are good and have increased year-on-year. Current information indicates that they are above average. 32 young people are currently living with former foster carers. Two young people in the armed forces return to their former foster carers when home on leave.
98. Good preparatory work and work with housing partners such as Stonham and Incommunities help to guide and support young people into independent accommodation when ready. Local data show good improvement in the proportion in suitable accommodation, with the rate currently at 94.5% and above that found nationally. No young people are in bed and breakfast accommodation, use of which has been minimal over the last 12 months.
99. Care leavers with learning difficulties are well supported by a dedicated worker when they enter the leaving care service. Close liaison with the learning difficulties adult team, colleges and work-based providers smooth transitions and provide support into adulthood. These young people are enabled to continue to live with their carers through the Shared Lives scheme. Seven of the eleven youngsters currently supported by the dedicated worker have taken advantage of these arrangements.
100. Young people are not informed well enough about the national government's published 'Entitlements for looked after children and care leavers'. Not all young people who spoke to inspectors were clear about this information. Although they say they receive updated guidance and information, guidance does not spell out specifically what the entitlements mean for them, so they cannot check if their service meets or exceeds minimum expectations.

Leadership, management and governance is good

101. The chief executive, DCS and elected members discharge their statutory duties effectively, and governance arrangements are well-established within clear lines of accountability and reporting structures. A clear and shared vision for children and young people across the partnership includes an active voluntary sector, to meet the diverse and changing needs of children and young people in the community. The working relationship between the local authority and Bradford Safeguarding Board is well-defined and effective in driving improvement in most areas.
102. Good leadership skills and stability at senior management level both in children's social care and in the local partnership are key strengths. They have a track record of providing effective services for children in the vast majority of areas. Consistency in maintaining positive working relationships with elected members and partners means strategies and plans have steadily progressed. Overall, work with children and their families is child centred and has a positive impact on outcomes, reduces risks and is underpinned by good assessments. Senior managers know their service well and respond to issues as they arise but, in a very few areas, ongoing work must continue to embed improvements and ensure that all aspects of performance are good.
103. Accountabilities between the Health and Wellbeing Board, the BSCB and the Children's Trust are clearly set out in a governance structure. Key senior leaders are members across the boards, to promote children and young people's interests in all key priorities and influence strategic planning and delivery. The Children's Trust is well embedded, supported and influential in driving the agreed priorities across the partnership, in particular driving educational attainment and improving the number of children participating in education and training. Almost all looked after children have an allocated educational placement and none are permanently excluded.
104. Corporate parenting is a high priority, elected members are fully committed to their corporate parenting responsibility and the panel discharges its functions effectively. Creative solutions are found to minimise the impact of budgetary cuts. For example, suitable placements and accommodation are available in-house, with only 9% of looked after children placed out of the area. Cross-party scrutiny is effective, involves children and young people and holds partners to account. For example, requesting more detail than the league tables offer to effectively scrutinise educational attainment.
105. Responsive and assertive action taken by senior managers during the inspection resulted in a suitably authorised police officer being located in IAT and available for strategy discussions. Managers were already aware of the issue but historical difficulties in accessing suitably authorised police officers had led to the practice of decisions to undertake a child protection enquiry being taken solely by social work managers. No children were

found to be at risk of harm as a result of this. Once the child protection enquiry is underway, all relevant partner agencies, including the police, are consulted and managers effectively oversee the process.

106. Managers have also been aware for some time of the inappropriate delays in holding child protection conferences. Despite support from BSCB and the appointment of an additional conference chair, the expected improvement has not immediately followed. Corporate changes led to administrative support for conferences being provided by a centralised rather than a specialist team. The Chief Executive and senior managers acknowledge that this needs to change, and during the inspection took immediate steps to resolve the matter. Management action to mitigate the situation for children and families waiting for their conference to be held has been effective, although this has not been consistently applied in all cases.
107. Performance management and quality assurance is a priority and is effectively embedded. The good quality on-line performance management system 'Covalent' collates information at team, area and district levels. This means that each manager is fully aware of their team's targets, their rating against priorities and how they compare to national bench-marking data. Senior managers hold routine Performance Clinics and use the 'live data' to explore and challenge under-performing areas.
108. A published, appropriate annual audit programme clearly details wide-ranging planned audits for the year. Routine, themed audits across service provision, such as children placed out of district, demonstrate good levels of management scrutiny and understanding of practice. A range of audit methods are used, including group case file audits and joint agency audits. Audit activity and findings are reported to the monthly 'improvement board' chaired by the Assistant Director.
109. Managers acknowledge the challenges in consistently raising the profile of private fostering. In line with the national picture, the number of assessed and identified carers is very small. However, more needs to be done by managers to ensure that assessments fully take account of the carers' abilities and that resources are matched to the needs of individual children.
110. The local authority learns from inspections and serious case reviews. Work to address key actions and recommendations from the Safeguarding and Looked After inspection in May 2012 are complete and as a result the quality of assessments has improved and is good.
111. Progress against the Learning and Improvement Action Plan of the HK Serious Case Review is good overall, and a key action to pilot the single assessment has demonstrated positive outcomes to improve 'inquisitive and challenging' practice. In line with the positive outcomes of the pilot, training for all staff is already planned and implementation set for May 2014. The local authority has strong links with universities and works collaboratively

on using research evidence to support a range of approaches to service delivery and practice. For example, the supervision framework and the early help strategy.

112. Good senior management planning and development has resulted in the multi-agency initial assessment team located in Bradford. Similar arrangements have not been achieved in Keighley due to a lack of partner agency capacity. Whilst no evidence was seen of children being adversely affected it does mean that there is variation in practice standards.
113. Senior managers are successful in improving outcomes for vulnerable children in a number of key areas, demonstrated by some positive increases in placement stability, securing permanency options and timely adoptions. Overall, care leavers feel well supported and prepared for adulthood.
114. Senior managers engage positively with voluntary partners to pool resources and 'thinking' to work creatively across the community and within the resources available. A well thought through commissioning strategy in partnership with the voluntary sector is re-shaping and focussing resources on what can make the most difference, for example in re-designing domestic abuse services. The ethos is strong, focussing on 'what can be done differently' to help and protect children, young people and families. The well- applied local discretion through the 'Troubled Families' agenda meets needs early in families and is successfully making a difference.
115. The local authority strongly values engaging and consulting with children and young people. This is evident in the widespread ways children and young people are influential across children's services. Examples include influencing the design of children's homes and presenting their views on CSE to Bradford Safeguarding Children Board. Children and young people report favourably on their role on 'take over days', which increases their insight and ability to contribute to planning and delivery. Commissioning activity benefits from engagement with children and young people, for example in tendering panels, key interviews and visiting provisions to assess and comment on how friendly and accessible they are for them.
116. A key strength is the authority's effective workforce strategy and action plan, which ensures that there are sufficient frontline workers to meet the needs of the service, informed by an analysis of needs. The frontline workforce is stable and largely experienced, with over 60% of social workers having achieved an advanced level of professional development. Managers have successfully achieved and sustained manageable caseloads for staff, which allows time spent with children to be at the heart of social work activity. Social workers consistently report that they are motivated and very proud to work for the local authority. Generally social work recruitment is successful and retention rates are very good. However, the recruitment of skilled case conference chairs has remained stubbornly

challenging. In 2010 senior managers implemented a robust set of professional standards to ensure high levels of competence and behaviour. Evidence demonstrates good use of the standards to manage and remedy issues in a structured and assertive way.

117. Newly qualified social workers are well supported through increased supervision, reduced caseloads and co-working on complex cases with experienced colleagues. Following a drive to implement an improved framework for supervision, the vast majority of workers report good supervisory arrangements. However, some staff in assessment teams report supervision is not always regular. The overall quality of supervision records need to better reflect challenge and to evidence reflective discussions.

What the inspection judgements mean: the local authority

An **outstanding** local authority leads highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** local authority leads effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and those who are looked after and care leavers have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a local authority that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the authority is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children, young people and families.

A local authority that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after or care leavers not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Section 2: The effectiveness of the local safeguarding children board

The effectiveness of the LSCB is good

Areas for improvement

- 118. Implement routine oversight of arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of privately fostered children, including work aimed at raising professional and public awareness of children who may be privately fostered.
- 119. The BSCB should accelerate development of a multi-agency data set and clearly record any challenge to areas of poor performance and the impact of this challenge.
- 120. The BSCB should review the engagement of schools and FE colleges to ensure that they are fully represented on the Board.
- 121. The BSCB should complete the implementation of a comprehensive local learning and improvement framework.
- 122. The BSCB should evaluate the impact of safeguarding training on the quality of frontline practice and outcomes for children as part of a comprehensive training needs analysis.

Key strengths and weaknesses of the LSCB

- 123. BSCB has benefitted from consistent, good leadership by an independent chair supported by an effective Business Manager. The Chair demonstrates a strong leadership role in regional developments such as child sexual exploitation. Membership is at the appropriate seniority to enable BSCB to drive forward its key priorities and the wider safeguarding agenda. The engagement of the lay member perspective and the voluntary and community sector is good.
- 124. Governance and accountability arrangements are well managed with clear lines of communication between the Independent Chair, Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of the authority. There is evidence of the influence of BSCB in effectively challenging partner agencies. For example, effective challenge to partners over inter-agency responses to children at risk of sexual exploitation has led to the development of a CSE Hub that is functioning well and has improved information sharing and responses to young people at risk. The Board is responsive and has used its resources to add capacity in key operational teams. A good example of this is the Board providing resources for the recruitment of an additional case conference chair. Relationships with

strategic partnerships such as the Health & Wellbeing Board are well defined and lead to a shared understanding of priorities.

125. Strong commitment and shared responsibility characterise partnership working in Bradford, both operationally and strategically. This is exemplified by the ownership of chairing BSCB sub-groups alongside good attendance at a range of BSCB meetings. The annual Safeguarding Week, with over 70 events and 2,000 participants, provides an effective opportunity to raise awareness of a range of safeguarding issues across Bradford.
126. Where schools are involved in the work of the Board, this has led to strong partnership approaches to the engagement of young people, for example in piloting the use of Viewpoint and activity in respect of domestic violence. However, the absence of Head Teacher and FE College representation on the Board means that schools and colleges do not have sufficient opportunity to contribute to and influence the partnership at this level.
127. The sub-structure of BSCB is clear and regular business meetings promote effective planning and co-ordination of business. Challenge between partners is good but more work is required to fully evidence this in written records. As a consequence, it is not always easy to evidence the impact of challenge when issues of poor performance are addressed.
128. Improvement made as a result of effective monitoring and evaluation of frontline practice is clearly demonstrated. A programme of single agency audits is supported by thematic multi-agency Challenge Panels. Good quality, innovative practice is evident in the individual consideration given to how a particular Challenge Panel operates. For example, in October 2013 a panel looked in depth at inter-agency practice with four disabled children, involving their parents and carers, and identifying appropriate improvements to raise practice standards.
129. Quality assurance by BSCB in respect of the early help strategy is in its infancy. Plans to undertake a thematic audit of early help and the impact of work in relation to neglect in 2014 will link to an evaluation of the new Bradford Single Child Assessment (BSCA). This directly links to the recently published Serious Case Review.
130. The Serious Case Review in respect of HK has had a significant and positive impact on BSCB's work to improve frontline practice, particularly in terms of early recognition of, and responses to, neglect. The action plan provides a clear assessment of good progress against actions. Social workers and other staff are clear about how learning from the review has changed the way they work. Procedures and practice have improved in respect of home visits and staff now routinely see where all children in a household live and sleep. Good new guidance is in place on families who are not engaging with services or are failing to attend appointments. Further improvements include an effective protocol between health trusts and education services

over children who do not have a school place, and improved screening of domestic abuse.

131. The use of performance data to monitor and hold agencies to account for poor performance is variable. Data has successfully been used to improve agency attendance at, and reporting to, child protection conferences. Good progress has been made on understanding data on unintentional injuries to children. However, not all data and performance are monitored systematically and routinely. This means that BSCB is not always able to respond as quickly as it otherwise could. The development of a multi-agency data set is on-going.
132. Good use of shared information has led BSCB to drive improvements to practice such as the development of the Integrated Assessment Team. The local learning and improvement framework is under-developed, and ongoing work will strengthen capacity to improve the co-ordination of this work. Plans to complete revised Section 11 audits are in place, to provide greater assurance to the effectiveness of partners in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
133. The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Report 2012–13 provides a good analysis of some of the causational and modifiable factors in respect of child deaths and the actions taken as a result of learning. The Board has made improvements to the timeliness of reviews in respect of child deaths. The prevalence of consanguinity (marriages of close familial relatives) within Bradford often results in complex genetic, chromosomal and congenital conditions, so reviews can be lengthy.
134. Safeguarding procedures are comprehensive and up-to-date and evidence demonstrates good understanding of thresholds amongst partners. The toolkit for safeguarding children who attend madrassahs is very good, and its use has been well supported through good engagement by leaders from the Muslim community.
135. BSCB delivers a comprehensive multi-agency safeguarding training programme and take-up and evaluation of these learning opportunities are good. Briefing sessions and additional training have been provided on working with highly resistant, hostile families following the HK serious case review. BSCB has completed work with a local university and has adopted a research-based approach to the evaluation of the impact of safeguarding training on the quality of frontline practice and outcomes for children, young people and their families.
136. BSCB has a good understanding of children missing from home or care, and services to support such children are in place. The Board has been instrumental in improving inter-agency responses to child sexual exploitation. The development of the effective CSE Hub involving co-location of police, social care and a voluntary organisation has improved

information-sharing and identification of young people at risk of sexual exploitation. This has enabled the Board to build a local understanding of high risk areas and the characteristics of local challenges. The local authority has committed additional resources to strengthen preventative work and therapeutic support to young people. The BSCB Chair has taken a strong leadership role in contributing to the development of a regional strategy in collaboration with the police.

137. BSCB is successful in increasing the participation of children and young people. For example, the Board has established it's own 'Youth Fusion' sub-group, in partnership with the voluntary sector. Young people have undertaken work to improve information about services and 'how to keep safe', and took part in Safeguarding Week.
138. The BSCB annual report is satisfactory, comprehensive and provides analysis of the effectiveness of safeguarding children arrangements in Bradford. The Independent Chair acknowledges that the impact of the HK serious case review has delayed progress in some aspects of the BSCB work plan for 2013–14. For example, there has been no formal oversight of private fostering arrangements or of children living out-of-area during this period. Plans to address capacity issues are well advanced.

What the inspection judgments mean: the LSCB

An **outstanding** LSCB is highly influential in improving the care and protection of children. Their evaluation of performance is exceptional and helps the local authority and its partners to understand the difference that services make and where they need to improve. The LSCB creates and fosters an effective learning culture.

An LSCB that is **good** coordinates the activity of statutory partners and monitors the effectiveness of local arrangements. Multi-agency training in the protection and care of children is effective and evaluated regularly for impact. The LSCB provides robust and rigorous evaluation and analysis of local performance that identifies areas for improvement and influences the planning and delivery of high-quality services.

An LSCB **requires improvement** if it does not yet demonstrate the characteristics of good.

An LSCB that is **inadequate** does not demonstrate that it has effective arrangements in place and the required skills to discharge its statutory functions. It does not understand the experiences of children and young people locally and fails to identify where improvements can be made.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD
T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk
© Crown copyright 2014