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6 February 2024

Add recipient details (local authority to complete)

To the children and young people in East Sussex

Inspection of children's services

In December 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 would like 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	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

What did the inspectors find?

- Children in East Sussex continue to receive consistently strong and effective support that helps to improve their lives. When children or families need help, this is provided as soon as possible. If children are at risk, social workers and other professionals take action to make them safer.
- Children are helped by experienced social workers who visit them regularly and know them well. Sometimes specialist workers also become involved, so that the right additional support is provided. Specialist services, such as connected coaches and the collaboration against child exploitation (CACE) group for parents, make a big difference to children's lives.
- For a small number of children, the plans created to support them and their families are not clear enough.
- When children are unable to live with their parents or other family members, they live with local foster families or in other homes, where they feel safe and supported.
- Children who cannot live with their families are often supported by the same social worker for a long time. Children get to know and trust their workers, who help them to keep in touch with their friends and family, because they know this is important.
- Older children leaving care are supported to get to know and trust their personal advisers, who provide them with ongoing help as they become adults. Most care leavers receive good support, although sometimes it is not ambitious enough.
- Children in care and care leavers participate in forums and have a voice. Managers look carefully at the feedback completed by children in care and care leavers, and they are looking for more opportunities to increase involvement in discussions about how they can provide the best support.
- Leaders in the council want to do the right things for children and their families. Social workers and personal advisers love working in East Sussex because they feel valued and supported.
- Inspectors had the pleasure of meeting a group of articulate, caring and kind children and young people, all of whom said that they feel safe and have someone to turn to as a trusted adult.

Yours faithfully

Tom Anthony
Lead inspector
His Majesty's Inspector