

Foss House, 4th Floor
Kings Pool, 1-2
Peasholme Green,
York, YO1 7PX

T 0300 123 1231
Textphone 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofsted

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To the children and young people in Gateshead.

Inspection of children’s services

In December 2024, Ofsted inspectors visited your area. They looked at children and young people’s experiences of the help, protection and care given to them by 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 wish.

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	Good
The experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

What did the inspectors find

- The last time inspectors visited Gateshead in 2019, services were judged to be good. They have continued to be good and in some areas they have

improved. This means that children continue to receive good quality help and support.

- Senior leaders and committed staff have worked hard to make sure children in Gateshead receive the help they need, when they need it and most children's lives improve as a result.
- Leaders have made sure that children and families can access the help they need from within their local communities. Most children and families receive this help quickly.
- When children need more specialist help, they are supported to receive this from their wider family, community and skilled workers. When children need to come into care, they do so at the right time for them.
- Workers make determined efforts to find a family member for children to live with if they can't live with their parents. This means that children mostly live with people who know them well and importantly understand their identity and history. Children live with their brothers and sisters where possible, and if this is not so, workers make sure they see each other as much as possible.
- Senior leaders know they have more to do for some 16 and 17 year old children who are homeless so they understand their rights and what help they are entitled to with no delay.
- Leaders mostly understand what help is needed for some children who are young carers. They recognise that more needs to be done to understand what life is like for these children.
- When children leave care, they continue to receive good help and support for as long as they need it. They live in homes that suit them and if they need help with their emotional well-being, they receive it. Many attend, and benefit from further education. Leaders are working with partner agencies to ensure that older care leavers can also access education, employment and training opportunities.
- The voices of children are valued. The Young Ambassadors and Youth Network groups ensure that children's voices shape the way services are designed and delivered. This continues to develop and strengthen services and is making a difference to the way children experience help in Gateshead.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Fairhurst

Lead inspector
His Majesty's Inspector