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To the children and young people in Wiltshire

Inspection of children's services

In June 2019, 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 and care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

What did the inspectors find

- Services for children and families in Wiltshire are good. Leaders, managers and staff are working hard to keep children and young people in Wiltshire safe, and to make their lives better.

- Leaders and politicians work together really well. They know what works and what could be better. They are good at coming up with solutions that give children and young people what they need.
- Children and young people are listened to, what they say is taken very seriously and it makes a difference. So for example, the council have stopped charging council tax for care leavers because they listened to what care leavers had to say.
- We met with some really brilliant young people who told us what they think about living in Wiltshire. They challenged us to get the word pinata in this report, so here you go.
- When children and families need help they are supported quickly. Social workers help families to find better ways to sort out their problems.
- When children runaway from danger in their country, they are made welcome in Wiltshire and given everything they need to be safe.
- Social workers are good at working out what needs to happen to make children safer. When they have done this they make a plan that the whole family understands.
- Social workers are really good at finding families for children who can't go back home. This happens quickly, children go to live with the right people and are happy there.
- Children and young people who cannot live at home have social workers who know them really well. These children live with good carers, who help them succeed and they have advocates when they need them.
- We really liked the grand mentor scheme where people over 50 make friends with children in care and help them try new things.
- Because they have been busy going to see children, some social workers don't always write things down quickly enough. We have asked them to get better at this.
- Sometimes it's hard to find the right place for children straight away because there aren't enough foster carers. The senior people are trying really hard to find ways to make this better.
- If children and young people go missing there are lots of people who look for them and do something about the reasons why. Other professionals like the police do a good job of protecting young people from danger.
- Young people who leave care live in a safe place and are happy where they live. They have a worker who works hard for them and who helps them with practical things.

Yours sincerely

Steve Lowe HMI