

Derbyshire Constabulary is 'outstanding' in how it legitimately keeps people safe and reduces crime – HMIC

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has assessed how legitimate Derbyshire Constabulary is at keeping people safe and reducing crime. This is the second year running HMIC has carried out inspections of this kind, which makes up part of HMIC's annual PEEL inspections.

HMIC considers a police force to be legitimate if it has the consent of the public, and if those working in the force consistently behave in a way that is fair, ethical, and within the law.

To assess this, HMIC has inspected how well forces treat the people they serve; ensure their workforce acts ethically and lawfully; and treat their workforces with fairness and respect. The findings of this inspection are included in a report, published today.

This inspection also included, for the first time, an assessment of how well forces tackle the problem of abuse of authority for sexual gain by members of its workforce. This serious form of corruption betrays the trust of the public and, while we identified some examples of good practice, there remain significant areas where forces must improve. The service needs to be more proactive in seeking out and preventing this form of corruption, and referring cases of abuse of authority to the IPCC.

HMIC found that Derbyshire Constabulary:

- Is fully committed to working with partner agencies to tackle hate crime and improve support to victims;
- maintains a very strong commitment to neighbourhood policing; and
- treats its workforce with fairness and respect and encourages feedback about concerns officers and staff might have.

HM Inspector of Constabulary Zoë Billingham said:

"I am delighted to report that Derbyshire Constabulary has again achieved an 'outstanding' grade in our 2016 Legitimacy inspection. The force has improved in a number of areas since our inspection in 2015, when it was judged as 'good'.

"There are a number of areas where Derbyshire Constabulary is excelling. I was pleased to find a genuinely ethical and value-based culture within the force. The force works hard to seek feedback from the public including those who may have less trust and confidence in the police. This enables the force to maintain strong relationships with the public it serves, but also identify and address areas that it needs to improve.

"Derbyshire Constabulary has developed an innovative approach to gathering intelligence to identify corruption. It works closely with community groups to help them recognise and report potential corrupt activity. The force fully understands the risk of police officers abusing their authority for sexual gain (taking advantage of their position of power to exploit vulnerable victims of crime).

"Officers and staff in Derbyshire told us that they believe they are treated fairly and with respect. They also said that they felt if they did have concerns, then the force would listen. It is hugely encouraging to see a force make such a commitment to the wellbeing and development of its workforce.

"I am pleased to see how well the force is performing in this area – it sets an example for other forces to aim for. I would like to commend Derbyshire Constabulary on achieving such a high standard in the area of Legitimacy that we inspected. The people of Derbyshire can be assured that their police are operating fairly and respectfully, underpinned by strong ethics and integrity."

HMIC has also published individual assessments of the leadership within each police force in England and Wales. These, along with individual reports on the legitimacy of all forces in England and Wales, are available on HMIC's website.