

Merseyside Police judged as 'good' at legitimately keeping people safe and reducing crime – HMIC

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has assessed how legitimate Merseyside Police 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 Merseyside Police:

- reinforce messages to its workforce about how important it is to treat people with fairness and respect;
- continues to ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. Staff understand what serious corruption is and how to report it; and
- takes the wellbeing of its workforce seriously, and is investing in this area based on analysis of current services.

HM Inspector of Constabulary Mike Cunningham said:

"Following our inspection, I have judged Merseyside Police as 'good' at how legitimately it keeps people safe and reduces crime. The force regularly seeks feedback about how the public perceives that they are treated by its officers and staff.

"I was pleased to find that the force takes threats to its integrity seriously. It has effective methods to deal with potential corruption and continues to make sure that its IT systems are secure. It identifies the early warning signs of corruption, and also deals with cases of abuse of power for sexual gain robustly.

"Workforce wellbeing is also taken seriously by the force, and it is investing in this area based on analysis of current services. The force however couldn't demonstrate it had an effective and consistent approach to the assessment of individual staff performance."

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.