

The Metropolitan Police Service judged as 'good' at how legitimately it keeps people safe and reduces crime - HMIC

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

- is working hard to ensure it treats all of the people it serves with fairness and respect;
- requires improvement in ensuring that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully; and
- in general treats its workforce with fairness and respect.

HM Inspector of Constabulary Matt Parr said:

“I have judged that the Met is good at how legitimately it keeps people safe and reduces crime. The force engages well with the communities it serves, seeking feedback from the public and regular analysis of the responses.

However, not all officers were aware of the local communications plans within their borough. This suggests there is still work for the force to do.

"The force also has more work to do before it can ensure that its workforce operates ethically and lawfully. It does not have a suitable anti-corruption strategy. Also, because of a lack of investigative capacity, it does not seek intelligence on corruption. This leaves the force open to potential risk, and should be addressed. While the force takes the problem of abuse of authority for sexual gain seriously, it recognises it as a serious misconduct matter, as opposed to serious corruption.

"The force has invested in looking after its workforce, with guidance and support available to supervisors and staff. It uses a range of methods to identify and understand what it can do to improve how its workforce feels it is treated. The force has improved its performance appraisal process, in response to feedback from staff.

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.