

# Joint area review

Report for children and young people in the City of York

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Report for children and young people about the services they receive in the City of York

## Why should I read this?

All children and young people have the right to find out about the services provided for them and how they might be improved.

The law says that inspectors must look at, and then report on, how well local services serve children and young people in an area. This is called a "review". Inspectors visited the city of York recently and this brief report provides the headlines of what they found. If you prefer, you can read the full report on Ofsted's website, where you will be able to see, in more detail, what they had to say about the really good projects and services in the city.

## What did the inspectors do?

Six inspectors visited York at the beginning of 2008 so that they could see what life is like for you as children and young people. They:

- ❖ talked/listened to children and young people
- ❖ talked with adults working with children and young people (such as social workers, headteachers and school staff, youth workers, nurses, doctors, police officers and councillors)
- ❖ spoke to parents and other people caring for children
- ❖ met with school councils' representatives and other representative groups of young people
- ❖ heard from the council and partners about what they think about the services they provide for children. These partners included schools and colleges, health services, the voluntary and community sector and the police
- ❖ read a lot of reports; and
- ❖ visited a number of projects in the city.

Previous inspections of services in York had found that the council was doing a really good job and that the quality of services for children and young people was improving. This was against a background of having less money than other places. The evidence available to the inspectors showed that this was still the case and that the outcomes for you were still excellent in nearly all respects. Therefore, this time, the inspectors concentrated on services:

- ❖ that make sure children and young people are safe.
- ❖ for children who are being looked after by the local authority
- ❖ for children and young people with a learning difficulty and/or disability.

## How safe are children and young people in York?

Children and young people are "outstandingly" safe in York. All the evidence, including what children and young people told the inspectors, shows that York is a very safe environment in which to live. Local partners work really well together to make sure that you are safe. Children and young people whose safety is at risk are given help and support when they need it. Services know what to look for and what to do; they act quickly to make sure that the problems for you and your families are tackled early and that appropriate support is provided. Young people receiving help from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for example, and through the Castlegate Centre, said that the support had been crucial to them and had turned their lives around.

However, the inspectors did find that not all partners attended child protection reviews, particularly when support is likely to be coming to an end.

## How good are local services for children who are being looked after by the council in York?

Services for children who are looked after by the council rather than their parents are outstanding and help to make a real difference to their lives. Their health, emotional and educational needs are very well met. Services provided for young people when they leave care are particularly good. They include help with housing, financial assistance and help to get them into further education, employment or training when they leave school. Young people have many excellent opportunities to influence the way in which services are provided for them. They told inspectors how much they appreciated the efforts of councillors and senior officers, and the way that their achievements are celebrated.

## How good are local services for children and young people who have a learning difficulty and/or a disability in York?

Services for children and young people with a learning difficulty and/or disability are outstanding. Local services do an outstanding job in making sure that these children and young people get the support that they need and are able to take part in a full range of activities, both in school and in their local communities. Once again, this is because of the way that their needs are spotted early and all the services and partners work together to meet those needs. There is particularly good support to help these young people when they are moving into adult life, including travelling and living in their own or

shared housing. Their voices and opinions are listened to and help shape the support they receive.

### **How well are local services led and managed?**

As you would imagine, from what's been said above, the leadership and management of the services provided for you is good, and there are some real strengths. The council and its partners are working very well together to put their good ideas and very ambitious plans into practice. The links between the high level plans for what the City wants, and the services for you, are generally well joined up. The chances of making things even better for all children and young people in York in the future are excellent.

### **What should services do to improve still further?**

As you can guess, from all the strengths that the inspectors found in York, and the way things have been improving, they didn't make many recommendations. The council and its partners have a good grip on what's needed, but the inspectors did pick out a couple of things.

#### **Things that need doing straight away**

Make sure that all partners are properly represented at child protection review conferences.

#### **Things that need doing over the next six months**

Make sure that there are the right number and the right kind of people in place to deliver what's planned for the future.