

Report for children and young people about the services they receive in Torbay

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and doing well at school and as they grow up
- Making a positive contribution to society
- Being successful in whatever they choose to do when they are adults

Why should I read this?

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 your area recently. You might like to read this, or the full report which you can find on Ofsted's website, to find out what they had to say.

What did the inspectors do?

Eight inspectors visited Torbay during January and February 2007 so that they could get a feel of what life is like for children and young people in the area.

They:

- ❖ talked/listened to a number of children and young people in a number of different settings including clubs, projects, schools and children's centres
- ❖ talked with adults working with children and young people (like social workers, teachers, youth workers, nurses, doctors, police officers and councillors)
- ❖ spoke to parents and other people caring for children
- ❖ met with school councils' representatives and members of the Youth Parliament
- ❖ heard from the council and other agencies what it thinks about the services it provides for children
- ❖ read a lot of reports
- ❖ visited the Ellacombe and Tormuhun areas of Torquay to see for themselves the areas and services provided.

The inspectors also looked at how well particular children are doing, like those children in council care or those who have a learning difficulty or disability.

How well are children and young people doing in Torbay?

- ❖ Most children and young people are generally healthy.
- ❖ The numbers of teenagers who become pregnant are above the national average.
- ❖ Not all children and young are able to access specialist help easily if they are emotionally or mentally unwell.
- ❖ Some children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families do not get access to the services they need.

- ❖ Most children in Torbay are safe and those who are most likely to be at risk are recognised quickly and properly protected.
- ❖ Most children and young people enjoy school, attend regularly and make at least satisfactory progress.
- ❖ Standards of educational attainment vary, at some stages it is at or above the national average, however, at other stages particularly at age 16 it is below the national average. Most children and young people achieve good standards at school, except at Key Stages 2 and 4.
- ❖ Children and young people who are looked after make adequate progress throughout their education, though the number getting 5 or more GCSE's at A*-C grades is below the national average.
- ❖ The vast majority of children and young people behave responsibly and many contribute to decisions about the running of their schools.
- ❖ There is a low rate of offending by young people.
- ❖ Young people are prepared well for working life and the number of those who are in education, employment or training between the age of 16 and 18 is high.
- ❖ Young people who want to live independently are provided with good support, particularly if they need emergency accommodation.

What were the main things children and young people told inspectors about your area?

- ❖ Most children and young people consider themselves to be healthy.
- ❖ Most children and young people feel safe in school.
- ❖ Children and young people have a high fear of crime. They particularly feel unsafe in some neighbourhoods where there is a lot of drug misuse and where they face physical and verbal abuse.
- ❖ Young people are concerned about the lack of easily accessible facilities, affordable activities and safe places to meet in some communities.
- ❖ Children and young people appreciate opportunities to take part in consultations and influence decisions made that affect them, but are concerned that they are not always told the outcome of their suggestions.
- ❖ Young people are appreciative of information and advice they receive, for example from the Connexions service.

What things did the inspectors say are good for children and young people in my area?

- ❖ Projects that promote healthy lifestyles such as the 'Five a Day' healthy eating project.
- ❖ The high number of schools that have achieved a 'Healthy school' accreditation.
- ❖ The quality of support that children up to 5 years of age who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive from the team around the child service.
- ❖ The way agencies work together to protect those children and young people who are most at risk.
- ❖ The reduction in the number of children who are looked after by the council.
- ❖ The support that children and their parents get from Sure Start and Children's centres.
- ❖ The quality of the work done by the Youth Offending Service.
- ❖ The high numbers of young people 16-18 successfully taking part in education, employment and training.
- ❖ The support provided for young people leaving care.

What things are not so good for children and young people?

- ❖ The poor access to specialist mental health services for some children and young people who need them.
- ❖ The slow progress in reducing the high number of teenagers who become pregnant.
- ❖ The lack of access to support services for some children and young people with learning difficulties and or disabilities and their families
- ❖ The slow progress in reducing the high fear of crime felt by children and young people.
- ❖ The lack of a clear understanding by agencies about when they should make referrals to social workers about accessing their support for children and young people.
- ❖ A lack of choice of placements for children and young people who are looked after.
- ❖ The variation in standards of education between the schools in the area.
- ❖ The need to improve the educational attainment of young people who are looked after.

- ❖ The need to improve the participation of children and young people in developing local services.