



Joint area review

Report for children and young people

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

- 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?

Nine inspectors visited Sheffield in September 2006 so that they could get a feel of what life is like for children and young people in your area. They:

- ❖ talked to a number of children and young people they met in children's centres, schools, youth centres and projects
- ❖ 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 youth forums
- ❖ heard from the council and other agencies what it thinks about the services it provides for children
- ❖ read a lot of reports
- ❖ visited services in the Burngreave neighbourhood to see things for themselves.

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 Sheffield?

- ❖ Children and young people generally feel safe at school and within their local areas.
- ❖ The health of people in the city is gradually getting better. More babies and young children are now immunised than before, which helps them to be healthy in the future. Tooth decay is a problem, particularly in some areas of the city. More teenage girls become pregnant than in many other areas of the country. Children with serious illnesses and those with a serious disability are supported well by the health service.

- ❖ Children and young people achieve better at school than in the past, particularly in secondary schools and in further education and training. This is not quite the case in primary education. Most pupils enjoy school but too many take time off for no good reason.
- ❖ Young people are being prepared for working life through work-related courses.
- ❖ Families who move to Sheffield from other parts of the world are given good support to improve their English where this is needed.
- ❖ Many children and young people make a good contribution to their communities and gain from their involvement in sporting, cultural and youth activities.
- ❖ The council has a responsibility to look after those children who are in care or who are living with foster parents. They have support to make sure they are healthy, but they are not doing as well at school as others.

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

- ❖ Some are concerned about bullying and the anti-social behaviour of a few.
- ❖ Inspectors feel that the council has worked well to support young people and families who may be homeless, but there is a shortage of affordable rented accommodation for young people.
- ❖ Children and young people really enjoy the annual Children's Festival.
- ❖ Young people expressed concern about misuse of illegal drugs and alcohol by adults and about some young people who drink too much.
- ❖ Although most consider that they can have a say and influence developments in the local community, they are less clear about how they can be involved in bigger city-wide decisions taken by the council.
- ❖ It is getting easier for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to get involved in decisions that affect their future.

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

- ❖ Children and young people are encouraged and helped to eat healthily and take part in physical activity.
- ❖ Very good systems are in place to check that those adults who work are properly checked in order that children and young people are safe.

- ❖ Schools, colleges, employers and Government agencies work together to improve opportunities for young people aged 14-19. The numbers staying on to study full-time at age 16 are improving and more young people are progressing to higher education.
- ❖ Some young people have been trained in interviewing skills and been involved in the recruitment of staff in schools and in the health authority.
- ❖ Good support is in place to provide information, advice and support to discourage children and young people from smoking and substance abuse.
- ❖ Voluntary, community and faith organisations contribute much to the lives of children and young people. They provide activities and opportunities in youth projects, play and music for instance.
- ❖ Organisations such as the Youth Offending Team help young offenders or those in danger of offending.

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

- ❖ Sexually transmitted infection rates among young people have been increasing, but the latest figures suggest improvements. Inspectors cannot say for sure if this improvement will continue.
- ❖ Too many children at risk of abuse are not allocated a named social worker to help protect them and support their families.
- ❖ The attendance at school by a small number of children is poor. Some also take time off school without permission. This often means that these pupils do less well in their education
- ❖ The number of children looked after by the council, but living away from Sheffield, is too high. There are not enough foster carers within the city to provide a home for looked after children.
- ❖ The council keeps track of young people if, and when, they leave school at 16. However, the numbers of young people not in education training or employment is higher than found in many other parts of the country.