



Joint area review

Report for children and young people
Slough

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

- 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, to find out what they had to say.

What did the inspectors do?

Eleven inspectors visited Slough in September and October 2005 so they could see what life is like for children and young people in the area. They:

- ❖ listened to a number of children and young people they met at youth centres, community centres and schools, especially in the Chalvey area;
- ❖ talked with adults working with children and young people (like social workers, teachers, youth workers, health visitors, doctors, police officers and counsellors);
- ❖ spoke to a few parents, as well as other people caring for children;
- ❖ met with school councils' representatives;
- ❖ heard from the council and other agencies what it thinks about the services it provides for children;
- ❖ read quite a few reports; and
- ❖ visited services used by children, to see things for themselves.

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

How well are children and young people doing in Slough?

The inspectors found that:

- ❖ most children and young people are healthy;
- ❖ they are provided with a safe environment and those most at risk are protected well;
- ❖ seven-, 14- and 16-year olds do very well at school; and
- ❖ children looked after by the council and children with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities do well at school. More young people over 16 are staying on into full time education than in the past.

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

- ❖ Children and young people say they usually have some influence on how things are run at school and in their neighbourhood. They are, however, less involved beyond this and have too little knowledge of how school councils influence the decisions that are made by Slough council.
- ❖ A minority of children and young people say they are worried about their safety in their local area, though they feel safer at school.
- ❖ Most schools are very sensitive to the needs of children and young people and provide them with good support. Support from adults and good quality teaching featured strongly as reasons why children and young people felt they were making good progress at school.
- ❖ Older young people are proud to be living in what they described as 'integrated societies' and praised the efforts made to ensure different communities lived happily side-by-side.

The inspectors agreed with these views. They could also see why some were worried about safety in their local areas.

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

- ❖ The hospital provides well for children and young people who are ill.
- ❖ Schools place a high priority on promoting healthy eating and physical activity.
- ❖ The most vulnerable children and young people are kept safe from abuse and exploitation.
- ❖ Most schools are good at helping children and young people to do well and enjoy their education.
- ❖ There is good support for those children and young people with behavioural problems and for those in danger of being excluded from school.
- ❖ There are ample opportunities for children and young people to get involved in sport or music, or to enjoy recreation in many, but not all, areas of Slough.
- ❖ There is a wealth of opportunity for children and young people to take on responsibilities at school and to support their communities.
- ❖ There are some excellent initiatives that are very well focussed on helping children and young people to help each other.
- ❖ Schools are good at helping new children settle in.
- ❖ Well focused activities in some of the less prosperous areas are helping to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
- ❖ There is good careers education and guidance, and good support to help young people to prepare for working life.
- ❖ Slough Council is replacing three schools where the buildings are poor.

What do inspectors think were not good enough and should change to make things better for children and young people?

- ❖ There is not enough support for some children and young people with mental health problems.
- ❖ 11-year-olds and children and young people in some minority ethnic groups do not make sufficient progress.
- ❖ Looked after children need better support with their education after the age of 16.
- ❖ Not enough young people in Slough have the skills and qualifications needed in the work place.
- ❖ Slough Council needs to develop better ways of ensuring that children and young people contribute to major decisions.