



Joint area review

Report for children and young people
Sefton

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

- 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?

Nine inspectors visited Sefton in May and June 2006 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, children's centres and schools, especially in the Bootle and Southport areas
- ❖ talked with adults working with children and young people (like social workers; teachers, youth workers, nurses, doctors, police officers and counsellors)
- ❖ spoke to a few parents, as well as other people caring for children
- ❖ met with local Youth Forums, and spoke to people from the Youth Parliament
- ❖ 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 Sefton?

The inspectors found that children and young people in Sefton:

- ❖ are generally healthy
- ❖ feel safe
- ❖ are able to enjoy and achieve in their lives
- ❖ are involved in decision-making, and
- ❖ are prepared and supported well for adult life.

Inspectors also found that:

- ❖ Access to services in some parts of Sefton are more difficult than in others.

- ❖ Assessing the needs of children and young people could be improved to make sure all options are considered fully.
- ❖ Some services for disabled children and young people could be improved.
- ❖ Work is needed to restore services for young carers so they can feel they have the levels of support that they had previously.
- ❖ There is scope to involve children and young people more in the evaluation of the range and quality of services and the impact on their lives.

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

They said that services are, in the main, good and that adults are making a lot of effort to improve them. They felt they could see how things had got better in the past few years, including education, health services, and services to keep them safe. They felt that people were listening more to them and trying to involve them in decision-making. Young carers in Southport said that recent changes to their service had not improved things and they wanted the support they previously had and chance to meet with each other. Looked after children indicated that services and the choices they have were getting better and they were being given more opportunities to achieve at school and to plan for their futures. Some parents and carers of children with disabilities thought that some parts of the services they received were good, but these needed to be made more reliable and that access to some of them could be improved.

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

Inspectors liked the way different groups are working together to help children in Sefton. This includes the council, health services, voluntary groups, the police, Connexions and the Local Skills Council, schools and colleges and other agencies. They liked the support being given in schools to enable all children to achieve and the way children and young people can become involved in school and community life. They thought that health services were generally good and aimed at improving health care and support. Inspectors also liked the commitment to children's services shown by the council, its elected members and officers, and the fact that budgets have been protected to support the development of these services. They found that much is being done to safeguard children and young people from harm and that this was an area where children, themselves, felt generally safe. Inspectors also found that the level of

crime and offending is reducing with good examples of schemes to enable children and young people to make a positive contribution to their communities.

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

Inspectors would like to see arrangements for the assessment of need to be improved. They felt that more should be done to improve services to children and young people with mental health needs to ensure these were available in time across the whole area. Inspectors thought that more could be done to plan and develop services jointly, including sharing resources. They also felt that more could be done by council members to monitor children's services to make sure vulnerable groups received the services they need. Finally, and in the longer-term, inspectors would like to see more cooperation between professionals and school governors to make services more even across the borough as a whole in terms of access and quality.