



Joint area review

Report for children and young people
Medway

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

- 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?

Thirteen inspectors visited Medway between March and May 2006 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
- ❖ 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 All Saints and Rainham/Twydall areas 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 Medway?

- ❖ Overall, children and young people are doing about as well as those in similar areas.
- ❖ Their health is similar.
- ❖ They do as well at school (and rather better by the time they reach 16).
- ❖ A higher proportion aged 16-19 is involved in education, employment and training.
- ❖ Many make a good contribution to their schools and the area in which they live.
- ❖ A significant number live in inadequate housing.

- ❖ Those looked after by the council do as well at school as similar children elsewhere.
- ❖ A higher than average proportion of those looked after by the council live with families, rather than in children's homes.

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

- ❖ Most said they usually have some influence on how their school is run. They did not think they had as much say about the area where they live. This is much the same as elsewhere in the country. Inspectors were surprised at this because they thought there were comparatively good opportunities overall for young people to have their say in Medway. They also heard about a number of things which had been changed for the better in response to young people's views.
- ❖ A significant minority of children and young people say they are worried about their safety in their local area, although they feel safer at school. In both cases, the proportion feeling not very safe is higher than the average elsewhere. Even those who feel quite safe or better in their local area say they have to avoid some areas at certain times. Inspectors understood this point of view and felt that the lack of leisure facilities was an important factor (see below) as it meant that young people often hang around in areas like shopping precincts.
- ❖ Many children and young people said they would like more things to do in their leisure time. This was particularly so for older teenagers and those who are not very interested in sport. In particular, young people wanted more places (like youth centres) which are open most of the time and where they could drop in to meet friends. Inspectors agreed that there are not enough activities and facilities outside of school but felt that provision in schools is good.

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

- ❖ The help provided by health visitors, doctors and nurses.
- ❖ Health education in schools and elsewhere.
- ❖ Support for children and young people if they feel troubled (although if they need more specialist help this can sometimes take too long to get).
- ❖ Education and other support for parents.
- ❖ Day care for children up to age 5.

- ❖ Education and training in schools, the further education college and elsewhere, including for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- ❖ Support in preparing for working life.
- ❖ Recreational provision in schools.
- ❖ The efforts made to get young people's views and to change things in response to them.
- ❖ Support for young people leaving care.

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

- ❖ The steps taken to protect some children and young people from being abused or neglected.
- ❖ Education for those who cannot attend school.
- ❖ Recreational provision outside schools.
- ❖ The youth service.
- ❖ Work with young offenders.
- ❖ Housing for some families and for some young people living on their own.
- ❖ Support for some young people who are looked after by the council.