



Joint area review

Report for children and young people
Kingston upon Thames

Report for children and young people about the services they receive in Kingston upon Thames

- 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 Kingston upon Thames in July and September 2006 so that they could get a feel of what life is like for children and young people in the area. They:

- ❖ talked and listened to a number of children and young people they met at youth centres, community centres and schools
- ❖ 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 Council
- ❖ heard from the council and other agencies what it thinks about the services it provides for children
- ❖ read a lot of reports
- ❖ visited services used by children and young people 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 Kingston upon Thames

- ❖ Most children are healthy. Their dental health is very good and they have fewer accidents and illnesses than in other parts of England. They receive good treatment when they are ill but the facilities at Kingston Hospital for adolescent young people need to be improved.
- ❖ Most do very well at school, including those children who are looked after by the council and children with learning disabilities. Standards in schools are very high and the progress they make while they are at secondary school is amongst the best in England. They enjoy school and their attendance is excellent.

- ❖ They are well prepared and supported to cope with significant changes in their lives, such as moving from primary to secondary school.
- ❖ There are some good individual examples of where children and young people have influenced the design of services for them and evaluated their quality but this needs to be happening more often.
- ❖ A very high proportion of young people remain in full time education at age 16 and progress into higher education.
- ❖ The range of qualifications which can be taken after the age of 16 has increased and young people achieve very well. However, standards in some school sixth forms and the further education college need to get better.
- ❖ Incidents of anti-social behaviour are reducing and high numbers of young people who offend benefit from taking part in education, employment or training.

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

- ❖ They receive good support and advice about their health.
- ❖ They feel safe in Kingston upon Thames and at school but there are some parts of the borough where they feel less safe.
- ❖ A high proportion think they are doing very well or quite well at school.
- ❖ Few are aware of or have used high quality resources such as the Youth Unlimited magazine or 'Young Livin' website which are designed to enable them to contribute their views.
- ❖ The level of responsibility and decision making that school councils have is very variable and there are limited opportunities for school councils and other young people's groups to talk to each other.
- ❖ They value the support they receive from Connexions and the youth service.

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

- ❖ All services for children and young people are good or excellent and are making a big difference for almost all children and young people in the borough. The council and other agencies work very well together and they want the very best for children and young people.

- ❖ A good range of health services are provided for children and their families. Schools and the youth service are actively involved in promoting healthy lifestyles.
- ❖ The council works well with other agencies to help children and young people stay safe in their community.
- ❖ Very good progress has been made in setting up preventative services which provide early support as well as more intensive work to children and their families, and there are good plans to develop these further.
- ❖ Making sure children and young people do well at school and enjoy good leisure facilities is a high priority for the council and the other agencies it works with.
- ❖ Children and young people take advantage of the many opportunities there for them to help others in their school or in the wider community through volunteering or acting as mentors or buddies.
- ❖ The careers advice and guidance provided by schools and the Connexions service is good for all groups of young people in Kingston.
- ❖ The range of provision available to young people to continue their education at age 16 is good. They now have a broader range of vocational as well as academic choices.

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

- ❖ Health visitors are not consistently following national guidelines for the identification and referral of vulnerable children who need additional support.
- ❖ Health services for school aged children with learning difficulties and disabilities need to be better coordinated and waiting times reduced.
- ❖ Unaccompanied asylum seeking children do not have timely access to health advice.
- ❖ Children and young people are not consistently consulted about decisions that affect them and asked for their opinions about the quality of services that are provided for them.