



Joint area review

Report for children and young people
Hillingdon

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

- 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?

Seven inspectors visited Hillingdon in October and November 2005 so they could see what life was like for children and young people in the area. They:

- ❖ listened to a number of children and young people they met at various locations and particularly in the neighbourhood study area of Hayes and Harlington;
- ❖ received the views of approximately 650 school children through the Tellus survey;
- ❖ talked with adults working with children and young people (like social workers, teachers, community workers, health visitors, doctors, careers officers and counsellors);
- ❖ spoke to a few parents, as well as 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 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 Hillingdon?

The inspectors found that:

- ❖ overall children and young people enjoy living in Hillingdon and with the right support can do well there;
- ❖ children and young people are generally healthy;

- ❖ children and young people feel safe and receive good advice from their schools although some reported that there are unsafe places in the borough where they will not go;
- ❖ looked after children including unaccompanied asylum seekers are well cared for;
- ❖ educational standards achieved are only in line with or just below national averages but there are small signs of improvement;
- ❖ many young people behave responsibly and make a positive contribution to their schools, young people's centres and the areas in which they live;
- ❖ young people are well prepared for working life and an increasing number of 14-16 year olds are taking part in vocational learning programmes;
- ❖ the numbers of young people without a job or training when they leave school are reducing;
- ❖ rates of re-offending by children and young people are reducing.

Inspectors also found that:

- ❖ some children and young people who live in the south of the borough, and particularly those from the traveller community, do not always receive the range of health care they need;
- ❖ standards in education are not as good as they should be in a number of primary and secondary schools;
- ❖ children and young people who are looked after by the council or who have a learning disability or difficulty do not make as good educational progress as those in other parts of the country;
- ❖ the views of children with learning difficulties and disabilities are not always listened to by decision makers.

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

Children and young people say they like living in Hillingdon and think there are enough activities for them to participate in. They are concerned about the high cost of travel to leisure facilities and the high cost of the activities once they get there. There are some areas where they do not go as they do not feel safe. Inspectors could appreciate that there were genuine concerns about safety for some that restricted their freedom.

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

- ❖ The way that a number of services and programmes such as Healthy Hillingdon and Healthy Schools help children and young people stay healthy and encourage healthy eating and physical activity.
- ❖ The services available for young children and their families that keep children and young people safe.
- ❖ The good support available to children and young people with mental health problems.
- ❖ The good care given to those children and young people who are looked after by the council, many of whom are unaccompanied asylum seekers.
- ❖ The range of youth and leisure services that help children and young people enjoy their recreation time.
- ❖ The opportunities available to children and young people to become involved in school and community activities which help them to become thoughtful and responsible citizens.
- ❖ The range of support that is available to help young people when they are facing difficulties with, for example drugs and alcohol and exclusion from school.
- ❖ The quality of information, advice and guidance for pupils and students about their career prospects.
- ❖ Increasing numbers of young people who are moving from school in to training, further education and employment.

- ❖ The range of affordable and decent housing available to most young people when they leave their homes to become more independent.

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

- ❖ Gaps in services for health care by doctors and other service providers in the south of the borough need to be addressed.
- ❖ Traveller families need improved living conditions and access to better health services to ensure the children and young people are healthy.
- ❖ The council should ensure that all children and young people's views and ideas are listened to and help to shape the services that they need and use.
- ❖ Standards in education at all levels and for all children and young people need to be improved.
- ❖ The number of pupils permanently excluded from schools needs to reduce.
- ❖ Transition arrangements for vulnerable children and young people and particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities need to improve.
- ❖ Increasing rates of teenage pregnancy should be addressed more effectively particularly in those areas of greatest need.
- ❖ Service providers must make sure that information given to the public is available in a range of appropriate community languages and not just in English.