

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

- 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?

Eight inspectors visited Cambridgeshire in December 2006 and January 2007 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 a neighbourhood in Oxmoor, Huntingdon 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 Cambridgeshire?

Inspectors found that most children and young people in Cambridgeshire are doing well. In general, children and young people in the county are:

- ❖ healthy
- ❖ feel, and are kept, safe
- ❖ enjoy school and leisure and are achieving well
- ❖ are able to make a positive contribution to their communities
- ❖ are given good support as they move into adult life.

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

- ❖ They felt services were becoming better organised and they were being consulted more on matters that affected their lives. They said there were many projects and events where they could have a say about what happens in Cambridgeshire and that, usually, they were listened to positively. Some said they would like to get to know the outcomes of these consultations sooner than they do currently. Some also said they would like help in opening discussions with some private businesses, such as bus companies, about things on which they had views.
- ❖ They generally liked living in Cambridgeshire and thought it was a nice place to grow up. There was plenty to do and, in the main, they felt safe in the area. However, some children and young people said it was sometimes hard to get around the county because of transport problems and costs.
- ❖ They enjoyed opportunities to learn and to support one another in school and local communities. They liked mentoring each other and felt they were being treated with respect in schools.

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

- ❖ Children and young people in Cambridgeshire get adequate health care and support and encouragement to live healthy lifestyles.
- ❖ Children and young people generally feel safe in Cambridgeshire and they are clear about how to get help and support when needed. However, they think more can be done to improve arrangements for the most vulnerable groups of children and young people in the county.
- ❖ There are very good opportunities to make a contribution to their communities and a great deal of effort is being made to respond to the needs of the many different groups in Cambridgeshire.
- ❖ Children and young people are achieving well at school and have many chances to enjoy leisure time.
- ❖ Services to help young people enter the adult world are generally good, but more can be done to help young people with disabilities and other groups with additional needs.

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

- ❖ Many children and young people who are in the care of the council or have complex needs have to go out of Cambridgeshire to live. The inspectors thought that more should be done to allow the children and young people to stay in the County.
- ❖ Some young people said they did not always know how to raise concerns if things in their lives were not going well. Inspectors felt more should be done to provide advocates and additional support for the most vulnerable children who do not have regular contact with their families.
- ❖ Although young carers said they received very good help and support, they were worried that there might not be enough money in future to carry on funding the groups that support them so well.
- ❖ Some young people, particularly those with additional needs, sometimes have too little choice about the training they get to help prepare them for working life. They would like more opportunities at this important time in their lives.
- ❖ Housing and other types of accommodation for some groups of young people are not available in sufficient quantity to give choice. Although good work is being done, there needs to be a greater focus on the most vulnerable groups and how suitable accommodation can be provided.