



Joint area review

Report for children and young people
Bristol

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

- 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?

Eleven inspectors visited Bristol in December 2005 and January 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, a children's centre and schools, particularly in the Knowle West and Hengrove areas.
- ❖ talked with adults working with children and young people (like social workers, teachers, youth workers, nurses, doctors and police officers).
- ❖ spoke to some parents, as well as other people caring for children.
- ❖ met with some members of the Youth Parliament.
- ❖ met with a group of young carers.
- ❖ heard from the city council and other agencies what they think about the services they provide 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 and/or disability, or in council care).

How well are children and young people doing in Bristol?

The inspectors found that:

- ❖ the majority of children and young people are healthy;
- ❖ children and young people most vulnerable to risk and exploitation are helped to stay safe;
- ❖ children who are looked after by the council are generally provided with settled environments in which to grow up;
- ❖ all children on the child protection register have an allocated social worker;
- ❖ levels of bullying in most schools are low;
- ❖ young children progress well in nurseries and nursery classes;

- ❖ children with a learning difficulty and/or a disability make generally satisfactory progress at school;
- ❖ most children and young people behave responsibly and many make a good contribution to their schools and the area in which they live;
- ❖ the number of children and young people involved in crime is falling; and
- ❖ young people find it relatively easy to gain employment in Bristol.

Inspectors also found that:

- ❖ the quality of children's health varies across the city;
- ❖ the number of young people who take drugs and/or who misuse substances is high;
- ❖ the number of teenagers who become pregnant is high;
- ❖ in some parts of the city, children are more likely to suffer emotional abuse and neglect than in others;
- ❖ many young people do not value education enough;
- ❖ overall, children and young people in Bristol schools do not achieve well compared to other parts of the country;
- ❖ high numbers of young people, including many who are looked after by the council, leave school with few or no qualifications;
- ❖ high numbers of older pupils in particular are excluded from school;
- ❖ poor achievement at school means that many young people only find employment in low-paid jobs, with limited prospects for moving to something better;
- ❖ opportunities for young people aged 14+ to take part in work-related learning while still at school or college vary across the city; and
- ❖ young people wanting to live independently have difficulty finding affordable homes.

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

Children and young people say they like living in Bristol but they are concerned about street crime, anti-social behaviour and the cost of reaching leisure and recreational facilities in the centre of the city.

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

- ❖ The support provided to help very young children to gain a good start in life.
- ❖ The attention paid to the health needs of children and young people who are looked after by the council.
- ❖ The support provided for children who need help in developing their speech and language skills.
- ❖ The support provided for pregnant teenagers and young mothers.
- ❖ The education provided for children who spend long periods of time in hospital.
- ❖ The support for children and young people with learning difficulties.
- ❖ The opportunities for recreation provided by schools.
- ❖ The opportunities young people have to express their views.
- ❖ The use of mentors to help young people improve their confidence and face challenges in their lives.
- ❖ The support provided to help children improve their behaviour, particularly those in danger of being excluded from school.
- ❖ Careers information, advice and guidance.

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

- ❖ Health services for children and young people need to be readily available in all parts of the city.
- ❖ Mental health services need to be made more widely available to the children and young people who need them.
- ❖ More needs to be done to help prevent children and young people from suffering emotional abuse and neglect.
- ❖ More needs to be done to help young people attend school and achieve higher standards.
- ❖ More needs to be done to help young people and their parents or carers understand the value of education, so that young people in Bristol have higher aspirations for the future.
- ❖ Support for children and young people who look after their brothers, sisters or parents needs to be improved and extended.
- ❖ Recreational facilities in some parts of the city need developing, expanding and/or updating.

- ❖ Schools and colleges need to work together more with employers and training providers to increase the range of work-related learning opportunities available to young people between the ages of 14 and 19.
- ❖ More affordable housing needs to be available for young people and families with children.