



# Joint area review

Report for children and young people  
Brent

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

- 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 Brent in January 2006 so that they could get a feel of what life is like for children and young people in the area. They:

- ❖ talked with children and young people
- ❖ talked with lots of adults working with children and young people (like social workers, teachers, youth workers, nurses, doctors, police officers and counsellors)
- ❖ spoke to parents and other people caring for children
- ❖ heard from the council and other agencies what it thinks about the services it provides for children
- ❖ read a lot of reports and
- ❖ visited one neighbourhood, Church End, 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 and/or disability. They know that elsewhere these groups of children often don't get a good service and needed to check up on this locally.

## How well are children and young people doing in Brent?

- ❖ They are doing quite well overall and things are getting better for them.
- ❖ Children and young people are quite healthy.
- ❖ More children and young people are keeping themselves fit through healthy eating and being active.
- ❖ A concern is that a high number of teenage girls get pregnant.
- ❖ Most children and young people are helped to do very well at school.
- ❖ Many children and young people are involved in decisions that affect their local area and their lives. They give their views, for example, about how the housing estates might be modernised or how their schools are run. Being involved like this helps children and young people feel more confident.

- ❖ Children and young people with special needs are also helped to do well at school, and to have a say about things that affect their lives.
- ❖ Children and young people in council care are not doing so well in school. They are involved in making plans for their lives and feel listened to.
- ❖ A high number of young people, including young people with some difficulties in their lives, continue their education after they reach 16, or until they are able to find work.
- ❖ Although a high number of young people commit crimes, this number is going down.

### **What were the main things children and young people told inspectors about their area?**

- ❖ Children feel they are quite healthy.
- ❖ Children generally feel safe at school, and feel bullying is dealt with well.
- ❖ Children living on estates that have been modernised feel safer and happier in their local area than before.
- ❖ However, children feel unsafe in some areas, and at particular times like after school and on the buses, because of the risks from other young people or adults.
- ❖ Children and young people say that they enjoy their lives, although some, including young people with special needs, wish there was more for them to do.
- ❖ Children and young people are happy and proud to live in their multi-cultural community.

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

- ❖ All the services working with children and young people in Brent work well together. There have been a lot of improvements to the way the services work so they can make a difference for children. There are high hopes for all children in Brent and services try to give everyone an equal chance in life.
- ❖ Services work well together to protect children and keep them safe, including children with disabilities.
- ❖ Children and their families are helped to be healthy through the Healthy Schools projects which encourage children to eat healthily and get fit. Also, health staff go out to meet families to encourage them to look after their children's health by having immunisations or having their teeth checked.

- ❖ There is good support for children and their families through services like Sure Start, On Track, Boys2Men and other groups.
- ❖ The council and other services work well with schools to help pupils of all abilities to achieve as well as they can.
- ❖ Children with special needs have good health care, and some good services to support them and their families.
- ❖ A lot of importance is given to encouraging children and young people to be involved in things that affect their lives, communities, or services they receive. This includes children with special needs or others facing difficulties in their lives, like young carers, children in council care, young offenders, and asylum-seeking children.
- ❖ The council and other services involved have considered the needs of children and young people carefully when making improvements to housing and local areas, so that children's chances in life can be improved.

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

- ❖ Too many children and families stay in temporary housing for a long time.
- ❖ Too many children in council care are placed far from Brent. This, together with other things, means they are not doing as well in school as they could.
- ❖ Children and their families have too many changes of social worker.
- ❖ Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families do not always get the support they need.
- ❖ Although many children and young people are asked for their views, they do not always hear about what decisions have been made.