



Joint area review

Report for children and young people
Blackpool

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

- 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?

Twelve inspectors visited Blackpool 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 in schools, youth clubs and in focus groups focusing particularly on those living in the town centre and in Grange Park
- ❖ talked to adults working with children and young people (such as social workers, teachers, youth workers, nurses, doctors, police officers and counsellors)
- ❖ spoke to parents, as well as other people caring for children
- ❖ met young people involved in the Young People's Council and schools' councils
- ❖ met with and heard the views of young people looked after and those who had a learning or physical disability
- ❖ spoke to those in charge of the council and other agencies, such as health agencies and the voluntary sector, to find out what they are doing to make things better for young people in the area
- ❖ read quite a few reports
- ❖ checked how well money was being spent
- ❖ visited those services used by children and young people to see things for themselves
- ❖ undertook a tour of the area to get a view of what things are like.

The inspectors also looked at how well particular children are doing, such as those with a learning difficulty and/or disability or those being cared for by the council, either in a foster home or a residential home, as well as those who had left care.

How well are children and young people doing in Blackpool?

The inspectors found that:

- ❖ the majority of children and young people are healthy

- ❖ some children and young people have to wait a long time to get treatment if they are mentally unwell
- ❖ children who need to be adopted are found a new family in good time
- ❖ children on the child protection register and those at risk of being sexually exploited are helped to be safe
- ❖ there are lots of good leisure facilities and young people are being encouraged to use them
- ❖ children in primary school are supported to achieve well
- ❖ children in the council's care get good support to help their education and more of them are going to college and moving into training and employment
- ❖ teenage mothers are well supported to get into education and training.

Inspectors also found that:

- ❖ young people's attendance at secondary school is not as good as elsewhere in the country but it is improving quicker than in some places
- ❖ too many teenagers are getting pregnant but the numbers are falling quickly
- ❖ too many children and young people are being looked after by the council
- ❖ too many children are on the child protection register
- ❖ young people excluded from school are not given enough help to get them back into mainstream school
- ❖ young people who get into trouble with the police find it hard to get on a course, training programme or to find a job.

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

Children and young people say they are being asked for their views and they are being listened to. They can see some things have changed and improved. They are not sure how some of the big changes around the seafront and the town centre will be of benefit to them in the future. They see that a lot is being done to stop bullying but they are still worried about it; they don't think that all adults treat it as seriously as they should.

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

- ❖ Young people are having a chance to influence decisions made by those in charge.
- ❖ Education services help children and young people to enjoy their education and leisure activities.
- ❖ Local agencies are working together to contribute to keeping children and young people healthy.
- ❖ Health education is available to most young people, especially regarding not smoking when pregnant, substance misuse, healthy eating and physical activity.
- ❖ The way that services identify children and young people who might get in trouble with the police is good.
- ❖ Children are being helped to protect themselves from sexual abuse.
- ❖ Those who face difficult situations, such as being a young mother, misusing drugs and alcohol are supported well.
- ❖ There is good access to full-time education, training and work-based learning after 16.

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

- ❖ Children have to wait too long for assessment and treatment services when they need help with their mental health.
- ❖ Children being cared for by the council should have their own qualified social worker to help sort things out for them.
- ❖ More services are needed for young people who care for a member of their family.
- ❖ The council and its partners should work together to get more services for children and young people with really complex needs.
- ❖ Get more excluded pupils back into mainstream school.
- ❖ Get a better understanding of bullying and make sure everyone in school treats it seriously to stop it happening.
- ❖ Make sure that young people over 16 who get in trouble with the law have as good a chance as others to get onto courses or training programmes.