



# Joint area review

Report for children and young people

## Report for children and young people about the services they receive in the London Borough of Bexley

- 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?

Nine inspectors visited Bexley in September and October 2006 so that they could get a feel of what life is like for children and young people in the area. They:

- ❖ talked with and listened to a number of children and young people
- ❖ talked with adults working with children and young people (like social workers, teachers, youth workers, health visitors, nurses, doctors, police officers and councillors)
- ❖ spoke to parents and other people caring for children
- ❖ met with school councils' representatives and members of the Children's Parliament and the Youth Council
- ❖ heard from the council and other agencies what it thinks about the services it provides for children
- ❖ read a lot of reports
- ❖ visited services in the neighbourhood of North 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 or disability.

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

The inspectors found that:

- ❖ most children and young people are healthy and their dental health is good
- ❖ they can get help quickly if they have mental health problems
- ❖ children and young people appear safe and children who are looked after by the council receive good care, including for their health and education
- ❖ most children do as well at school as other children in the country up to the end of Key Stage 3

- ❖ young people make good progress at Key Stage 4 and a high number stay on in full time education after the age of 16
- ❖ too many children are absent from school
- ❖ there are good sports facilities in Bexley and a lot of activities are available in the summer holiday
- ❖ children and young people have been able to take part in some major events and give their views
- ❖ children and young people have many good opportunities to volunteer in the local area
- ❖ the number of young people who are not in education, training or employment has reduced a lot.

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

- ❖ They feel healthy and enjoy school and life generally.
- ❖ They find it very or quite easy to get help, advice and information when they need it.
- ❖ They find the work of the police and community safety officers in local areas helpful.
- ❖ They are concerned about gangs and racist bullying in some local communities.
- ❖ They are asked for their views but do not always feel these views are acted upon.
- ❖ Teenagers who are parents think they get very good support and advice.

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

- ❖ They get excellent help to help them be healthy.
- ❖ There is especially good help for families who have a child who is disabled.
- ❖ Children and young people who have mental health problems get very good help.
- ❖ Education, social care and health agencies work together very well and this makes it easier for children and young people, and their parents and carers, to get the right help.
- ❖ There are good opportunities to take part in voluntary work and to be a mentor.

- ❖ A lot of young people continue in education, employment or training after the age of 16.
- ❖ There is a good range of housing for young people who do not live with their families.

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

- ❖ Children and young people do not always get feedback when they have taken part in consultations.
- ❖ There are not enough specialist places in the borough for children who have special educational needs.
- ❖ Too many young people start college or school courses when they are 16 but drop out before they finish the courses.
- ❖ There are not enough courses in the borough for young people aged 16 and over who have complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities.