

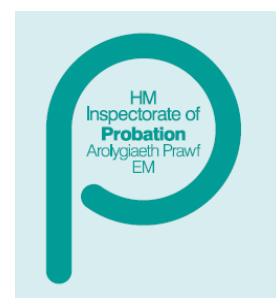
Joint Targeted Area Inspections

Consultation outcome, learning from the pilot inspection and next steps

This report summarises the response to the proposals for Joint Targeted Area Inspections of services to evaluate how local agencies work together to protect children.

It also outlines the main learning points arising from the pilot inspection undertaken to test these proposals and the next steps the inspectorates plan to take.

Later in the report we summarise the response to proposals about whether Ofsted could use a version of the joint framework to undertake targeted inspections of local authorities.



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Introduction

1. In July 2015, Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation set out our joint intention to complete a small number of Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI) in local areas. These JTAIs will evaluate how local agencies work together to protect children and will include a focus on a specific area of concern.
2. In addition to a four week online consultation, we undertook face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders and young people and hosted a series of webinars with key sector representatives.
3. The JTAI framework is, in part, a response to the Government report *Tackling child sexual exploitation*,¹ but also reflects the continuing collaboration between the inspectorates over recent years to develop a model of joint inspection that maximises added value to the sector and the systems that support the most vulnerable children and their families.

Consultation proposals

4. We proposed that the JTAI would have a tightly defined scope, focusing on areas of multi-agency practice where an independent evaluation would add most value for the local partnership. We proposed to evaluate the effectiveness of multi-agency practice to protect children. We also wanted to include some flexibility within the scope so that we have in place a joint published framework that will allow us to respond to specific areas of interest or concerns that may arise. We proposed that these inspections would evaluate:
 - the multi-agency response to all forms of child abuse and neglect at the point of identification and referral/notification
 - the quality and impact of assessment and decision making in response to those notifications and referrals
 - the experiences of a specific cohort of children and young people at risk of harm through a 'deep dive' investigation
 - the leadership and management of this work and the effectiveness of the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) in these areas.
5. The full consultation proposals can be found at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/joint-targeted-area-inspections

¹ Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation, March 2015, Home Office;
www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation--2

Consultation feedback

6. We received 190 responses to the online consultation and we had 72 attendees at stakeholder webinars. Respondents broadly agreed with our proposals although there was a consistent concern that, as the JTAI would be additional inspections, this added burden into the system. The full date response to the consultation is in Annex 1. The bullet points that follow are a summary of the responses to the consultation.
- It is important that the inspection recognises and clearly distinguishes the difference between the effectiveness and leadership of the agencies and the effectiveness of the LSCB.
 - The framework needs to consider arrangements for services and structures that cross local authority borders.
 - The framework should avoid duplicating existing inspection frameworks.
 - Many respondents expressed some concern about the continued focus on child sexual exploitation, stating that this could lead to other equally important areas being neglected
 - Some respondents suggested that it might be better to make child sexual exploitation the focus of a deep dive element in a later round of inspections. This would allow more time for practice to develop and improve following the recent Ofsted thematic report on this issue
 - A common theme from respondents was that notification of the inspection should be through Director of Children’s Services (DCS), as the local operational lead for child protection, or the local authority Chief Executive; our proposal to notify the Chair of the LSCB would be problematic as they work only limited days and have fewer resources to support this function.
 - Respondents’ views varied about the number of cases it was feasible for a local area to jointly audit between being notified of the inspection and the time that inspectors arrive onsite. Respondents felt that the number of audits requested should take account of the size of the local area. Some requested that the inspection not penalise areas where local infrastructure made drawing together information for joint audits legitimately more challenging.
 - Most respondents agreed that arranging a joint set-up meeting was desirable but would require a tightly managed and agreed format. Some were concerned that with only eight days’ notice this would still be challenging to arrange. Publishing notification dates in advance, as with some existing inspection programmes, would help with setting up those multi-agency meetings.
 - There was broad support for recommendations arising from an inspection to be presented according to their priority and clearly stating where they require a joint response or are specific to an agency. However, there were some concerns that including areas for priority or urgent action could fuel

counterproductive interest that diverts attention from aspects of local services that are performing well.

- Similar to respondents' views about arrangements to notify the local area of the inspection, respondents felt that the DCS or Chief Executive, rather than the Chair of the LSCB, should be asked to coordinate the factual accuracy check of the inspection report/letter. One respondent commented that making additional expectations on the LSCB Chair would have significant impact on the funding for this role.
 - Respondents supported the proposal for the inspections to be announced. However, there was concern that the length of the notice period and having only one week of inspection fieldwork would make it more challenging for inspectors to engage with children and young people in the local area.
7. In our consultation, we asked what sources of information may indicate where local areas are demonstrating good or outstanding practice so that we could inspect in these areas and highlight good practice from which others can learn. Respondents' suggestions are set out in Annex 2.
 8. The Who Cares? Trust invited us to meet with a group of young people to discuss our proposals. Young people had mixed views about how well inspectors can really get to the heart of their experiences and some were sceptical about the accuracy of 'good' judgements. They provided us with a report that set out some extremely useful suggestions for future 'deep dive' topics and how inspectors might find good practice (see Annex 2). Young people identified some advantages to giving the local area a notice period, but also expressed concerns, for example: "They [local agencies] will know inspectors are coming and this will give them a chance to change things and make things look better".

Testing the methodology

9. In addition to the consultation, we undertook live testing of some of the multi-agency aspects of the methodology in one local area, and a full pilot inspection in another area. We learnt some valuable lessons from these activities and have refined the framework and methodology in response. The pilot inspection in particular has shown that this type of inspection can and does work and the full pilot inspection was well-received by local senior leaders.

Changes to the inspection

10. As a result of consultation feedback and lessons learnt from the pilot, we made the following changes to the framework and methodology:
 - We have made clear in the framework that leadership, management and the LSCB are only considered in relation to their impact on the 'front door' of services and the deep dive theme (this is not a wider assessment of leadership in the local area).

- We have increased the notice period from eight to nine working days. This is the most time we could add without extending the inspection across a greater number of weeks.
 - We will notify the DCS of the start of the inspection (followed by senior leaders in other local agencies) rather than coordinating this through the Chair of the LSCB.
 - We will offer a conference call for all local senior leaders on the afternoon they are notified of the inspection. This will allow joint 'set-up' of the inspection to commence earlier and before inspectors arrive onsite. We will also offer a joint meeting for inspectors and senior leaders on the first day onsite.
 - We will ask the area to evaluate five to seven cases before inspectors arrive onsite, allowing some flexibility according to the size of the area and the structure of local systems.
 - Inspectors will not track any cases in addition to those the area are asked to jointly evaluate. Inspectors will instead spend more time jointly case sampling. Tracking fewer cases will also help minimise the amount of documentation the local area is asked to provide.
 - We will separate the recommendations in the inspection letter/report into 'areas for priority action' and 'areas for development'.
 - We will still ask the partnership to provide single factual accuracy response to the letter of findings, but we will ask the DCS to coordinate this work not the Chair of the LSCB Chair.
11. We have heard the concern about focusing the 'deep dive' on child sexual exploitation in the first round of inspections. However, the Chief Inspectors have decided that we must commit to delivering against this key ministerial priority. We have decided to publish two documents: the first is the generic framework and guidance for the joint inspection; the second relates to the specific deep dive theme. This will support us to be flexible in developing and implementing new deep dive themes in the future. We look forward to exploring future deep dive topics with all interested parties.

Ofsted only inspection

12. In addition to proposals about the joint inspection, Ofsted asked whether they could use a version of the joint inspection framework to conduct an Ofsted-only inspection of the local authority. The scope and methodology would be the same as the joint framework, with some modifications to account for only the local authority being involved.
13. Overall, respondents agreed that Ofsted could use the framework in this way. Attendees at external webinars (which focused on the views of local authority staff) were less supportive. However, respondents' comments and other discussions with the local authority sector indicated that their concern was

mainly about the additional burden created by introducing another type of inspection. Respondents' expressed concern about the proposed focus on child sexual exploitation for the first deep dive theme; these concerns mirrored those raised in relation to the Joint Targeted Area Inspection.

14. Ofsted wants to reassure local authorities that while our current single inspection framework (SIF)² is live, the Ofsted-only target inspection will not be an additional 'programme' of inspection and we do not propose to predetermine the number of these inspections we will undertake each year. Rather, we will use this more focused targeted inspection where concerns have been identified but where it would be disproportionate to undertake a full SIF. Introducing the new targeted inspection will provide Ofsted with an alternative mechanism to respond to concerns that will help us to minimise the burden of inspection on local authorities.

Next steps

15. We have published the Joint Targeted Area Inspection framework and inspection guidance³ at the same time as this consultation outcome document. The programme of live inspections will start in February 2016. We plan to complete up to six inspections (including our pilot) by September 2016.
16. The initial deep dive theme will be child sexual exploitation and children missing from home, care or education.⁴ We will publish a thematic overview report about the findings from these inspections. To maximise the opportunities for learning for all local areas, we will publish an overview thematic report following each future 'deep dive' topic in addition to the individual local area inspection letter.
17. During 2016, we will continue to confer with all the inspected sectors and stakeholders about future 'deep dive' themes.
18. At the same time as publishing the joint framework, Ofsted published its framework and inspection guidance for an Ofsted targeted inspection of the local authority.⁵

² Single inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers; *Inspecting local authority children's services: the framework*; www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-framework

³ *Joint Targeted Area Inspections: framework and guidance*; www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspection-of-arrangements-and-services-for-children-in-need-of-help-and-protection

⁴ *Child sexual exploitation and children missing from home, care or education: guidance for the 'deep dive' theme on Joint Targeted Area Inspections*; www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspection-of-child-sexual-exploitation-and-missing-children-february-to-august-2016

⁵ *Ofsted Targeted Local Authority Inspection: framework and guidance*; www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-inspection-of-local-authority-arrangements-and-services-for-children-in-need-of-help-and-protection

Annex 1. Full data response from the online consultation

As well as an online consultation, we carried out webinars for stakeholders where attendees could submit their response to the consultation questions using the webinar technology.

Number of responses to the online consultation	180
Number of responses via stakeholder webinar surveys	72
Number of response received via other channels	10
Total number of consultation responses submitted	272

Responses to the online consultation by sector

Sector	Number of responses
Social care	41
Education	19
Health services	27
Policing	20
Probation services	4
Youth offending team	3
Community rehabilitation company	2
For a charity	4
For a voluntary sector organisation	2
Local safeguarding children board	29
Prefer not to say	2
Did not answer	27
Total	180

Although the total number of respondents to the online questionnaire was 180, not all respondents answered all questions. The figures below are based on the number of responses to each specific question.

Part 1 – Joint targeted area inspections

Proposal one: the scope of the joint targeted area inspections

Q1. Do you agree that the joint targeted area inspections can best help the local partnership to improve by focusing on:

- the multi-agency response to all forms of abuse and neglect at the point of identification, referral/notification?

Type	Yes	No	Don't know
Online consultation	167 (95%)	3 (2%)	5 (3%)
Stakeholder webinars	49 (84%)	3 (5%)	6 (10%)
Total	216 (93%)	6 (3%)	11 (5%)

- the quality and impact of assessment and decision making in response to referrals?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Online consultation	159 (92%)	5 (3%)	9 (5%)
Stakeholder webinars	54 (89%)	1 (2%)	6 (10%)
Total	213 (91%)	6 (3%)	15 (7%)

- the leadership and management of this work and the effectiveness of the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) in these areas?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Online consultation	164 (94%)	5 (3%)	6 (3%)
Stakeholder webinars	51 (85%)	4 (7%)	5 (8%)
Total	215 (91%)	9 (4%)	11 (5%)

Q2. Do you agree that the deep dive aspect of inspections between October 2015 and March 2016 should be the experiences of children at risk of sexual exploitation or and those missing from home, school or care?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Online consultation	129 (75%)	36 (21%)	8 (5%)
Stakeholder webinars	36 (60%)	21 (35%)	3 (5%)
Total	165 (71%)	57 (24%)	11 (5%)

Proposal two: notice period and duration of fieldwork

Q3. Should the Chair of the LSCB be the first person we notify of the inspection?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Online consultation	98 (56%)	71 (41%)	6 (3%)
Stakeholder webinars	19 (32%)	35 (59%)	5 (8%)
Total	117 (50%)	106 (45%)	11 (5%)

Q4. How many children's cases could the local partnership jointly audit in the eight working days before inspectors arrive in the local area?

	5 cases or fewer	6 to 10 cases	More than 10 cases	None, it is not possible to jointly audit cases in eight days
Online consultation	54 (32%)	83 (49%)	17 (10%)	17 (10%)
Stakeholder webinars	23 (40%)	21 (37%)	6 (11%)	7 (12%)
Total	77 (34%)	104 (46%)	23 (10%)	24 (11%)

Proposal three: inspection methodology

Q5. Is it feasible (with eight days' notice) to organise a joint set-up meeting on the first day of the inspection that brings together all the inspectorates and all the local service leaders?

	Yes, this is achievable with eight days' notice	No, this is not achievable with eight days' notice	Don't know
Online consultation	130 (74%)	28 (16%)	17 (10%)
Stakeholder webinars	51 (88%)	3 (5%)	4 (7%)
Total	181 (78%)	31 (13%)	21 (9%)

Q6. Is a joint feedback meeting that involves all inspectorates and service leaders the best way to help local agencies understand the findings of the inspection or should each local agency meet with the relevant Inspectorate separately so they can focus on their part of the service?

	All local agencies should hear the findings together at a joint feedback meeting	Each local agency should receive feedback from the relevant inspectorate separately	Don't know
Online consultation	149 (86%)	19 (11%)	5 (3%)
Stakeholder webinars	52 (90%)	4 (7%)	2 (3%)
Total	201 (87%)	23 (10%)	7 (3%)

Proposal four: reporting the inspection outcome

Q7. Should the report list the recommendations without any indication of priority or should it indicate which issues need urgent or priority attention?

	Without prioritisation	Indicate which issues need priority/urgent action	Don't know
Online consultation	7 (4%)	165 (94%)	3 (2%)
Stakeholder webinars	13 (22%)	46 (77%)	1 (2%)
Total	20 (9%)	211 (90%)	4 (2%)

Q8. Should each agency and the Chair of the LSCB be asked to comment on the factual accuracy of the draft report separately or should the Chair of the LSCB be asked to coordinate a single joint response?

	A single joint response coordinated by the chair of the LSCB	Separate responses from each agency and the chair of the LSCB	Don't know
Online consultation	96 (55%)	75 (43%)	3 (2%)
Stakeholder webinars	43 (81%)	10 (19%)	0 (0%)
Total	139 (61%)	85 (37%)	3 (1%)

Q9. Please give us your views on how the inspectorates can identify areas where good or best practice exists.

See Annex 2 for information on the responses to this question.

Part 2: Ofsted's proposals for a single agency inspection

Q10. Could Ofsted use the joint targeted inspection model to undertake a single agency targeted area inspection of the local authority and LSCB where concerns are identified?

	Yes, Ofsted could use the joint inspection model for single agency targeted area inspection	No, Ofsted should use their current full single inspection framework only which is specific to local authorities and LSCBs	Don't know
Online consultation	95 (67%)	26 (18%)	21 (15%)
Stakeholder webinars	28 (49%)	12 (21%)	17 (30%)
Total	123 (62%)	38 (19%)	38 (19%)

Annex 2: Identifying areas of good practice

Respondents suggested the following indicators could be used to identify areas of potential good practice:

- The views of key groups, such as: children and families, front-line practitioners, representative groups and professional networks (such as ADCS, SOLACE, LGA, Association of Independent LSCB Chairs), and third-party partners and stakeholders (such as charities and third-sector organisations).
- Information and intelligence held by government departments and other organisations, such as the Office of the Children's Commissioner.
- Data on local performance, particularly 'bellwether' indicators that indicate consistently good or significantly improved performance of help and protection services (for example, re-referrals or children subject of a child protection plan for a second/subsequent time).
- The outcomes of other evaluations of performance, including: inspection reports, peer reviews, self-assessments, LSCB annual reports and serious case reviews.
- Encourage 'best practice folders' that the inspectorates can access.
- Where there is leadership and workforce stability
- Research into practice that identified examples of good practice
- Evaluations of projects with social innovation programme funding
- Identifying areas that employ independent Parent Liaison Officers in multi-agency teams tackling child sexual exploitation to maximise the ability and capacity of statutory agencies and families to safeguard a child at risk of/being sexually exploited.
- Areas that offer return home interviews, and those that have been using the intelligence gained from these interviews to map out key areas of risk, not just within their local vicinity but also in the neighbouring boroughs.

Young people's views on identifying good practice

- Review feedback from young people via email or *have your say* forms.
- Does the local authority have apprenticeships or volunteering opportunities in each department?
- How does the local authority listen to and take into account young people's thoughts and feelings?
- Is the local authority ready to adapt when needed to deal with young people's issues?
- Speak with service users both in and out of the children in care council.
- Speak to the advocacy service.

- Speak to the IROs.
- Interview participation workers and targeted youth advisors.
- Look at how effective the children in care council is.
- Look at what recommendations have been acted on.
- Look at placement breakdowns and moves.
- Look at the use of the Staying Put policy.
- Look at how many care leavers are in higher education.
- Look at how many care leavers are in employment.
- Look at young people's understanding of their rights and entitlements.
- Look at how workers encourage young people.
- Assess the quality of relationships between staff and service users.