

Guidance for joint targeted area inspections on the theme: child exploitation

A 'deep dive' theme for joint targeted area inspections

This document should be read alongside the framework and inspection guidance for joint targeted area inspections (JTAI).

JTAIs include an evaluation of the multi-agency 'front door' for child protection, when children at risk of harm first become known to local services. This is a part of all JTAIs. They also include a 'deep dive' evaluation. The deep dive is an evaluation of the experiences of children and young people at risk of a specific type (or types) of harm, or the support and care of children looked after and/or care leavers. This part of the JTAI will periodically change to investigate different themes.

Inspectors will use this guidance document when the deep dive focus is on children and young people:

- who are at risk of, or who are experiencing sexual exploitation
- who are at risk of, or who are experiencing criminal exploitation.





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Introduction

- This guidance is for inspectors from Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation) to use when carrying out a joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of a local area, with a deep-dive evaluation of how local services respond to child exploitation. This includes children at risk of sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
- 2. This guidance should be read alongside the framework for these inspections.¹ We updated this guidance in May 2019 to incorporate learning from previous JTAIs.
- 3. Between February and June 2016, five JTAIs focused on child sexual exploitation and children missing from home, care and education. The findings from these inspections are summarised in our overview report 'Time to listen a joined up response to child sexual exploitation and missing children'.²
- 4. In 2018, we carried out a further three inspections on this theme. For these three inspections, we also looked at children associated with gangs and who are at risk of criminal exploitation. This was in response to increasing awareness of the risks to children being exploited for criminal reasons. In particular, evidence of the risks to children from involvement in 'county lines' and the recognised relationship, in some cases, between risk of child sexual exploitation and gang association.
- 5. We published the findings of the three inspections of child exploitation in 2018 in our report 'Protecting children from criminal exploitation, human trafficking and modern slavery: an addendum'.³

² Guidance for joint targeted area inspections on the theme: Child sexual exploitation, children associated with gangs and at risk of exploitation and children missing from home, care or education; Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, HM Inspectorate of Probation, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, January 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspections-of-child-sexual-exploitation-and-missing-

www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspections-of-child-sexual-exploitation-and-missingchildren-february-to-august-2016

¹ 'Joint targeted area inspections: framework and guidance'; Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, HM Inspectorate of Probation, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, January 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspectionsof-arrangements-and-services-for-children-in-need-of-help-and-protection.

³ 'Protecting children from criminal exploitation, human trafficking and modern slavery: an addendum', Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, HM Inspectorate of Probation, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, November 2018;

www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspections-of-child-sexual-exploitation-and-missing-children.



- 6. This report recognised that agencies have done much to address child sexual exploitation, but calls for them to learn the lessons of the past in responding to the criminal exploitation of children and county lines. All children are vulnerable to exploitation. Agencies, locally and nationally, do not yet fully understand the scale or level of this risk. Family focused services are not always appropriate for dealing with the exploitation of children outside of a family setting. Agencies need to be flexible and respond quickly to changing risks.
- 7. For the purpose of these inspections, we have further refined our focus to children at risk of, or who are experiencing, exploitation. This includes sexual and criminal exploitation. We have removed the reference to gangs to reflect that exploitation can be perpetrated by individuals as well as gangs.
- 8. We recognise that the multi-agency response to children missing is a crucial aspect of an effective response to reduce the risk of exploitation. We will still consider this as part of this inspection. We will focus on the responses to missing children through the lens of exploitation.
- 9. We have extended the guidance to include children in care who are at risk of exploitation. We will sample, when possible, the experiences of at least one child in care who has been placed a significant distance from home and who the local authority has identified as being at risk of exploitation.
- 10. For these inspections, we will use the following government definitions.
 - Child sexual exploitation: This is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.⁴
 - Criminal exploitation: Child criminal exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation

⁴ Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners; Department for Education; www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners



does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. 5

- County lines: This is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. The criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines It includes, for example, children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.
- 11. These inspections aim to provide findings about frontline practitioners' understanding of, and ability to, recognise the risks to children who are at risk of sexual exploitation and/or criminal exploitation and the strategic response by the multi-agency safeguarding partners.
- 12. Inspectors will track and sample the experiences of children and young people. Tracking is an in-depth, end-to-end look at the experiences of between five and seven children and young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation and/or criminal exploitation. Guidance on tracking and sampling is in the inspection framework and guidance.

Scope of the inspection

- 13. All JTAIs are of multi-agency arrangements for:
 - the response to all forms of child abuse, neglect and exploitation at the point of identification
 - the quality and impact of assessment, planning and decision-making in response to notifications and referrals
 - protecting children and young people at risk of a specific type (or types) of harm, or the support and care of children looked after and/or care leavers (evaluated through a deep dive evaluation of the experiences of these children)
 - the leadership and management of this work
 - the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding partner arrangements in relation to this work.
- 14. Our evaluation of the initial response and the quality and impact of planning and decision making will mainly focus on children at risk of exploitation.

⁵ Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines; Home Office; www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-countylines



Evaluation criteria

- 15. Inspectors will evaluate whether:
 - agencies work together to identify children at risk of exploitation, intervene to reduce risk and monitor effectively the impact of interventions so that risk is reduced (ESN 23)⁶
 - the impact of exploitation on children is reduced because they and their families can access a sufficient range of services, including therapeutic help that improves children's emotional well-being and safety. This may include help provided by community and voluntary services (ESN 24)
 - professionals and support staff⁷ are well trained, confident and knowledgeable. They understand the impact of exploitation on children's health and well-being. This enables them to identify how to help and protect children and to take action to do so (ESN 25)
 - the range of risks to children who are exploited are understood by partner agencies and steps are taken to avoid the unnecessary criminalisation of children (ESN 26)
 - children who are exploited experience a child-centred approach from all professionals. The risks to them and their needs are assessed effectively and responded to appropriately. Assessments consider contextual risks as well as any risks and strengths within the family. They show a clear understanding of the interplay of risk factors and the impact of exploitation on the child. The views of the child are clearly recorded and central to the work with the family (ESN 27)
 - professionals understand the importance of building trusting relationships with children who have been exploited. Professionals are appropriately persistent in their efforts to engage with children and relationships are based on consistency, stability and respectful communication (ESN 28)
 - children at risk of exploitation who are missing are offered a return home interview. The return home interviews are of good quality and are used at an individual and strategic level to tackle risk (ESN 29)
 - work with young people who are perpetrators of sexual and/or criminal exploitation, such as those involved with gangs or peer-on-peer exploitation, is effective (ESN 30)

⁶ The evaluation schedule numbers (ESN) are a referencing system to support inspectors when they record their findings in evidence records.

⁷ This means but is not limited to early help workers, social workers, family/social work support workers, police officers and support staff, health professionals and support staff, personnel in the National Probation Service and community rehabilitation company, youth offending team staff, teachers and school staff.



- any concerns raised through whistleblowing about the protection of children have been responded to effectively (ESN 31)
- the agencies effectively combat and disrupt the exploitation of children (ESN 32)
- children suffering exploitation have access to post-abuse therapeutic help and good-quality support (ESN 33)
- children and their families feel that their views have been heard. This leads to improvements in the help and support that they receive (ESN 34)
- schools have effective systems to identify children at risk of, or subject to, exploitation and children who are missing from school. They make timely referrals to early help or children's social care, where appropriate, and children receive support within the school and/or from external agencies where required (ESN 35)
- schools contribute effectively to inter-agency working to improve outcomes for children who are at risk of, or subject to exploitation (ESN 36)
- the workforce meets its responsibilities to children at risk of exploitation, (social workers, family support and social work assistants; police officers and other police staff; health professionals and support staff; National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Companies and youth offending team personnel) (ESN 37)
- leaders and managers share information effectively so that they know and understand the experiences of children at risk of or subject to exploitation, and the prevalence of these issues in their area.⁸ This leads to effective action to meet children's needs and improve the help and support provided to children and their families (ESN38)
- leaders and managers use their knowledge to challenge and support practitioners and promote continuous improvement in services for children at risk of exploitation (ESN 39)
- Iocal safeguarding partners actively monitor, promote and coordinate and evaluate the work of partner agencies to help, protect and care for children at risk of exploitation⁹ (ESN 40)
- awareness-raising and preventative work is in place with the community, businesses, schools, parents and children to alert them to the risk of child exploitation (ESN 41)

⁸ This includes leaders and managers from police, health, probation and the local authority. ⁹ The role of the LSCB or the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements is in line with the Working Together requirements and guidance on the arrangements for transition.



- the police force captures preventative work, including how effectively they map patterns and profile the overview of cases, and the quality of the response from local services (ESN 42)
- the cases of children at risk of exploitation are investigated effectively and perpetrators are arrested and prosecuted (ESN 43)
- work with adult offenders on reducing risks of harm to children which may stem from the adult's offences or their role as a parent/carer is effective (ESN 44)
- the roles and responsibilities of support staff are appropriate, and the training and support they receive meets their needs and impacts on the quality of service delivery (ESN 45).



Annex A. Local information to support the inspection

- 16. This annex sets out the information inspectors request from local agencies when the deep-dive theme for the JTAI is child exploitation. There is a flow chart at the end of this annex that provide an overview of the process and milestones for local agencies to share the information we request. Inspectors will provide details for accessing an online system that local agencies can use to share information.¹⁰
- 17. Inspectors use the lists of child-level data in this annex to select the children whose experiences they will track and sample and those that they will ask the local area to jointly evaluate.

Lists of children at risk of exploitation

- 18. **By the end of Tuesday in week one**, the local authority should provide lists of child-level data for:
 - all those in receipt of services as a child in need at the point of inspection or in the six months before the inspection
 - all those who are the subject of a child protection plan at the point of inspection, including those who ceased to be the subject of a child protection plan in the six months before the inspection
 - all children in care at the point of inspection, including all those children who ceased to be looked after in the six months before the inspection.
- 19. These lists are the same as lists six, seven and eight in Ofsted's framework for the inspection of local authority children's services. For a JTAI, the local authority should include some additional fields of data for these lists:

Additional fields	Lists the fields should be added to
 Is the child is at risk of or subject to sexual exploitation? Is the child at risk of or subject to criminal exploitation? Is the child currently in receipt of full-time education? 	 List six (children in need) List seven (child protection) List eight (children in care)
The number of episodes where the child has been missing from home or care in the last six months.	List six (children in need)List seven (child protection)

¹⁰ Ofsted has risk assessed this site against the Government's Cloud Security Principles to handle sensitive personal data: 'Summary of cloud security principles'; www.gov.uk/government/publications/cloud-service-security-principles.



- 20. An Excel template setting out the fields and detailed guidance for these lists is published on the same webpage as this document: www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspections-of-child-sexual-exploitation-and-missing-children.
- 21. **By 3pm on Wednesday of week one**, the local authority and partner agencies should share lists of children as set out in the bullet points below. For each child on these lists, the local authority should include the child's unique ID; the agencies involved with the child and their family; and whether they are a child in need, on a child protection plan or a child in care. The lists should cover:
 - up to 10 children for whom the local authority and partner agencies think that sexual and/or criminal exploitation is a current or significant factor and there is multi-agency involvement¹¹
 - up to 10 children for whom the local authority and partner agencies think that sexual and/or criminal exploitation is a current or significant factor and believe there has been positive engagement with the child and their family to improve outcomes for the child
 - up to 10 children for whom the youth offending team and children's services are involved and for whom sexual and/or criminal exploitation is a current or significant factor
 - up to six children for whom the National Probation Service or community rehabilitation company and children's services are involved and for whom sexual and/or criminal exploitation is a current or significant factor.
- 22. If there are any particular contextual issues in the local area in relation to sexual and/or criminal exploitation, for example a specific programme of work or service, the DCS can advise the lead inspector of this when they provide these lists. The lead inspector will take this into account when selecting the children whose experiences inspectors will track and sample.
- 23. **By 5.30pm on Wednesday**, the lead inspector will select 20 children from all the lists provided and ask the local authority to provide additional information on these 20. **By 4pm of on Thursday**, the local authority should provide the following information about each of the 20 children:
 - is the child or young person known to the youth offending team? (Y/N)
 - is the National Probation Service working with a parent or any adult living in the same household as the child or who has a close connection to the child or young person? (Y/N)

¹¹ Multi-agency involvement means at least two agencies



- is the community rehabilitation company working with a parent or any adult living in the same household as the child or who has a close connection to the child or young person? (Y/N)
- is there a current police investigation or any criminal proceedings? (Y/N)
- 24. **By mid-day on Friday,** the lead inspector will select between five and seven children whose experiences the local partnership should evaluate jointly and inspectors to track. The lead inspector may request a phone call with the local authority, before 10am, to confirm that the selection of cases include multi-agency involvement and current or recent work to address concerns about child exploitation. The lead inspector may ask the local authority to review the cases on the electronic recording system to ensure this.
- 25. Inspectors will focus their evaluation on the experiences of the specific children identified. Although family context will be taken into consideration, the experiences of any brothers or sisters will not be evaluated in detail. Inspectors will focus on practice in the six months before the inspection, but will take into account the child's experiences prior to this point.
- 26. In week two, the local agencies should provide key documents associated with these children (by Tuesday) and their joint evaluations (by the end of Thursday). See the section 'Key case file documents' below for further information.

Other child-level lists and planned multi-agency meetings

- 27. **By the end of Thursday in week one,** the local agencies should provide the lead inspector with details of multi-agency meetings taking place during the fieldwork week, including: initial child protection conferences; review child protection conferences; looked after children's reviews; strategy discussions; and any other planning or review meeting relating to children at risk of exploitation, or children who have been missing.
- 28. The local authority should provide further lists of child-level data. These lists are of all children in each category known to the local authority, not just those at risk of exploitation or who have been missing:
 - all contacts received in the six months before the date of inspection
 - all referrals received in the six months before the inspection
 - all statutory assessment in accordance with section 17 or section 47 of the Children Act 1989 in the six months before the inspection
 - all section 47 enquiries in the six months before the inspection.



- 29. These lists are the same as lists one, three, four and five in Ofsted's framework for the inspection of local authority children's services. For the JTAI, the local authority should provide two additional fields for list four (assessments):
 - If assessment has been completed has sexual exploitation been identified?
 - If assessment has been completed has criminal exploitation been identified?
- 30. An Excel template setting out the fields and detailed guidance for these lists is published on the same webpage as this document: www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspections-of-child-sexual-exploitation-and-missing-children.
- 31. The local authority should also share:
 - a list of children who have been missing within the last 12 months. The list should include for each child: their unique ID, current status (care leaver, looked after child, child protection, child in need or not receiving a statutory service) and whether they were at risk of exploitation¹²
 - A report on children, for whom the local authority is responsible, who are of school age and who are not in receipt of full-time school education at the time of inspection.¹³ This report should include for each child the:
 - child unique ID or UPN and the date of birth
 - type of educational provision that they are receiving, including home tuition
 - number of hours provision per week (in particular, whether they are receiving more or less than 25 hours per week)
 - type of exclusion (if the child has been excluded)
 - date when alternative provision commenced.

Key case file documents

- 32. **By the end of Tuesday in week two**, the local agencies should provide electronic copies of the following key documents for each of the children whose experiences they have been asked to evaluate (where recent examples exist):
 - initial referral/contact/notification (where applicable)
 - most recent assessment, including a common or early help assessment
 - strategy or other multi-agency discussion or equivalent

¹² This list is similar to item 2.02 in annex A of Ofsted's inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) framework.

¹³ This list is similar to item 2.05 in annex A of Ofsted's ILACS framework.



- section 47 investigation documentation/ICPC minutes
- most recent plan for the child and/or review of the plan
- latest return home interview and any subsequent risk assessments (where appropriate)
- minutes of any multi-agency meetings in respect of the child, such as multiagency sexual exploitation (MASE) meetings or multi-agency criminal exploitation (MACE) meetings
- where applicable, the most recent pre-sentence report relating to the child or any relevant adult
- a chronology of significant events in the six months prior to the inspection. Significant events may include:
 - episodes of the child missing from home, care or education
 - any contact the child or relevant adults had with the police as either a victim or suspect – such as reported incidents, crimes and investigations, and reports of the child being missing or absent
 - information on events earlier than the six months prior to the inspection where this is necessary to understand the context of the child's experience.
- 33. The CQC will request documents about the children whose experiences inspectors will track. However, as the specific health agencies involved will vary, the CQC will determine which agencies to request information from following inspectors' review of the evaluations undertaken by the local partnership. The CQC will make this request on the Friday of week two.
- 34. The local agencies should provide their joint evaluations, and where possible individual agency evaluations of children's experiences electronically **by the end of Thursday in week two**. Printed copies of the documents related to the children whose experiences the partnership has evaluated should be made available for when inspectors arrive onsite.

Other information to support the inspection

35. By the end of Tuesday in week two, the local agencies should provide the information outlined below to help inspectors understand the work of agencies within the area. The local agencies should not provide everything they hold on each subject; they should provide the area's **best and most recent** examples that relate to the scope of this inspection. They should provide this information electronically.

The local authority

1.1 – **organisational structures** showing lines of reporting and accountability



1.2 – **management information reports** for those children within the scope of the inspection, at both a local and agency level

 $1.3-\mbox{assessment}$ and threshold criteria for helping families and protecting the identified children

1.4 –**practice audits, including multi-agency**, over the six months prior to the inspection relating to the focus of the inspection, and associated **improvement/action plans**

1.5 – details of any services in the area that have been **commissioned from the community or voluntary sector** for children who have been missing, absent and sexually and/ or criminally exploited children

1.6 – minutes of Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meetings, or Multi-Agency Child Exploitation meetings and /or Multi-Agency meetings relating to gangs and/ or criminal exploitation

 $1.7-{\rm terms}$ of reference for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or local equivalent

1.8 needs analysis, strategies and action plans relating to sexual and / or criminal exploitation and children missing, any success criteria and any analysis impact

Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

2.1 – **organisational structures** showing lines of reporting and accountability

2.2 – minutes of meetings of the local safeguarding partners from the 12 months prior to the inspection (including executive board meetings where applicable)

2.3 – sub-group minutes as relevant to the scope of the inspection (requested by the lead inspector).

The Police force

3.1 – **organisational structures** showing lines of reporting and accountability

3.2 – child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation risk or vulnerability assessment process

3.3 – learning and development regarding vulnerability, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and child protection

3.4 - child protection referral document



3.5 - policy & guidance on missing from home

3.6 – strategy, policies and guidance relating to child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation

3.7 – problem profile related to missing, and sexually exploited and criminally exploited children

3.8 – three most recent sets of minutes for any force strategic governance meetings on missing, and sexually exploited and criminally exploited children

3.9 – any audits and action plan(s) relating to missing, and sexually exploited and criminally exploited children

3.10 – performance management information / data for child sexual exploitation, criminally exploited children and missing and absent children

The National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company/Companies

- 4.1 organisational structures showing lines of reporting and accountability
- 4.2 policy/procedures on child protection and safeguarding
- 4.3 policy/procedures for the management of risk of harm to others

Youth Offending Team

- 5.1 organisational structures showing lines of reporting and accountability
- 5.2 policy/procedures on child protection and safeguarding
- 5.3 policy/procedures for the management of risk of harm to others
- 5.4 policy/procedures for the management of sexual or criminal exploitation

Health partners

6.1 – **Organisational structures** showing lines of reporting and accountability including details of local health commissioning and /or provider services

6.2 – Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and provider services with details of who is providing commissioned services, including school nursing, young people's substance misuse services, contraceptive and health (CASH) services, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), urgent care units and midwifery.

6.3 – CCG and provider services annual reports on safeguarding and child protection, including for children looked after.



6.4 – Provider policies relating to child sexual exploitation, children who are criminally exploited, including local primary care policies

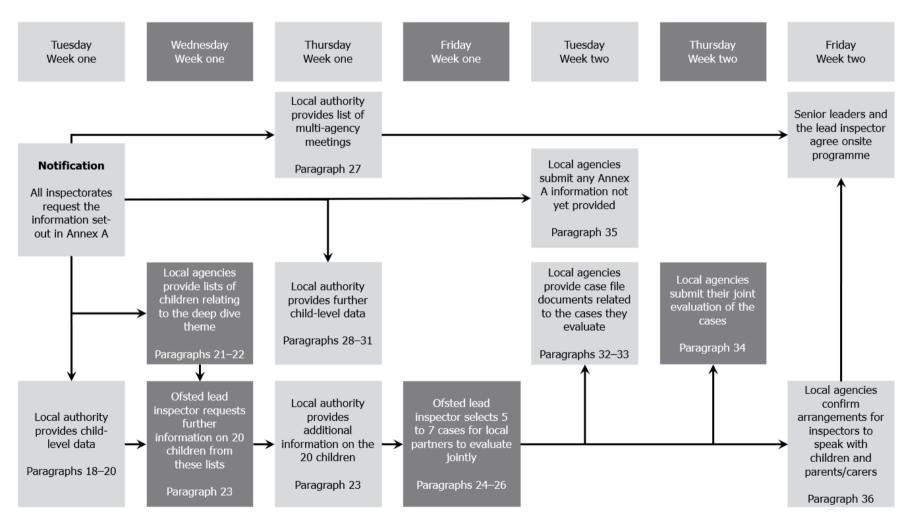
6.5 – Any commissioner or provider audits and action plans relating to child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation of children.

Speaking with children, young people, parents and carers

- 36. The lead inspector may ask the local agencies to arrange opportunities for inspectors to talk directly with the children whose experiences they have chosen to track and with their parents and carers. Inspectors will provide information leaflets to help children, parents and carers understand what their involvement in the inspection means. If a child, parent or carer does not want to speak with an inspector, the local agencies should inform the lead inspector of the reasons. Arrangements to talk to these children, parents or carers, or the reasons why these discussions cannot take place, should be confirmed by local agencies in writing as soon as possible and by the end of week two.
- 37. In all activities involving children and their families, inspectors will ask the appropriate practitioner/s in the local area to speak with the child/family and explain the inspection to them before the inspector speaks to the child/family or observes any work directly with them. Before proceeding with any discussions or observations, inspectors should always check with the child and family that they have understood what their involvement means. Inspections should record this in their record of the discussion/observation.



Overview of Annex A process and milestones





Annex B. Tool for tracking children's experiences

The inspection team uses the tracking tool to ensure that they are consistently recording evaluations of evidence from tracking individual children and young people's experiences. The questions reflect the experiences of children and young people at each key stage of intervention.

Inspector	
Inspectorate	
Case number	
Age of child/young person	
Does the child have any individual needs relating to their circumstances? (for example, their ethnicity or a disability)	

Evaluation by the local area

Does the joint evaluation by the local partnership accurately evaluate the experiences of the child?	
(where an evaluation has taken place)	

Inspector's evaluation

	Evaluative summary of child/young person's experience
Was referral for action timely for the child?	
Is risk identified, understood and prioritised? Does the child appear to be safe?	
Has decision-making matched the priority risks and needs?	
Where an assessment has been completed, are risks, needs and strengths clear?	
Is there a plan? Is it sufficient to address risk and need? Is it making a difference?	
Has the child been involved/engaged at all stages? Have family/carers been involved at all stages?	
Have individual needs and circumstances been taken into account?	



	Evaluative summary of child/young person's experience
Do the agencies work together effectively to protect the child?	





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