



Department
for Education

Joint targeted reviews of services to protect children

Government consultation

Launch date 15 July 2015

Respond by 11 August 2015

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Introduction

The Government's report Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (March 2015) set out its intention to deliver a new system of joint multi-agency reviews, to assess more effectively how local agencies are working in a co-ordinated manner to protect children and young people. These reviews will be conducted jointly by Ofsted, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation and the Care Quality Commission.

The aim of this consultation is to seek the views of interested parties on proposed amendments to the Joint Area Reviews (JAR) Regulations.

In particular, the consultation seeks views on arrangements for the making of a report following a targeted multi-agency review, and the written response to be produced by agencies subject to review.

Ofsted and the other inspectorates are consulting in parallel on their own framework for multi-agency reviews, which sets out how the review will be carried out.

The Joint Area Reviews Regulations

Section 20 of the Children Act 2004 allows any two or more of the persons and bodies listed in that section to conduct a review of children's services, in accordance with arrangements made by Ofsted. Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, the Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Probation for England and Wales are listed in section 20. The purpose of a review under section 20 is to evaluate the extent to which, taken together, the children's services being reviewed improve the well-being of children and, in particular, to evaluate how those services work together to improve well-being. The JAR Regulations make provision for the purpose of such joint reviews. They ensure that the persons and bodies listed in section 20 have sufficient powers to conduct a review. At present, regulation 3 requires Ofsted to make a report on a review and send it to the local authority to which the review relates, and to the Secretary of State. Within 30 working days of receiving the report, the local authority must send a copy of it to each of the authority's relevant partners, the persons and bodies with whom the authority makes arrangements to promote co-operation with a view to improving the well-being of children in their area, and to each of their partners on the Local Safeguarding Children Board for their area. The authority must also send the report to a local newspaper and a local radio station, make a copy available for inspection free of charge at their offices and supply a copy to a member of the public, on demand, for a reasonable charge.

The JAR Regulations currently require a local authority receiving a report under regulation 3 to make a written statement of proposed action in the light of the report,

within 70 working days of receiving the report (regulation 4). In producing the written response, the authority must consult the same persons and bodies as were sent the report. The written response must be sent to Ofsted and to those same persons and bodies, and made publicly available in the same way as the report.

Who this is for

- Local Authorities;
- Social care professionals; and
- Anyone with an interest in Local Authority children's services inspection

Issue date

The consultation was issued on 15 July 2015

Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the team on:

- 0370 000 2288 and ask for Adam Fry
or email:
JointInspection.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the [DfE Contact us page](#).

Additional copies

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from [GOV.UK DfE consultations](#).

The response

The results of the consultation and the Department's response will be [published on GOV.UK](#) in 2015.

About this consultation

This consultation document makes a number of proposals:

- Proposed changes to the report following a review;
- Proposed changes to the requirements for a written response to report; and
- Proposed changes to powers of entry.

We would like to hear your views on our proposals.

Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit www.education.gov.uk/consultations to submit your response.

Other ways to respond

If for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may download a word document version of the form and email it or post it.

By email

JointInspection.CONSULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk

By post

Patricia Malcolm
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith St, London
SW1P 3BT

Deadline

The consultation closes on 11 August 2015

Proposal Set 1: Changes to the Report Following a Review

Proposal and rationale

Under the changes which the Government is proposing, Ofsted will – as lead inspectorate – continue to be responsible for making the report following the joint review; however, it will do so in collaboration with the other inspectorates.

The requirement for the report to contain a summary for children will be removed from the JAR Regulations. There are other areas on which Ofsted inspects where they are not required by statute to produce a summary for children, so removing the requirement would be consistent with this. However, Ofsted propose to continue to produce a summary for children, either as part of, or alongside, the joint report, and they will confirm this intention in their Framework document.

The report following the review will be sent by Ofsted direct to the local authority, the Secretary of State, other agencies which have been inspected and other persons which Ofsted, taking into account the views of the other inspectorates, considers appropriate, having regard to the joint nature of the review which has been conducted.

At present, the JAR Regulations require the local authority to send the report to at least one local radio station and at least one local newspaper. We no longer consider that this requirement is necessary, bearing in mind the close media coverage of inspectorates' activity.

The JAR Regulations currently require the local authority to make a copy of the report available free of charge at its offices. In view of the joint nature of the review, we intend to require each agency which has been inspected to make the report available on its website. Similarly, each agency will, under our proposals, be required to supply a copy of the report to a member of the public on demand, on payment of a reasonable charge.

Proposal Set 2: Proposed Changes to the Written Response to Report

Proposals and rationale

Under our proposals, Ofsted will – as lead inspectorate – have discretion as to whether a written response is required, and if so from whom. When making this decision Ofsted will take into account the views of the other inspectorates. We propose to allow Ofsted to select one agency to lead on the making and sending of the written response. All other agencies which were subject to the review will be required to assist and co-operate in the making of the report. Ofsted's determinations on this point will be included in its initial report, as well as a list of the bodies/persons to whom the initial report was sent. Ofsted's decision will depend on the nature and scope of the review and the particular range of children's services reviewed. It may not always be appropriate for the local authority to lead on the response if the actions required are to be carried out by other agencies such as a trust. This would also lessen the burden on local authorities.

The response will be a joint response, and the other persons or bodies, whom Ofsted has determined should assist in the making of the response, will be required under the Regulations to do so. This joint response will reflect the joint nature of the review.

The JAR Regulations will require the written response to be sent to all inspectorates. The Regulations will not include an exhaustive list of copy recipients since relevant agencies will already have been involved in the development of the written response.

The JAR Regulations will not prescribe in detail what the written response will cover. However, they will require that the response specifies the action to be taken, the agencies responsible, and timescales for action.

Under our proposed changes, the Regulations will also require the written response to be published by all agencies subject to the review.

Proposal Set 3: Proposed Changes to Powers of Entry

Proposals and rationale

In order to ensure that all inspectorates have the necessary powers to obtain the information they may need under a joint review, we are proposing to amend the existing powers of entry. These inspectorates need to have (i) a power to obtain information from the various persons and bodies being reviewed (including the LSCB, if necessary); and (ii) a power to enter premises, if required. We propose to update the provisions currently in the Schedule to the Regulations, to ensure that all inspectorates involved have the necessary powers to do this.



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for Education

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