

# Re-visits to local areas issued with a written statement of action

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1. This guidance outlines arrangements for re-visits to local areas where Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) determined that a written statement of action (WSOA) be required. It should be read alongside other guidance for local area special educational needs and disabilities (LA SEND) inspections:  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspection-guidance-for-inspectors](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspection-guidance-for-inspectors).
2. Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) do not carry out monitoring inspections of a local area. The sole purpose of the re-visit is to determine whether the local area has made sufficient progress in addressing the areas of significant weakness detailed in the WSOA.
3. Each re-visit will focus on the weaknesses that caused us to require the WSOA. These are detailed in the WSOA. However, if any other serious weaknesses are identified during the re-visit, we will refer to these in the re-visit letter. This information may be used when determining the timing of the local area's next review under any new LA SEND framework. Any new significant weaknesses identified will not lead to a requirement for a new WSOA being produced because the re-visit is not a new inspection.
4. Ofsted and CQC re-visit local areas under section 20(1) of the Children Act 2004.

## **Decision to undertake a re-visit of a local area**

5. Ofsted and CQC will usually re-visit a local area within 18 months of the WSOA being declared fit for purpose. The deadline for the local area to submit its WSOA is within 70 working days of receiving its pre-publication inspection letter. Once a WSOA has been determined, advisers from the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England carry out quarterly monitoring visits to the local area. Ofsted's regional directors and CQC inspectors may discuss an area's progress when meeting routinely with leaders of the local area.

## **Deployment for re-visits**

6. The re-visit inspection team will always be led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), accompanied by a CQC inspector. Whenever possible, these will be the same inspectors who carried out the initial inspection. When this is not possible, the inspectors will have experience of LA SEND inspections.

7. The re-visits will be quality assured by Senior HMI from Ofsted and by nominated inspectors from CQC. Ofsted and the CQC will decide whether these re-visits are quality assured on site or off site. The HMI and the CQC inspector will make clear to local area leaders the scope of quality assurance at the time of the notification call.

## **Notice period**

8. The HMI will notify the director of children's services (DCS), as the representative of the local area partners, 10 working days before the re-visit team arrives on site. CQC will then notify leaders at the clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). A follow-up call will be made that day by the lead inspector to the local area's nominated officer (LANO) to discuss the re-visit in more detail. The local area is responsible for informing all stakeholders of the dates of the re-visit.
9. The lead inspector will ask the LANO for the opportunity for inspectors to speak to a group of children and young people. The inspector will share the questions they will ask the children and young people at the follow-up discussion on the fifth working day following notification.

## **Pre-inspection**

10. The re-visit team will have two planning days before the on-site visit. The lead inspector will notify the local area and the CQC inspector will notify CCG leaders. On the same day as the notification to the local area, the lead inspector will also notify the parents and carers forum (PCF) or other parent groups involved in the WSOA, when known.
11. During this discussion, the lead inspector will inform the PCF (or similar group) of the focus for the meeting with parents on day 1 of the on-site activities. This will be included in all notifications about the open meeting for parents. This meeting must be open but will focus on the reasons behind the WSOA, as set out by inspectors. The lead inspector will also share with the PCF the proposed questions for parents.
12. By the fourth working day following notification (day -7), the local area is to upload onto the portal all relevant evidence to show the impact of its actions in addressing the weaknesses identified in the WSOA. The PCF or other parent groups involved in the WSOA are invited to do the same. On the fifth day (day -6), the inspectors will review the uploaded evidence and arrange for a telephone discussion with the LANO and health equivalent to take place late that afternoon. This will be to discuss the schedule for the on-site visit and to discuss any other practical arrangements. This will enable the re-visit team to be more targeted when evaluating the impact of the local area's actions.
13. The lead inspector and CQC inspector will also hold a discussion with the advisers from the DfE and NHS England who carried out the monitoring visits. These discussions must be recorded in the evidence base.

14. The local area is responsible for providing the re-visit team with any relevant data/information. However, this must be only what the local area produces as part of its routine practice. The local area is not expected to provide any data/information in a particular format.
15. The local area should provide the evidence that it has used to assure itself that the necessary progress is being made to address the reasons for the WSOA. It must provide the detail of any tribunal and/or ombudsman outcomes since the initial inspection.
16. Inspectors will also devise some questions for parents. They will share these questions with the PCF (or similar group) to ensure that they are appropriately phrased. These questions will then be asked via an online survey, which will go live on the fifth day (day -5) before the inspection at 12 noon.
17. During the final five working days before the on-site activities, the HMI and the CQC inspector may request further information.

### **Inspection activity**

18. The activities carried out during a re-visit will be specific to the serious weaknesses that led to the WSOA being required. The activities will be to gather evidence to show the effectiveness and impact of leaders' actions to address the serious weaknesses.
19. The on-site activities will last between two and four days depending on the extent of the serious weaknesses. We will tell the local area how long the re-visit will be at the time of notification.
20. Inspectors will gather the contributions of parents and families through an online survey and a face-to-face open meeting. Inspectors will set the focuses of these based on the WSOA. It is important that inspectors make the focuses clear to parents when notifying them of the meeting.
21. Inspectors will gather the views of children and young people through a face-to-face discussion during the on-site visit.

### **Inspection fieldwork – indicative timeline**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Day of week</b>	<b>Activity</b>
-10	Monday	Local area notified of the re-visit (AM). HMI requests information from the local area and PCF (or other parents involved in the WSOA). CQC inspectors notify the CCG(s).
-7	Thursday	Local area and PCF (or other parents involved in the WSOA) upload any readily available evidence to demonstrate impact of leaders' actions.

Day	Day of week	Activity
-6	Friday	HMI and CQC inspector review uploaded evidence and identify activities. (PM) Telephone call between HMI, CQC inspector, LANO and health equivalent to plan draft schedule. Telephone call between lead HMI, CQC inspector, advisers from the DfE and NHS England.
-5	Monday	Online survey for parents goes live at 12noon.
-1	Friday	Online survey for parents closes at 12noon.
1	Monday	Meeting with senior leaders from the local area who have overall responsibility for the WSOA (AM). Meeting with PCF and parents to discuss the impact of local area's WSOA on children, young people and their families (PM). Open meeting with parents to discuss aspects set out at time of notification.
2/3/4	Tuesday	Evidence gathering. This may include an off-site visit and further meetings with stakeholders at the discretion of the inspection team.
2 or 4	Thursday	Provisional judgement meeting (PM). Confirm judgements. Feedback (PM).

## Feedback to leaders

22. The HMI and CQC inspectors will carry out one keeping in touch (KIT) meeting per day if the re-visit is longer than two days. Feedback arrangements on the final day of the re-visit will be to inform leaders as to whether sufficient progress has been made in addressing the serious weaknesses detailed in the WSOA. Leaders will be provided with clear reasons as to the inspectors' findings.

## The re-visit letter

23. The letter will include:
- the decision about whether the local area has made sufficient progress to improve each of the serious weaknesses identified at the initial inspection
  - a clear and brief summary of the effectiveness of leaders' actions against each serious weakness
  - reference to, and evidence for, any other serious concerns that inspectors identified during the re-visit and clarification that these will be

communicated to the DfE and NHS England and will be used to determine the timing of the next inspection under any future LA SEND framework.

24. Re-visit letters will be quality assured by Ofsted and CQC before the draft letter is sent to the local authority and CCG. The draft letter is restricted and confidential to the DCS and the chief executive(s) of the CCG(s) and their representatives. The draft letter or any of its content must not be shared more widely or published.
25. The local authority and CCG(s) will have 10 working days to comment on factual accuracy in the draft letter. The HMI will review any comments and amend the letter as necessary. The HMI will liaise with CQC inspector colleagues about any factual accuracy changes. Ofsted will notify the local authority and the CCG(s) of the lead HMI's response to the factual accuracy check.
26. The local authority and CCG will receive an electronic version of the final letter, usually within 28 working days of the end of the re-visit. The final letter will be published on Ofsted's and CQC's websites, normally within 33 working days.

### **After the re-visit**

27. Arrangements to sign off and check the factual accuracy of the letter will mirror the current published LA SEND handbook.
28. When we consider a local area to have made sufficient progress, the monitoring visits from the DfE and NHS England will cease.
29. When a local area is making insufficient progress in any of the serious weaknesses identified, it is for the DfE and NHS England to determine the next steps. This may include the Secretary of State using his powers of intervention. Ofsted and CQC will not carry out any further re-visits unless directed to do so by the Secretary of State.



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