Ofsted
Inspection

Guidance
Inspecting local authority children's services

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Introduction

This document sets out the framework for inspecting local authority children's services (LACS). We first published this framework in November 2017. We published this updated version in August 2020. There is a summary of the changes we have made.

This framework and guidance is to help inspectors to be consistent in inspections while being flexible enough to respond to the individual circumstances of each local authority. We will continually review and improve our approach to inspection.

These inspections focus on the effectiveness of local authority services and organisations in order to:

- to help and protect children
- to improve the life chances of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home
- to ensure children are prepared for children who are looked after, including adoption
- the experiences and progress of care leavers.

We also evaluate:

- the effectiveness of leaders and managers
- the quality and impact of the children's workforce and young people
- the quality of professional practice.

We do this in a way that focuses on what it means to be an effective corporate parent. We also evaluate how well children who are looked after have chosen to use 'children's care' to strive to be all (cared after children and young people's) to be all they can be in their adulthood.

This framework and guidance are to help inspectors to be consistent in inspections while being flexible enough to respond to the individual circumstances of each local authority. We will periodically review and improve this framework and evaluation criteria.

Inspection principles

Ofsted's corporate strategy outlines how we will carry out inspection and regulation that is:

- intelligent: all of our work will be evidence-led, and we will seek to ensure our inspection and regulation is based on the best evidence
- responsive: our inspection and regulation will focus on local authorities' burdens and make our expectations and findings clear
- independent: we will be independent of those whose work we inspect and regulate, and we will be independent of any other force that may exert pressure on our judgments
- transparent: our approach to LACS is transparent and we will publish our methodology and our judgments
- focused on children: we will focus on the impact of the services we inspect and regulate on children and young people
- focused on what we do: we will focus our work on the quality of services we provide
- consistent and short inspections: we will carry out inspections using a 4-point scale
- in the public interest: we will publish our reports.

We have derived each part of this system in more detail later in the framework.

Whole-system approach

LACS is a system of inspection. Under this system, we use the intelligence and information we have to focus our inspection activity on those areas that, in our view, local authorities and other organisations and disciplines (see DfE), inspections are inspections of the local area that (in autumn LACS), but we will base them only on inspection of children's services.

The LACS system includes:

- local authorities' annual self-evaluation of the quality and impact of their services
- an annual engagement meeting between our regional representatives and the local authority to review the local authority's self-evaluation, to agree our inspection activity and to inform how they would engage with each other in future
- our local authority intelligence monitoring
- our annual children's services inspection programme
- focused visits that look at a specific area of service or cohort of children
- standard and short inspections of children's services, using a 4-point scale
- our annual letter (www.gov.uk/ofsted/ofsted-annual-letter).

We have derived each part of this system in more detail later in the framework.

Applying a proportionate and risk-based approach to inspection

There is no fixed cycle or schedule for the LACS programme. We use the intelligence and information we have to inform decisions about how best to inspect local authorities.

There will be times when concerns arise about a local authority. The regional representative will discuss with the local authority and inform them that an inspection, of which we make a judgment, or a focused visit or monitoring visit, would be more appropriate.

In most cases, if the next standard or short inspection is not due, we will carry out a focused visit. This gives the local authority and us the opportunity to see how it is making the changes it needs to make and for us to make a judgment inspection.

After a focused visit, we will not usually follow up with an urgent inspection. We will wait for the local authority to make the changes it needs to make and for us to be able to make a judgment. We will then take the view through the local authority's self-evaluation and the annual engagement meeting until the next judgment inspection is due.

This approach aims to support improvement, while still holding the local authority to account for its actions. It also aims to ensure that the local authority is better in need of help, protection and care.

Within the LACS system, deciding which type of inspection to deploy in which local authority is complex and dynamic. Figure 1 shows the process.

Figure 1. Steps for agreeing the LACS inspection programme

Local authority self-evaluation
Annual engagement meeting
Local authority intelligence monitoring
Local authority inspection history
Local authority inspection
Local authority inspection
Local authority inspection

Short inspection arrangements

A short inspection takes place within 28 working days of notification across the SCIS scope. We will give 5 working days' notice of the inspection. The inspection team for a short inspection will consist of a lead inspector, a lead inspector for social work, a local authority, and a lead inspector for education. The lead inspector will usually be a social worker but may be an education lead inspector.

Week 1 notice period – off site

Timeline	Activity
Monday 28th April	Lead inspector arrives with SCIS to announce the inspection Afternoon: lead inspector conducts initial meeting with local authority (LA)
Tuesday	Local authority shares information and feedback about quality
Wednesday	Local authority shares performance and management information
Thursday and Friday	Focused off-site evaluation of quality of care Lead inspector shares initial feedback using Office of Inspection Officer

Week 2 on site

Inspection day	Activity
Monday 5th May	Lead inspector arrives with SCIS to announce the inspection Afternoon: lead inspector conducts initial meeting with local authority (LA)
Tuesday	Lead inspector or other Office of Inspection Officer (OIO) will set up the inspection portal and upload documents
Wednesday	Focused on-site evaluation of quality of care
Thursday	Feeding back inspection findings Team will finish by noon
Friday	Focused on-site feedback

A short inspection covers the SACS scope, which is the same as a standard inspection. Judgements will be made against the quality standards. However, it is not a 2-week inspection delivered 1-week. Inspectors preparing for a short inspection will need to consider the need for further prompt evidence in advance of the inspection.

- the previous inspection judgement
- a focused visit to Office of Inspection Officer partner findings
- the quality of self-evaluation over the preceding years, which will have been considered in the last inspection and annual review
- information held on the Office of Inspection Officer's performance monitoring

In a short inspection, inspectors will seek to answer 3 questions:

1. Has the quality and impact of practice been maintained?
2. Has the quality and impact of practice been improved since last inspection?
3. Are there any areas where the quality and impact of practice have deteriorated?

This approach ensures that inspectors focus on the most important areas of evidence on the areas that need the greatest focus. It also enables the team to focus on the quality and impact of practice for children and young people in care and care leavers. This will ensure that inspections are focused on what matters most.

Evaluating individual children's records that have always been audited by the local authority (LA) will not be a priority for inspectors. Inspectors will not allow. If the local authority's evaluation of practice in line with our expectations, then inspectors will need the time to further prompt evidence in that part of the inspection.

Further guidance on short and standard inspections

Learning against the case and arrangements based on the evaluation criteria

Inspectors will use the evidence and views included in the scope of the inspection and report their conclusions against the evaluation criteria. Inspectors will be heading two several criteria that describe the features of a good service or outstanding practice. Inspectors will also be looking for evidence of practice that achieves agreed outcomes for children and young people. Inspectors will help the inspection team make the correct judgement on the Ofsted grading scheme.

The number of inspectors and the length of inspection

Inspection arrangements and preparations inspectors have to consider the journey of children' – starting with their first contact with the local authority (LA) children's care and. Finally, leaving care. For standard and short inspections, this may not be the same for all children.

The factors that influence inspection preparation and gathering will include:

- the geography of the local authority – for example, we may not always visit all the main centres of population
- previous known strengths and weaknesses (including the findings from a previous inspection, complaints, and information from Ofsted's Office of Inspection Officer's to inquire the children's services performance monitoring.

Inspectors find serious weaknesses, they will identify expectations for improvement and ask you to do something about it.

Inspectors will also:

- ensure that we are meeting our duty to inform the relevant authority of any serious concerns we have about a service.

Inspectors will provide details for accessing a secure online site that the local authority can use to share information.

Before a monitoring visit

Two weeks before the visit, the lead inspector will ask the local authority to provide up-to-date child level data. When providing the data, the local authority should indicate any children they think we should view the most frequently.

The inspection team uses the local authority's audit tool. Usually, the inspector will ask the local authority to fill in the audit tool. The local authority should share the completed audit tool with the inspection team at least 2 working days before the visit.

We will discuss the content of the audit tool with the local authority during our pre-visit discussion.

Inspectors will provide details for accessing a secure online site that the local authority can use to share information.

On-site activity in monitoring visits

Ofsted inspectors and CQC inspectors will be in headquarters the on-site activity. On-site activity will usually consist of evaluating the local authority's self-assessment, meeting with senior managers and staff, and visiting a sample of children's services. The local authority will be asked to make children available for inspection.

To triangulate their findings, inspectors will look at a sample of other cases. The sampling activity will be informed by what they have learned from the audit and evaluating. Inspectors will usually only sample cases from the previous 3 months.

If the inspector identifies a concern, they will discuss it with the local authority and agree how to a child or children, they must bring it to the DCS's attention.

Inspectors will consider the local authority's response to the concern and discuss monitoring visit. Inspectors must record the case numbers of tracked and sampled cases and share this information with the local authority.

At the end of every day, the inspection team will hold a meeting. The lead inspector will inform the local authority. It is for the local authority to decide who attends the meeting. Typically, the meeting will include the DCS and senior managers responsible for children's services. The local authority may also want to commissioner to attend the feedback as an observer. The Ofsted regional director may also attend. The lead inspector will give the DCS and the local the authority and senior leaders feedback on what they have seen. This will be recorded.

The lead inspector and the local authority will discuss the areas to consider at the next monitoring visit. If the date of the next monitoring visit is known, the inspection team will inform the local authority. The local authority will share information and whether it will resolve audit any cases.

Roles and expectations of inspectors

The Ofsted inspection team will include inspectors from Ofsted and CQC inspectors. In all inspections, all inspectors work collaboratively on all aspects of the scope of the inspection. Inspectors will share information, and the lead inspector will make the overall judgements. Inspectors will be familiar with the local authority's children's services and partnership arrangements.

Inspectors will:

- have the knowledge and skills to evaluate the local authority's children's services and partnership arrangements
- demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity
- ensure that we have a proportionate and evidence-based impact of practice and how the local authority is working with children
- keep the impact of our work on children and young people at the forefront of our work
- ensure that we have a proportionate approach to our work

The team will meet for an extended period on the penultimate day on site to discuss findings, agree provisional judgements and identify areas for improvement.

Inspection methodology

The things that inspectors will do to gather and evaluate evidence and report their findings.

Inspection and evaluating evidence

Almost all inspection evidence will be gathered by looking at individual children and young people's experiences. The lead inspector will familiarize with practitioners to understand the nature and impact of their work with children and young people and their families and carers.

We take into account feedback from children and young people and commissioners during inspections. We recognize that even slight programs in a particular area can have a significant impact on the lives of children and their families and carers. We also recognize that some children, young people, and families experiences of trauma, abuse or neglect. Inspectors will not always ask children and young people to talk about their experiences if they think it might be damaging to their well-being.

Evaluating individual children's records that have always been audited by the local authority is not a priority. It is for the local authority to evaluate the local authority and target their evidence gathering. If the local authority's evaluation is not robust, inspectors will need to do more work to understand the further primary evidence of what it means for children.

When evaluating individual children's experiences, inspectors will not grade individual cases.

If statutory functions have been delegated, the inspectors will evaluate the impact of these functions on children and young people. If the local authority where functions have not been delegated, the inspectors will evaluate the delegation functions, see the section on alternative delivery models.

When inspectors review children and young people's experiences they will evaluate. They will take into account the factors set out below:

- the quality of practice
- children at risk from direct harm, including from abuse, exploitation and neglect, inspectors will also want to identify those children and young people who are at risk of being harmed but who are not known to children's services. We also want to know what the local authority knows about those who have been missing from care, home and education. These children must be part of the local authority's strategic planning
- educational achievement and attainment
- types of placement, including out of area placements, kinship care or connected person' accommodation, and placements with parents, including those subject to Children Care Proceeding, Placement and Care Review (England) Regulations 2021
- at least 1 child's journey in care
- children and young people supported by a third party provider operating under a contract with the local authority. We will also want to see how the local authority has made sure that children and young people receive services for further information on delegated functions, see the section on alternative delivery models.

The lead inspector will take into account the local authority's self-assessment and strong on the in particular children and young people who are identified as being in need of help and protection, looked after children, care leavers and children subject to private law proceedings.

It is important that inspectors examine good practice as part of the inspection. We encourage local authorities to share with us what they think are the strongest good practice that it has identified through local case audit activity.

In evaluating children and young people's experiences, inspectors will test the following:

- early help – including early help assessments
- care and assessment
- children in need
- children subject to the investigation and for a plan)
- continuing help and support for families
- children in care proceedings
- the decision to remove
- permanence planning
- matching and placement decisions, including work to support return home to their family
- care leavers
- services to support and prepare for contemporary practice. This will usually be practice in the Ofsted inspection of local authority Trust. Inspectors will evaluate practice from before this to understand a child's journey.

Judgements are based on the impact on children and young people and the child's or young person's current situation, although inspectors will need some evidence of practice from before the current situation to understand what this implies for the current situation.

If cases files are already in good shape, the lead authority should arrange for inspectors to access the local authority's case management system. Inspectors will need to have access to the system for 2 weeks before they are needed for the fieldwork working with the child and family.

Inspectors will review a sample of cases from the previous 3 months (when appropriate), including those related to the sample of children and young people.

Protecting personal data

During inspections and visits, inspectors will gather personal information that is necessary to fulfill the statutory purpose of the inspection. We collect only what data we collect, what we do with it, how long we keep it for and people's rights under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Hearing the views of children and young people and their families

There are various opportunities to hear the views of children, young people and their families. Inspectors will use these wherever possible. These include:

- direct meetings – for example, meetings with children and young people are looking at closure
- Ofsted online questionnaire – for example, from the Children in Care Council
- views expressed by others advocating for children in care and care leavers, including independent reviewing officers
- views directly recorded on logs and recordings
- views expressed by practitioners
- views expressed by those advocating for children, young people and their families
- analysis of the annual questionnaire, including those from children in care and care leavers, and their parents and carers
- summary complaints data

Inspectors will look to children and young people wherever possible during the inspection, although they will not necessarily meet with every child. When talking to or about children or young people, inspectors are interested in understanding their experiences of services and how they are being supported by the local authority and partnership. Inspectors will also want to hear the views of children or charters in practice.

Inspectors will promote the local authority with guidance to help prepare children, young people, carers and families to be involved in the inspection. Inspectors will also want to know what the local authority has done to make sure children and their involvement in the inspection minimizes any potential disruption with them about their experiences. We have published 2 documents with the DCS and Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services for children and families when their involvement in inspections and visits means.

Inspectors will discuss any risks or ethical issues concerned with meeting children and young people. Inspectors will use their professional judgment and advice.

Inspectors will work with agencies to ensure that any child or young person with communication difficulties or disabilities has the opportunity to facilitate feedback that involvement in the inspection.

Inspectors will also want to hear the views of those in consultation with all children and young people who are in care, care leavers, children in need and their parents and families. We will want to see how feedback has been sought from children and young people who are in care, care leavers, children in need and children.

During a standard or short inspection, an inspector may meet with a group of foster carers, either a representative group or a group identified through an invitation to meet the inspection team.

Documentation

The inspection team will review the documentation requested in Annex A. Inspectors will also review the local authority's self-assessment. In Annex A, it includes documents that the local authority has made available. Inspectors must be clear why it believes the information is relevant to the inspection. The inspection team will not ask for information that is not relevant to the inspection as part of the inspection evidence.

Where inspectors are seeking further information

We sometimes have to ask for further information. This may be about a service or strategy or about an individual child's experiences.

Requests for further information about an individual child's experiences should not be seen as a negative. Sometimes it is because inspectors have insufficient information to make a judgement. It may be because we want to see a child's journey. For example, the inspection team may want to see what information or it may not have been recorded by the local authority. After the local authority has provided information, inspectors will need to see how it has been used to make decisions and how it has reduced the potential risk of harm to the child or young. They look seen. In some cases, requests for further information arise from inspection activity.

At the start of the inspection, the lead inspector will discuss with the DCS and inspectors for further information and share this with the DCS. The lead inspector will ask the DCS to make sure they are responsible for information the record.

Engaging with leaders and staff

Interviews with practitioners, managers and stakeholders

Inspectors will transparent evidence to talking to practitioners and/or managers. Inspectors will also want to talk to other stakeholders and partners. Inspectors will provide an overall list of the practitioners and managers they intend to meet with. Inspectors will also want to talk to the practitioners and managers of other agencies and partners. The lead inspector will discuss with the local authority and partners the best way to arrange these meetings. Inspectors will also want to discuss the meetings if this is the only way to triangulate evidence and is based on broad and representative samples.

When talking to practitioners and managers, inspectors will want to ask questions about a range of issues, for example:

- the quality and consistency of practice and management oversight
- the ways in which they are helped to strengthen families and minimize risk of harm to children and young people
- the availability, quality and effectiveness of services, including early help opportunities
- the ways in which the quality of multi-agency training and the development of practice and partnership arrangements are supported

Inspectors will usually speak about these issues alone with social workers. They may ask for to meet with other practitioners and managers.

If these individuals are not available, inspectors may look to those who are deputising for them or who are acting up.

If local authorities are in a process of reform or implementing an improvement plan, the lead inspector will discuss with the DCS how inspectors will evaluate this. This is likely to be reflected in the report, particularly the impact of leaders on frontline social work practice.

Statutory guidance states that the DCS and lead member should provide a "clear and challenging vision for children and young people in their area." The DCS should report to the lead member and chief executive. The lead member should report to the council leader or mayor on the statutory will ensure.

Inspection of the corporate and strategic leadership

The lead inspector will inform the DCS or another member of the senior staff of the inspection team's intention to meet with them. The DCS may want to be accompanied by other senior officers or lead members, which inspectors will agree to. The team. This gives the local authority the opportunity to challenge or correct factual inaccuracies. The DCS may want to be accompanied by other senior officers or lead members, which inspectors will agree to. The DCS is known that the DCS for the daily meeting or be issued by the lead inspector to the DCS.

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Inspection. They will not be a description of all the inspection activity. The inspection report will be based on the evidence that the inspection team has collected during the evidence and inspection activities undertaken during the inspection.

Although the inspection report will always offer the DCS opportunities for improvement, it will not always make recommendations. In some cases, they may not be available to meet with the local inspection due to other commitments. In such cases, the inspection report will state that the inspection team was not able to meet, or influence inspection activities.

Local family justice system

Inspecting services for children subject to care, supervision and adoption proceedings, it is important to understand local authority performance in the context of the local family justice system. This includes the local family justice leadership, particularly the performance of the local family proceedings court and the public law outline (PLO) pre-court stage. The local family justice system includes the children and family court advisory and support service (Cafcass) and the local authority children's services performance and quality assurance and the governance arrangements.

Inspection leads, in some circumstances, decide to speak with the local judiciary (likely to be the designated family judge and the chair of the family proceedings court family court public administration (court manager, legal adviser, justices' clerk) and Cafcass (the designated family court officer) to inform their lines of inquiry.

We will not make judgements about family justice partner organisations or judiciary in the report. Any key observations will be included in the report.

The range of information gathered will vary according to the lines of enquiry and how and what the inspection is exploring.

Contact with the local Cafcass service area will add to the evidence base. Contact with the local judiciary will:

- response to written questions from the inspection team
- the appropriateness of thresholds for care applications and timeliness of applications
- event and appropriateness of applications for section 20 care orders and care proceedings
- the quality of local social work practice in preparing for and in court (Public Law Outline)
- the timeliness and quality of assessments and reports to court, including quality assurance
- the effectiveness of independent reviewing officers
- the effectiveness of the local family justice leadership (Justice Board
- the involvement of the local judiciary in the local family justice system and their effectiveness
- the quality of the local authority's legal advice and representation
- the quality of the local authority's preparation for court hearings (to the local authority

Action on the post-court phase when a court is considering a question with respect to a child under the Children Act 1989, it can 'ask' a Cafcass officer or a local authority officer to 'advise, assist and befriend' the child. Cafcass officers should be involved with other local authority services in relation to children who parents are divorcing or separating. A national protocol between Cafcass and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) sets out the role of Cafcass officers in the closed case of the court. Inspectors will need to understand the role of the local authority. The protocol, called 'Determining whether Cafcass or a LA should provide advice' (Cafcass/MoJ) is available here: www.cafcass.com/home.aspx

Recording evidence

Throughout an inspection or visit, inspectors will maintain a record of the evidence they gather. The record will include a description and a brief summary of the evidence. Inspectors may use anecdotes recording spoken for this.

Each inspector, independent reviewing officer, independent person, or other inspection team member will record the evidence they gather. If the local authority provides any evidence on paper that inspectors need to take away, inspectors will ask for a copy and record the fact of this in the notes.

The lead inspector must allocate time for team inspectors to analyse their record and add relevant information to the inspection team's shared evidence record.

The lead inspector must ensure a clear way to discuss their individual findings and record shared evaluative summaries. These shared summaries will usually be based on the lines of enquiry and will include a description of the evidence and analysis. They will also include a judgement on the extent to which the evidence supports the judgement and the strength of the evidence.

Evaluative summaries must set out the inspector's or team's view about the quality, effectiveness and impact of the local authority's children's services. The practice that is in place. A best practice can be to achieve summaries that are clear, concise and focused on the evidence that supports judgements.

Inspectors should record evidence commentary in the evidence record. Inspectors should use the evidence record to show how the local authority does and expect to be aware of and is not responding to inspection findings, including those from previous inspections, complaints, and serious incidents.

Inspectors should also record summaries of examples of outstanding practice.

Inspectors should not use the names of individual children, young people or their families in the evidence record. They should use pseudonyms, initials, numbers and/or letters. Inspectors should not use the names of individual staff or practitioners.

The lead inspector manager will review the evidence record and challenge lines of enquiry and evidence. The lead inspector will ensure that the quality of the evidence record, which may include recommending areas for further investigation by the inspection team.

Finalising evidence

Towards the end of the inspection or focussed visit, the inspection team will complete its inspection activities and inspectors will need to agree their judgements. The lead inspector will lead a team discussion and analysis and evaluation of the evidence.

Inspectors will assign the evidence against the evaluation criteria. It is standard practice for inspectors to use a 'traffic light' system to indicate the strengths/weaknesses in quality of practice and outcomes for children and young people and demonstrably leading to improved outcomes. Inspectors will use the evidence to support their judgements. Inspectors will also use the evidence to inform their lines of enquiry, and to support their judgements. Inspectors consider that the evidence overall is most appropriately with a finding of good. This will be a judgement of 'good'.

At the end of a focused visit, the team will agree the main strengths and areas for improvement in children's services. Inspectors will:

Before formal feedback at the end of a standard or focused inspection, the lead inspector and quality assurance manager will usually inform the DCS of any significant inspection findings.

Feedback at the end of the inspection/visit

On the last day on site, the team inspector will invite the DCS and senior leaders to meet with them to provide feedback on the inspection findings and/or judgements and, most importantly, the evidence that supports them. The lead inspector will usually provide feedback to the DCS and senior leaders of the local authority about the inspection findings and the evidence that supports the development should have been discussed in the daily meetings, there should be no surprises. The DCS and senior leaders may also invite other key stakeholders to attend the feedback session. The lead inspector will facilitate the meeting.

Senior leaders are invited to engage in the feedback session and offer evidence supporting the presented findings and/or judgements.

Inspectors will provide feedback on the inspection findings and/or judgements to support the local authority to understand the evidence that is good, this includes understanding the factors that lead from being good, to outstanding practice.

- participate in a debate about the evidence presented that may cause them to follow the inspection and to ensure that senior leaders fully understand the evidence and its implications
- understand what is working well and what needs to improve, including the expansion of children and young people and families that it serves
- support understanding of the evidence and how it supports the judgements of the inspection and be disseminated accurately and inform the inspection report and judgements.

The feedback findings and/or judgements will inform the discussion with the local authority. Inspectors should share their analysed, prioritised and themed evidence with the DCS and senior leaders. The lead inspector will usually provide a summary of the inspection findings and/or judgements to the senior leaders to help understand the findings and not just a standard presentation of the evidence. The lead inspector will usually lead the feedback session. Inspectors will usually provide their evidence support and/or at the stage of the inspection.

The lead inspector will outline the team's final findings and/or judgements. Members of the inspection team will then describe the local authority's performance in the area of their inspection, including the evidence that has been obtained. They will then provide a summary of the evidence, including the strengths and areas for improvement, and the implications for the expansion of children and young people through evidenced examples.

At the feedback meeting, the lead inspector will provide a summary of the sharing the draft inspection letter for factual accuracy checks, publishing the inspection letter and having a follow-up.

Engaging children's services commissioners appointed by the Secretary of State for Education

At the end of inspection or visit, a commissioner appointed by the Secretary of State for Education may be receiving an inter-letter by the local authority to inform the commissioner of the inspection. The commissioner will be aware that is having a monitoring role in the local authority and will be expected to be inadequate at its previous inspection. The commissioner is an important stakeholder.

Ofsted will contact the DCS to announce the inspection or visit. The local authority should inform the commissioner of the inspection. Ofsted will also inform the DfE of the commissioner. The lead inspector will usually contact the commissioner to inform them of the inspection.

The lead inspector should contact the commissioner for their view of the action taken by the local authority. This will usually be in the week before feedback. The lead inspector will use the commissioner's information to refine their lines of enquiry, and as evidence.

It is for the local authority to decide whether the commissioner should attend the feedback session. The commissioner does attend, this will be a valued event.

In some circumstances, the commissioner may be providing or facilitating direct improvement support to the local authority. Inspectors will not make judgements about the quality of the support provided by the commissioner. The commissioner is employed by a local authority or organisation delivering improvement support. Inspectors will not make judgements about the commissioner, inspectors will make judgements about the support after

Evaluation criteria and grade descriptors

Our inspection draws on good experience for children and young people looks like. Inspectors use this to make their judgements.

Overall effectiveness

Inspectors will determine the overall effectiveness grade (outstanding or below outstanding) on the basis of the evidence they have been gathered and by looking at:

- the extent of good practice across the service
- the extent and quality of the impact on inspected services
- whether areas for improvement have been identified and the extent to which leaders and managers have addressed them.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection

Annex A of this framework is likely to be inspected against:

Evaluation criteria	Grade descriptors
Helping children	Children, young people and families who need help and protection are helped to make lasting changes to improve their lives. Children, young people and families who need help and protection are helped by services that are responsive to their needs and circumstances and that work together to make a difference. They receive help that is timely and statutory work is clearly and effectively recorded.
Recognising, responding to and assessing risk and need	Children, young people and families who need help and protection are helped by practitioners who are able to recognise and respond to signs that children, young people and families may need help and protection. Practitioners are able to assess the risk and need to children's safety and well-being and to the safety and well-being of other children, young people and families. Practitioners are able to make good use of information from other agencies and services to inform their work with children, young people and families. Practitioners are able to make good use of their own and others' professional judgement and critical thinking to make sound decisions about children's safety and well-being. Practitioners are able to work with children, young people and families who are hard to reach. Children's safety and well-being is promoted and risks to their safety are reduced.
Participation of children, young people and families	Children, young people and families benefit from clear and meaningful relationships with practitioners who are able to listen to their views and who take account of their wishes and feelings. Children, young people and families are helped to participate in services that are designed to meet their needs and to participate in decisions about their own and their family's lives. Children and young people are listened to. Practitioners and managers are able to understand the lives of children, young people and families and their family and cultural backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Supporting children, young people and families	Children, young people and families receive services at the right time and in the right way to meet their needs. Services are flexible and responsive to the needs of children, young people and families. Services are based on a clear understanding of the needs of children, young people and families. Services are based on a clear understanding of what works to keep children, young people and families safe and promote their welfare. Services are based on a clear understanding of what works to meet the needs of children, young people and families who are vulnerable or who have special educational needs or disabilities.
Supporting children, young people and families who are looked after, adopted or care leavers	Children who are looked after, adopted or care leavers receive services that are responsive to their needs and circumstances. Services are based on a clear understanding of what works to promote the welfare of children who are looked after, adopted or care leavers. Services are based on a clear understanding of what works to promote stability and good outcomes for children who are looked after.
Participation of children and young people in their own care and in care reviews	Children and young people are listened to and their views and wishes are taken into account in their own care and in reviews of their care. Children and young people are helped to participate in services that are designed to meet their needs and to participate in decisions about their own and their family's lives. Children and young people are helped to understand their rights and responsibilities. Children and young people are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Quality and stability of placements	Children and young people are provided with stable and secure placements that are appropriate to their needs. Children and young people are provided with high-quality care that promotes their health and development. Children and young people are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Leaving care	Young people who are leaving care are supported and prepared for adulthood and independence. Young people who are leaving care are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.

The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers

This area is likely to be judged good if the following apply:

Evaluation criteria	Grade descriptors
Planning and review for children in care and care leavers	Children and young people have been supported to think in a timely fashion and their views, wishes and feelings are ascertained and taken into account in their care and in reviews of their care. Plans for children in care and care leavers are ambitious and aspirational and are underpinned by a clear understanding of their needs.
	If it is not possible for children to return home, suitable and timely plans for permanence are made in the best interests of the child.
	Reviews of children's care are timely. Reviews of care plans for care leavers are timely. Children and care leavers are safe and feel safe. They have a trusted adult in their life who they can rely on.
Health	Children and young people are given a good assessment of their health and are helped to improve their health. Their health needs are identified and met.
	Care leavers are given a good assessment of their health needs and are helped to improve their health.
Learning and achievement for children in care and care leavers	Children and young people make good educational progress or achieve other personal goals in their education, training or employment, taking into account their ability and circumstances.
	Children and young people who do not attend school have personal access to suitable good education. Children who are excluded from school are helped back into education at the earliest opportunity. Children who are at risk of exclusion are helped to avoid it.
	Children and young people enjoy what they do and have access to a range of social, recreational and cultural activities. Children and young people are helped to understand the importance of these activities for their well-being and development.
Stability and security of placements for children in care and care leavers	Children and young people are safe and settled where they live. They know who to turn to if they need help or are worried about their safety. Children and young people are helped to understand how to keep themselves safe. Children and young people are helped to understand the importance of healthy relationships and how to develop them. Children and young people are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Care leavers' transition to adulthood	Care leavers have timely, effective pathway planning. Care leavers are helped to understand their rights and responsibilities. Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Care leavers' relationships	Care leavers have stable, supportive relationships with their families and others. Care leavers are encouraged to maintain and add their DfE family and friends data so that their contacts are kept up to date. Care leavers are helped to understand the importance of healthy relationships and how to develop them. Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Care leavers' accommodation	Care leavers have good advice and enhanced opportunities. Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings. Care leavers are protected by their local authorities from being forced into living in harmful or inappropriate accommodation or homelessness.
Care leavers' education, training and employment	Care leavers are helped to make good educational progress or achieve other personal goals in their education, training or employment, taking into account their ability and circumstances. Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Care leavers' health	Care leavers are given a good assessment of their health and are helped to improve their health. Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Care leavers' participation	Care leavers are helped to participate in services that are designed to meet their needs and to participate in decisions about their own and their family's lives. Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Care leavers' leaving care	The local authority provides care leavers with a good offer of accommodation, support and other assistance. Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Care leavers' parenting	Care leavers have good advice and support in their parenting. Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.
Care leavers' financial support	Care leavers are helped to understand their own and others' cultural and family backgrounds and the impact of these factors, and to support their ascertainable wishes and feelings.

Guidance on inspecting local authorities that are part of a regional adoption agency

An Ofsted inspector will be in touch with the local authority lead officer for children's services (DCS) and the local authority's lead adoptive parent (LAP) to discuss the local authority's arrangements for inspection. The DCS may nominate a senior officer to act as the adoption leading or deputy to the local authority's lead – see the frequently asked questions later in this section.

On inspection

The LACS framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance outline how Ofsted will inspect the local authority's arrangements for providing support to foster and adoptive carers and children in care and care leavers when inspecting local authorities that may be part of a RAA.

Ofsted's inspectors will use the evidence they gather to inform their judgements about how well the local authority and its partners are working together to have the arrangements comply with their statutory responsibilities and meet the needs of children in care and care leavers. Inspectors will evaluate the performance of local authorities, and their partners, in relation to what works and this across with the local authority.

In most authorities, a small sample of cases will be inspected, with the planning, decision making and matching for the children in that local authority. Each inspection will also include a sample of adoptive parents who are RAA or local authorities, the agency decision maker, and other relevant managers at stages in the case management process. We would want to be assured of the quality of the work with children, adoptive parents, and foster carers, and the impact related to the planning, decision making and matching for children. We would expect to see:

- the voice of the child (there is a sufficient and suitable pool of adoptive families for the local authority to meet the needs of its children, and the decision making and choosing whether children are waiting to be placed and how quickly they are placed with their adoptive families, and how well the local authority and its partners are working together to ensure that children are placed with their adoptive families in a timely way, and this is not the case. This is a VfM task.
- if any of the local authority's children are placed for adoption, inspectors will look at the quality and impact of the recruitment and assessment of these adoptive families, and how well the local authority and its partners are working together to ensure that children are placed with their identified families. We will discuss with the local authority the steps it takes to assess the quality of its adoptive families.

It remains the local authority's responsibility to ensure that the best interests of children and their needs are at the heart of the plan is adoption, even though this may be delivered through a RAA.

Inspectors will only visit the premises of the RAA if that is the only way to meet the DfE's requirements for the inspection of the local authority's adoption authority. They will not, in most circumstances, visit the premises of the RAA.

We are not inspecting the effectiveness of the RAA, but we do take into consideration the local authority's arrangements with and to the RAA. We focus on how the local authority discharges its functions through the RAA and how well the local authority and its partners are working together to ensure that through the aim of the RAA, children in care and care leavers are supported to achieve their ambitions and aspirations, and that they are in a stable and secure range of information, including the range of options the local authority uses to ensure that children in care and care leavers are supported to achieve their ambitions and aspirations, and that they are in a stable and secure.

If the RAA arrangements hinder children achieving permanence and/or other moves emerge, inspectors will look at what the local authority uses resources from the local authority to discharge the duties they are being.

If the local authority's arrangements with the RAA are not in the DfE, we only focus on the children of that local authority and equally on the availability of the local authority's adoption offer.

The DCS should notify the management board of the RAA that an inspection has started.

Evaluating practice and writing the report

If a local authority is involved in an RAA we will, factually, name the RAA, and we will report on the local authority's work with the RAA. We will report on this with the focus of what overall impact the local authority's work with the RAA has had on the local authority's children.

We will report factually the name of the RAA. While we will report on any strengths or weaknesses in the local authority's work with the RAA and/or or make any judgement on the RAA.

The evaluation of the quality of children's experiences, local authority oversight and leadership are VfM tasks. If there is an RAA, the social care regulatory inspectors will not evaluate the adoption service's cases as identified by the lead inspector.

Frequently asked questions

Q. Should the RAA inspect with Ofsted?

The majority of RAAs will be several local authority services working together and not a separate legal entity. Ofsted inspections of RAAs, if they are, will be in the same way as Ofsted inspects any other local authority children's services. Most of other types of bodies (such as local authority trading companies or not for profit) are not inspected by Ofsted. Ofsted will not inspect the RAA, but will focus on a little and proportionate way on how the local authority is working with the RAA to ensure that children in care and care leavers are supported to achieve their ambitions and aspirations and that they are stable and secure.

Q. Does RAAs or children's services need to be registered as a children's company. Are these RAAs required to register with Ofsted?

No. As a trading company, RAAs are not required to register because the local authority and is required to register as a RAA and/or the DCS responsibility.

Q. Should the local authority children's services inspectors be involved in a serious that are about a foster, registered as a RAA/VFA and part of a RAA?

Yes. Ofsted's children's services inspectors will inform the Ofsted Children's Care (OCC) and social care regulatory inspectors. The local authority's adoption service is delivered through a trust and registered as SAA and/or a VFA, the OCC will lead the inspection. The OCC will inform the local authority children's services inspectors.

Q. Can the local authority's children's services delegate the role of the responsible officer for the RAA?

For local authority funded RAAs, each local authority must appoint one of its officers to be the responsible officer for the RAA. The role of the RAA responsible officer is set out in the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005. The RAA responsible officer must be one of the local authority's officers and not an officer from another local authority.

RAAs that have chosen to set up as a local authority trading company model (Teckal) will need to have a responsible officer. The responsibilities of the RAA responsible officer are set out in the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 and in the Teckal model. The RAA responsible officer is the RAA's responsible officer.

Q. Should local authorities that are participating in RAA arrangements inspect the RAA? Should the local authority inspect the RAA or should the local authority children's services inspect?

Yes. Individual local authorities should use SOC 2 for inspecting, or of arrangements with the RAA. The local authority children's services should be notified of changes to the RAA and the local authority should be informed of the adoption service to be sent to us by the individual local authority. The local authority should be informed of the RAA's responsible officer.

Q. Where can I find more information on the government's plans for adoption?

In 2016, the DfE published a new strategy for adoption, which set out how the government plans to address challenges in the adoption system over the next 4 years.

Guidance on ILACS focused visits during the restart of routine inspection

On 17 March 2020, the Secretary of State for Education wrote to DfE's social care providers, including Ofsted, to inform them of the decision to suspend, recently, HMI's inspections with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Ofsted should concentrate on providing assurance across as many local areas as possible.

Ofsted's ILACS focused visits framework was developed to provide a proportionate and flexible approach to inspection, based on professional judgements. As we return inspection, we have developed a flexible approach to focused visits, which will be used to inspect children's services, including without making a graded judgement on Ofsted's 4-point scale.

Ofsted's ILACS focused visits will be based on the framework for ILACS inspection visits. Unless otherwise specified in the guidance below, inspectors will follow the guidance and methodology for the inspection of the ILACS framework.

How the focused visits will work

Focused visits usually centre on topic areas that identify particular service areas (for example, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, for example, care leavers). The topic ways in which these focused visits differ from our usual arrangements are:

- they will have a broader scope, but with a particular focus on the quality of practice and impact on children
- fieldwork will last between 3 and 5 days in order to deliver this broader scope and will increase the team size to 4 or 5 (see HMI and 1 advisor, HMI)
- they will be carried out in a proportionate way, with a lighter touch than a full inspection, and will not result in a judgement on Ofsted's 4-point scale. We will make the decision in line with the principles set out in the main body of the ILACS framework.

For local authorities that are inadequate and whose monitoring visits starts from the beginning of the inspection, inspectors will use the time to gather evidence for the monitoring visit. Inspectors will also use the time to gather evidence for Ofsted's interested inspection) or return to routine monitoring visits, depending on the outcome of the focused visit and the local authority's ILACS.

Prior to an inspection, the lead inspector will contact the local authority by telephone to get a feel for the local authority's current position and to discuss the focus of the inspection. Unless otherwise specified in the guidance below, inspectors will follow the guidance and methodology for the inspection of the ILACS framework.

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Guidance on inspecting local authorities that are part of a regional adoption agency

An Ofsted in Mind is not a separate legal entity. Ofsted does not have powers to inspect the effectiveness of the RAA. Ofsted will inspect the RAA's work with the local authority's children's services. Ofsted will inspect the local authority's arrangements with the RAA. Ofsted will also inspect the local authority's work with the RAA. Ofsted will also inspect the local authority's work with the RAA. Ofsted will also inspect the local authority's work with the RAA.

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Q. Where can I find more information on the government's plans for adoption?

In 2016, the DfE published a new strategy for adoption, which set out how the government plans to address challenges in the adoption system over the next 4 years.

local authorities may request a deferral of an inspection.

Inspectors will take all reasonable steps to work within the arrangements that the local authority has in place to deliver the inspection of children's services. The inspection will work with the local authority to ensure that, wherever possible, the inspection does not unnecessarily impact on the day-to-day work of the local authority and its partners.

Scope

These focused visits will evaluate the quality and impact of key decision-making in the following practice areas:

- help and protection
- children in care and care leavers
- impact of leaders

Help and protection

In the help and protection area, inspectors will evaluate:

- the effectiveness of the front door, with specific reference to any rise in referrals and the impact on the quality of assessments and decisions
- the progress and impact of the local authority's response to case and care reviews (those who have experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation)
- the quality of the local authority's response to children who are in early help and the protection of children.

Children in care and care leavers

In the children in care and care leavers area, inspectors will evaluate:

- edge of care/care proceedings, particularly those subject to a letter before proceedings or the pre-proceedings process (stage of the Public Law Outline, local authorities are required to write to parents setting out what needs to change and what will happen if it does not change)
- the focus on practice with children who are subject to care and care leavers, including how the local authority has maintained contact with the children in care and care leavers during the pandemic (Covid-19)
- placement decisions, including the quality of matching, particularly when sufficiency is a challenge

Impact of leaders

In the impact of leaders area, inspectors will evaluate:

- the quality of supervision and the impact of staff 'in the quality and impact of practice with children and families'
- management and elected members' effective responses to staff and practice issues
- the effectiveness of leaders in leading and contributing to multi-agency working that leads to effective social care practice

Focused visit arrangements

During the inspection, all activities will take place over the same scope and the same timeline. The inspection will last for 4 weeks. The first 2 weeks will be spent on the lead inspector and deliverer (any specific lines of enquiry or emphasis arising from the initial 'notification to inspect' letter). The last 2 weeks will be spent on the full inspection team (the lead inspector and the deliverer).

Inspectors will need to look at what has happened for children and families in the 6 months before the visit to understand children's experiences. Children's experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic will be a key area of focus for the visit. Inspectors will apply. Our focus will be on understanding the impact that has been carefully thought out, evidenced by results in the best possible decisions for children in the context of Covid-19 and beyond. We will also be interested in understanding how the local authority has kept children who are vulnerable safe during pandemic when circumstances may have resulted in decisions that may have been different in normal circumstances. We will also be interested in how the local authority practitioners and managers have kept the children safe in these circumstances.

Inspectors will need to understand how any of the changes to regulation and guidance for children's services in Coronavirus (Covid-19) Recovery Framework 2020 have impacted on the experiences of children and families. This will include looking at management oversight.

We will give 10 working days' notice of the visit. The inspection team will contact the local authority by telephone and email. The Covid-19 PPE and Covid-19 Security concerns mean that "getting off the doorstep" will be difficult.

Timeline

Day	Activity
Tuesday	Notification (overnight)
Wednesday and Thursday	Notification (overnight) Notification (overnight) Notification (overnight)
Friday	Local authority liaison: informed data and list of months sufficient (only for lead inspector)

Week 1 – off-site analysis

Day	Activity
Monday	Local authority liaison: remainder of liaison (by COP) Analysis (by lead inspector)
Tuesday	Lead inspector: first day of analysis (by lead inspector) Analysis (by lead inspector)
Wednesday and Thursday	Lead inspector: first day of analysis (by lead inspector) and analysis (by lead inspector)
Friday	Prepare inspection (lead inspector)

Week 2 – fieldwork

Day	Activity
Monday	Return office and prepare (lead inspector)
Tuesday to Thursday	Fieldwork – primary evidence gathering
Friday	Lead inspector finishing focus visit letter

Notifying the local authority and requesting information

We usually carry out LA inspections Monday and ends 4 working days' notice. We will carry out focused inspections on a Tuesday to Friday. We will contact the local authority by telephone and email. We will give 10 working days' notice of the visit. The inspection team will contact the local authority to request information. The lead inspector will ask for information in advance of the start of the inspection. The lead inspector will ask for information in advance of the start of the inspection. The lead inspector will ask for information in advance of the start of the inspection

understand and manage its social work practice. The local authority should share its best and most recent information. The local authority must clearly direct the lead inspector to the relevant documents or sections within them. If the reasons for sharing a particular piece of information are unclear or the lead inspector decides the information is not relevant to the scope of the inspection/visit, inspectors will not read it.

The local authority should provide the information below as soon as it is able to and by the deadlines set out at the beginning of Annex A.

Each of the topics is numbered. When the local authority shares the information with inspectors, it should include the number in the document name as a prefix. This will enable inspectors to easily identify and retrieve information and support the local authority to link its evidence to the topic.

Impact of leadership on social work practice with children and families

Item number	Text
1.01	Organisational structure showing lines of reporting and accountability (when relevant, this should include information about structures for alternative delivery model(s).
1.02	The local authority's scheme of delegation, case transfer policy (including step-up/down from or to early help) and any workflow documents/flowcharts that will help inspectors understand how children's social care work is structured.
1.03	Management information reports that the local authority uses to monitor and improve performance. This should include the most recent monthly/quarterly report(s) and the last annual overview document.
1.04	The local authority's arrangements to gather feedback from children and their families, complaints and serious case reviews and what the local authority has done in response to improve practice.
1.05	The most recent self-evaluation of social work practice and any peer review or similar external evaluation of practice, carried out in the last 12 months.
1.06	A sample of local authority and multi-agency practice audits of work with children in need, those at risk of significant harm and those who are looked after or care leavers carried out in the 6 months before inspection and any associated improvement/action plans.
1.07	The workforce profile for social care staff working with children in need, children subject to child protection plans, children in care and care leavers (including: the number of qualified social workers and their post-qualifying experience; the number of vacancies for permanent staff; the number of locum/agency staff; the extent of staff turnover/stability and sickness levels; and average caseloads of staff by team). This should include information the local authority uses to understand its workforce profile within particular localities, offices or teams.
1.08	The workforce development strategy, including the core training and development offer for social workers and their managers and any evaluation of the impact of this carried out in the last 12 months.
1.09	The social work supervision policy and a list of all case-holding social workers, including the number of cases held on the date of notification. This should include a list of all workers' allocated cases, the number of open cases they held on the day of notification and their job title. Include the number of open cases unallocated on this date. If possible, please provide this information on an Excel spreadsheet. This list should be as up to date as possible. However, the local authority may provide a pre-prepared version showing the position up to the Wednesday before notification.
1.10	The thresholds/criteria for the provision of services to children at different levels of need.
1.11	The annual report by the local safeguarding partners.
1.12	The safeguarding arrangements agreed by the local safeguarding partners.
1.13	Minutes from the last 12 months of meetings of the local safeguarding partners.
1.14	Rapid reviews carried out following child safeguarding incident notifications in the 12 months before the inspection. You can find guidance on rapid reviews in chapter four 4 of 'Working together to safeguard children'.

Children in need of help and protection, including early help

Item number	Text
2.01	The early help strategy, any associated action plan and relevant management information on the quality, timeliness and impact of the early help provided to children and their families. This should include, as a minimum, the number of early help assessments or similar (for example, the common assessment framework), completed in the last 12 months and the number currently receiving a service through a team around the family.
2.02	Information about children missing from home or care and children suffering or at risk of sexual exploitation, and the services these groups of children receive. This should include: - a list of children who have been missing or at risk of sexual exploitation within the last 12 months, including the child unique ID for each child (in line with the ID used in the child-level lists). This should indicate the current status of each child (care leaver, looked after child, child protection, child in need or not receiving a statutory service) and highlight those that are both missing and at risk of sexual exploitation. - any child sexual exploitation or missing strategies and associated action plans. - any workflow documents/flowcharts that will assist inspectors in understanding work done to reduce the risks to children from sexual exploitation and going missing and how this work is structured and delivered. - the most recent performance management and quality assurance information used to monitor and develop practice in these areas of work.
2.03	A report on those children known to the local authority who are currently being privately fostered. This report should include, for each child: - child unique ID and the date of birth. - date private fostering arrangement commenced.
2.04	The information the local authority uses to monitor the welfare of electively home educated children, in particular those children who are electively home educated and are either on a child protection plan, education, health and care (EHC) plan or are a child in need. If available, please provide the policy on elective home education.
2.05	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. This report should include for each child the: - child unique ID or unique pupil number (UPN) and the date of birth. - type of educational provision that they are receiving, including home tuition. - number of hours of 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.

Children in care and care leavers

Item number	Text
3.01	The strategic plan for children in care, the corporate parenting strategy/plan and the last 3 sets of minutes from the meetings of the corporate parenting board.
3.02	The latest sufficiency strategy and any associated action or commissioning plans.
3.03	The arrangements for permanence planning and any associated strategy, action plan and management information used to monitor performance.
3.04	The most recent adoption and fostering panel reports to the local authority.
3.05	The local child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) strategy, any associated action plan and recent, relevant management information, including length of waiting time, average length of help offered and any outcome information routinely collected.
3.06	The management report of the independent reviewing officer service.
3.07	The annual report of the headteacher of the virtual school and any other relevant plans.
3.08	The data the headteacher of the virtual school and the local authority use to monitor the attainment, progress, attendance, exclusion, employment and training of children in care and care leavers.
3.09	Evidence of an appropriate focus on maintaining and improving the health of children looked after, including data on health (physical, psychological and emotional) assessments and dental checks.
3.10	The number of young people currently placed under secure accommodation welfare orders (section 25 of the Children Act 1989).
3.11	Any care leavers strategy, associated action plan and relevant recent management information used to monitor and develop practice (to include 'in-touch' figures and information about the completion of pathway plans).
3.12	Information the local authority uses to track and manage cases in the Public Law Outline (PLO).
3.13	The local authority's offer for care leavers.
3.14	A list of care leavers known to be living in houses in multiple occupation. This list may be up to 1 month before the date of notification.
3.15	Information about the recruitment, assessment, training and support of foster carers. This should include: - the local authority's register of foster carers. - the 3 most recent fostering panel minutes (if the local authority is part of a partnership arrangement to deliver its fostering services, this should be the most recent minutes that relate to children that the local authority is responsible for). - overview of training for foster carers and data about take-up/completion. - recruitment strategy for foster carers. - statement of purpose for the fostering service. - list of support groups run for foster carers
3.16	Information about the recruitment, assessment, training and support of adoptive carers: The local authority's list of adopters. The 3 most recent adoption panel minutes (if the local authority is part of an RAA, this should be the most recent minutes that relate to children that the local authority is responsible for). - overview of training for adopters and data about take-up/completion - recruitment strategy for adopters - statement of purpose for the adoption service - list of support groups run for adopters
3.17	The information the local authority uses to monitor which of its children are in unregulated provision. This should be a list of each child living in unregulated provision and include their unique ID, age, the date this provision started and details of the provision. The local authority may share a list that they created any time in the month before they are notified of the inspection.

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Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and support

The UK has left the EU

Check the new rules for January 2021

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Disabled people
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