



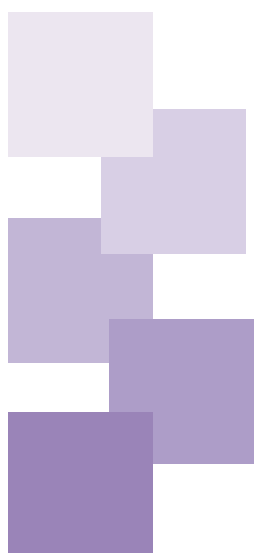
CONNEXIONS PARTNERSHIPS



A framework for inspection

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

June 2001



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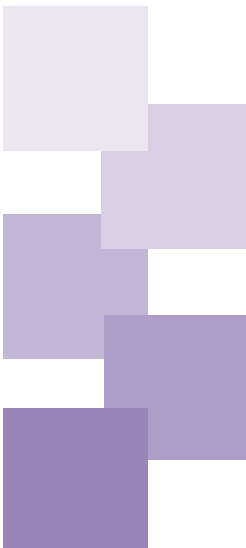
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Reference number: HMI 278



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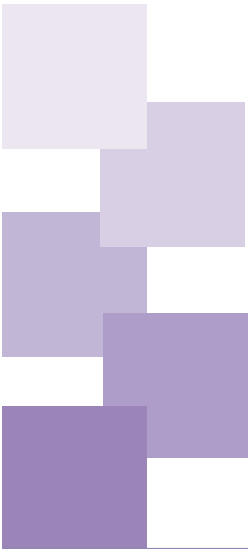
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INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSES OF INSPECTION

The purposes of inspection are to:

- give an independent public account of the standards achieved, the quality of provision and the efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are managed by Connexions partnerships;
- help bring about improvement by identifying strengths and weaknesses and proposing key issues for action;
- keep the Secretary of State informed of the standards, quality and efficiency of Connexions partnerships and whether they provide value for money.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Inspectors must:

- evaluate the work of the partnership objectively, be impartial and have no previous connection with the partnership which could undermine their objectivity;
- report honestly and fairly, ensuring that judgements accurately and reliably reflect what the partnership achieves and does;
- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy and sensitivity;
- do all they can to minimise stress, in particular by ensuring that no individual is over-inspected;
- act with the best interests and well-being of staff and young people as priorities;
- maintain purposeful and productive dialogue with staff and communicate judgements of the work of the partnership clearly, frankly and respectfully;
- guarantee, where legally permissible, the confidentiality of information about young people and staff and of judgements made about the work of individuals.

WHAT IS EVALUATED AND REPORTED ON

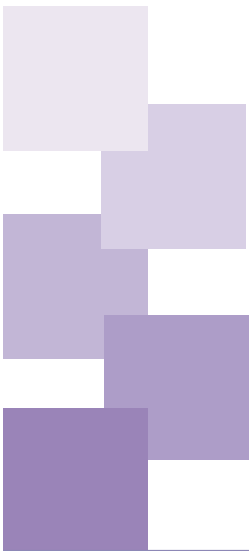
All inspections will focus on the experience of young people and will evaluate and report on:

- the quality and effectiveness of the partnership;
 - the achievement of young people;
 - the responsiveness of the partnership;
 - the quality of provision;
 - the effectiveness and efficiency with which the provision is managed and its quality assured and improved;
 - the value for money provided.
-

THE QUALITY OF JUDGEMENTS AND COMMUNICATION

Inspectors must ensure that:

- evidence gathered is sufficient to sustain secure judgements;
- judgements are consistent with the inspection evidence and represent the collective view of the inspection team;
- communication of findings, orally and in writing, is clear, well argued and based convincingly on evidence gathered before and during the inspection.



THE EVALUATION SCHEDULE

PART A: SUMMARY

1. Basic information about the partnership and the area served
2. Performance Indicators (yet to be agreed with the DfEE)
3. The evidence base of the inspection
4. The main strengths and weaknesses of the partnership
5. What the partnership should do to improve

PART B: COMMENTARY

The following key questions, set out under five broad headings, will guide the inspection:

The quality and effectiveness of the partnership

1. How successful is the partnership in implementing the aims of the Connexions Service?

Achievement

2. How well do the young people within the partnership achieve their goals?

Access and participation

3. How responsive is the partnership to the range and diversity of young people in the area?

The quality of assessment, support, guidance and programmes of learning

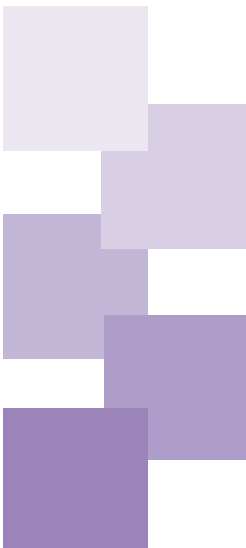
4. How effective is Connexions practice – assessment, support, guidance, teaching and learning?

5. How well do the programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of young people and satisfy national requirements?

6. How do resources affect achievement and learning?

Leadership and management

7. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting young people in their personal and social development?



THE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

1. HOW SUCCESSFUL IS THE PARTNERSHIP IN IMPLEMENTING THE AIMS OF THE CONNEXIONS SERVICE?

To answer this question evaluate and report on:

- how well the partnership
 - (i) meets its agreed primary targets for participation and achievement;
 - (ii) contributes to cross-Government targets relating to particular groups of young people;
- how actively the partnership involves young people at every stage of its operation;
- how well the partnership represents the interests of all young people within its area;
- how successfully the partnership works with external agencies to support the enhancement of services for young people.

In making judgements consider, where applicable, the extent to which the partnership:

- *demonstrates that both national and local targets are being met;*
- *has enabled young people to exert a real influence within its structures;*
- *Is representative of the key players involved in working with young people in the area;*
- *contributes to the planning decisions of strategic bodies and institutions involved in the provision of education and support services;*
- *has established mechanisms for ascertaining the quality of those services to which it directs young people;*
- *enhances the opportunities for learning and development in its area through close liaison with local businesses, community groups and other relevant bodies.*

Possible sources of evidence:

- Partnership agreements
- Protocols
- Structure charts
- User surveys
- Discussions with young people and other stakeholders
- Discussions with key staff

ACHIEVEMENT

2. HOW WELL DO THE YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN THE PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS?

To answer this question, evaluate and report on:

- the success of young people in achieving
 - (i) individual academic targets
 - (ii) goals for personal and social development
- how well young people engage with, and participate in, the services available to them.

In making judgements, consider, where applicable, the extent to which young people:

- *acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to raise their achievement and support their social and educational inclusion;*
- *have a broad and accurate knowledge and understanding of the world of work and of the education, training and employment opportunities that are available locally, regionally and nationally, including higher education;*
- *are well informed about the range of social, voluntary and leisure-based opportunities for learning and development;*
- *know their own strengths and weaknesses, personal qualities and preferences;*
- *cope with their lives and new roles and situations, such as starting work, moving on to further education or living independently;*
- *assume increasing responsibility for their personal development;*
- *are effective in making choices in relation to anticipated education, training and employment;*
- *set themselves realistic personal goals and develop plans of action to achieve these goals;*
- *recognise and overcome potential barriers to learning and social inclusion;*
- *view the work of the partnership positively;*
- *form and maintain constructive relationships;*
- *respect other people's differences, particularly their feelings, values and beliefs.*

Possible sources of evidence

- Evidence forms from direct observation of sessions, including interviews conducted by personal advisers
- Discussions with young people
- Portfolios and other work
- Progress files
- Action plans

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

3. HOW RESPONSIVE IS THE PARTNERSHIP TO THE RANGE AND DIVERSITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE AREA?

To answer this question evaluate and report on:

- the partnership's assessment of the needs and demands of the young people in the communities it serves;
- how successfully the partnership provides an inclusive service, tailored to individual requirements;
- how well the partnership ensures that young people in its area are aware of the services available to them.

In making judgements consider, where applicable, the extent to which the partnership:

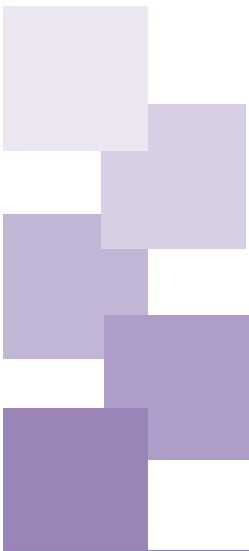
- *has collected comprehensive information about the young people in its area;*
- *understands the nature of the area and the communities it serves;*
- *consistently involves young people in the identification and assessment of their needs;*
- *has effective strategies to enable all young people to gain access to support and provision responsive to their needs;*
- *ensures that relevant programmes are provided in a range of locations easily accessible to all young people and at times convenient to them.*
- *has a clear and realistic action plan for work with its agreed priority groups, both for the short and the longer term;*
- *is sensitive to, and provides for, the needs of young people within the target age group, irrespective of gender, ethnicity and disability;*
- *promotes its work actively across the area;*

and young people:

- *view the services as being relevant and free from barriers to access;*
- *participate regularly in the services available.*

Possible sources of evidence

- Community profiles, including demographic and socio-economic data and key trends
- Planning documents of related agencies and key providers, eg LEA behaviour support plans, educational development plans, housing strategies, health improvement programmes, youth justice plans, children's service plans, LSC strategy documents
- Discussions with representative groups of young people
- Attendance, participation and tracking data collected centrally by the partnership and by individual providers
- Observations and/or minutes of meetings of relevant groups, eg youth and school councils, Youth Offending Team drug action teams, voluntary youth organisations
- Evidence forms from direct observation of assessment and advice sessions and detached and outreach activity



QUALITY OF ASSESSMENT, SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRAMMES OF LEARNING

4. HOW EFFECTIVE IS CONNEXIONS PRACTICE - ASSESSMENT, SUPPORT, GUIDANCE, TEACHING AND LEARNING?

To answer this question, evaluate and report on:

- the effectiveness of provision for young people including those with learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties and disabilities, those at risk, those for whom English is an additional language and those who are gifted and talented, referring to:
 - the assessment of need;
 - support and guidance;
 - the teaching and learning associated with Connexions goals;
 - young people's response to what is provided for them.

- the tracking of young people's progress and its use in developing their learning and support plans.

In making judgements, consider, where applicable, the extent to which personal advisers, teachers and youth workers:

- *have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and key processes underpinning their work;*
- *challenge and inspire young people, expecting them to make the most of themselves;*
- *respect and are receptive to young people's views;*
- *plan effectively, setting clear objectives that young people understand;*
- *establish and sustain positive working relationships with young people that help them to identify and achieve their academic and/or personal goals;*
- *assess young people's needs accurately and negotiate individual learning plans with them;*
- *use a range of methods to enable all young people to learn effectively;*
- *assess written work thoroughly and constructively, and use assessments to inform subsequent teaching and learning support;*
- *prepare young people for transition to the next stage of education, training or employment;*
- *support young people in their progress through the learning plan and, in consultation with them, evaluate and record their progress;*
- *observe appropriate guidelines on confidentiality;*

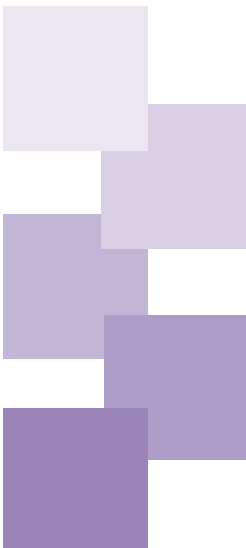
- *have up-to-date information about, and links with, a wide range of support structures, specialist services and other opportunities for learning to which they can refer young people when necessary;*
- *liaise effectively with parents, carers, and all those with a legitimate interest in the progress made by individual young people;*

and the extent to which young people:

- *have high aspirations, including progression to higher education, and are actively involved in constructing and implementing their learning plans;*
- *understand what they are doing, how well they are progressing, and what further steps they need to take.*

Possible sources of evidence

- Evidence forms from direct observation of assessment, support, guidance and teaching sessions and informal activities
- Planning documents and schemes of work
- Assessment records
- Observation of young people's involvement in planning, carrying out and evaluating their work
- Discussion with personal advisers, teachers, youth workers, young people, parents and carers
- Discussion with young people



5. HOW WELL DO PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES MEET THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND SATISFY NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS ?

To answer this question, evaluate and report on:

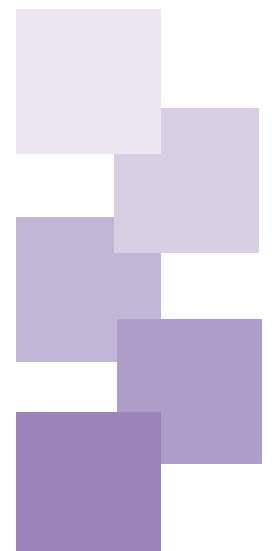
- the breadth and relevance of the available programmes and activities;
- the involvement of young people in the planning of provision;
- whether programmes fulfil the relevant statutory requirements.

In making judgements, consider, where applicable, the extent to which programmes and activities:

- *support young people to continue in, or return to, education and training and gain appropriate qualifications;*
- *provide effectively for personal and social education, including behaviour support programmes, health education, sex education and attention to substance misuse, and for careers and citizenship education;*
- *offer opportunities for work experience and work-based learning;*
- *enable young people to obtain impartial information, support and guidance, particularly at key points of transition during adolescence;*
- *are developed in consultation with young people, on the basis of diagnostic assessment and in response to their interests and aptitudes;*
- *include effective referral systems to specialist information and advice services as required;*

Possible sources of evidence

- Policy and programme planning documents
- Patterns of use of different types of provision
- Evidence forms from direct observation of sessions
- Discussions with managers, personal advisers, teachers, youth workers and young people
- Partnership agreements
- User surveys



6. HOW DO RESOURCES AFFECT ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING?

To answer this question, evaluate and report on:

- the suitability of designated staff associated with the work of the partnership;
- the adequacy, suitability and use of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation;
- how effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve the partnership's objectives.

In making judgements, consider, where applicable, the extent to which:

- *there are sufficient numbers of personal advisers, teachers and youth workers with the appropriate qualifications and experience to match the requirements of the programmes and activities;*
- *all staff are deployed to ensure effective use of their expertise in meeting the priorities of the partnership;*
- *accommodation is fit for purpose, particularly where the work is of a confidential nature, and is accessible to all young people;*
- *young people have access to up-to-date and relevant resources that support their individual learning plans, contribute to their achievements and encourage them to accept increasing responsibility for their personal development;*
- *learning resources and accommodation allow young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate;*
- *priorities and agreed outcomes are supported by responsible financial management and the equitable distribution of resources across the partnership.*

Possible sources of evidence

- Analysis of full-time, part-time, administrative and volunteer staff deployment
- Job and roll descriptions
- Discussions with young people, personal advisers, teachers, youth workers, administrative staff and volunteers
- Evidence forms from direct observation of sessions
- Map of overall provision, including dedicated or other accommodation.
- Observation of the condition, appearance, accessibility and use of other buildings, equipment and materials
- Analysis of use by young people of accommodation and other services and facilities
- Budget papers, including information about the allocation of funds to cost centres and delivery partners

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN RAISING ACHIEVEMENT AND SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT?

To answer this question, evaluate and report on:

- how well the partnership sets a clear direction for the work, in response to the needs of young people, providers and local communities;
- how successfully the management of the partnership ensures coherent and effective support for young people in all aspects of its provision;
- how actively young people are engaged in developing the Connexions service in their area;
- how effectively the partnership monitors and evaluates its success in raising achievement and supporting young people and whether steps are taken to secure improvement;
- how well the partnership measures its cost-effectiveness.

In making judgements consider, where applicable, the extent to which:

- *the partnership sets a clear direction for the work through strategic objectives, targets and values that are fully understood and implemented by all staff, including sub-contractors;*
- *there are explicit aims, values and strategies promoting equality and inclusion;*
- *management responsibilities and accountabilities are clearly defined and accepted;*
- *young people are involved in the governance and management of the partnership and in decisions about its development;*
- *inter-agency co-operation is effective and secured by comprehensive and clearly-formulated service level agreements;*
- *performance management, appraisal and supervision are successful in improving the quality of provision;*
- *the professional development needs of all staff are identified and met and their effectiveness enhanced as a result;*
- *quality assurance arrangements, informed by performance indicators and quality standards, are carried out in conjunction with young people and include direct observation of work;*
- *the partnership collects accurate participation and tracking data and uses the information gathered to ascertain which young people are being reached;*
- *the partnership measures its cost-effectiveness within both the local and the national contexts, taking full account of the principles of Best Value.*

Possible sources of evidence

- Policy documents
- Business and delivery plans
- Discussions with a range of stakeholders, including young people and staff
- Performance management and appraisal documents
- Training plans
- Monitoring records and self-assessment reports
- Quality standards and performance indicators used in evaluation
- Internal reviews of quality
- Participation and tracking data
- Best Value reviews

