

JOINT INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN WITHIN THE WIDER COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

Summary Key issues:

This paper aims to summarise the framework for the joint inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children within the wider Comprehensive Area Assessment and recommended actions to ensure that we are prepared for this inspection.

Background

Until December 2008, Ofsted assessed with other inspectorates, how well local services work together to improve outcomes for children and young people through the Joint Area Reviews (JAR) of children's services. From 1 April 2009 these were replaced by Comprehensive Area Assessments and a new programme of inspection of outcomes and services for safeguarding and looked after children's services. The new programme will be carried out by inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission and will contribute to Ofsted's annual reviews of the performance of each local authority's children's services function and will be taken into account in HMCI statutory annual performance rating for each authority.

Ofsted has published an overarching framework for inspection – *Inspections of safeguarding and looked after children services: Framework for inspection and guidance for local authorities and partners:*

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/content/download/9517/105616/file/Inspections%20of%20safeguarding%20and%20looked%20after%20children%20services.doc>

and this paper outlines the key issues and the role of the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust and the current position with respect to our preparations.

Key facts

The inspection process

Before and during the inspection:

- 1. The inspection will specifically evaluate the effectiveness for the work of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) and the OCYPT including the impact they have on improving outcomes for children and young people.**
2. We will be inspected at least once before April 2012; the timing will be influenced by other inspection evidence.
3. There are two separate inspections held at the same time – Safeguarding and Looked After Children. Maximum notice period is usually 10 working days. (The DCS will be contacted by Ofsted.)

4. Inspection teams will normally consist of at least three Ofsted inspectors and a Care Quality Commission inspector. Inspectors will usually be on site for up to 10 working days.
5. Case file scrutiny will play a significant role in both elements of the inspection. At least eight cases **selected by the inspectors** before the fieldwork begins, a further 12 will be **selected by the inspectors** at the start of the field work. Inspectors will also scrutinise the analysis and evaluation of case files undertaken by the local authority (and partners).
6. Surveys of children within the authority care and recent care leavers will be carried out through the office of the Children's Rights Director at Ofsted. Inspectors will also take account of an annual Ofsted survey of the views of social workers and other safeguarding professionals.
7. Inspectors will undertake activities that focus on evaluating the outcomes for children and young people and the quality and impact of services in helping to improve outcomes.
8. Inspectors will want the following documentation:
 - 1) Minutes of the last six Local Safeguarding Children Board meetings.
 - 2) Details of Children's Trust Board membership, and minutes of last six meetings.
 - 3) Children and Young People's Plan and the latest review of Children and Young People's Plan, including any updates to the plan.
 - 4) Lists of existing groups of service users and their parents/carers.
 - 5) Summaries of the views of service users and other stakeholders, as collected by the council.
 - 6) Local performance management and quality assurance information, including case-related audit evidence, relating to safeguarding, child protection and looked after children services.
 - 7) Data relating to the common assessment framework.
 - 8) Workforce data and current pressures and priorities.
 - 9) Summaries of any management reviews of safeguarding and looked after children services conducted in last two years.
 - 10) Management reports of the independent reviewing officers.
 - 11) Details of placements in council, voluntary or private children's homes, fostering or adoption agencies.
 - 12) Arrangements for identifying and responding to missing children and young people
 - 13) Organisation charts for council and partner agencies.
9. A set up meeting will take place four days after notification; the purpose to provide further information about the scope of the inspection, practical arrangements etc.
10. Gradings will be on a four point scale – outstanding, good, adequate and inadequate.

11. There will be limiting grades:

For the safeguarding element of the inspection, the limiting grades are:

- Overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate if either of the two safeguarding outcomes (children and young people are safe and children and young people feel safe)¹ is judged as inadequate.
- Overall effectiveness is unlikely to be good or better if either of the two safeguarding outcomes (children and young people are safe and children and young people feel safe) is not judged as good
- Leadership and management are unlikely to be adequate if the grade awarded for equality and diversity is inadequate.

For the looked after children element of inspection, the limiting grades are:

- Overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate if any outcome judgement is inadequate
- Overall effectiveness is unlikely to be good or better if either staying safe or enjoying and achieving is not judged as good
- Enjoying and achieving are unlikely to be good if looked after children and young people are not making at least good educational progress overall in relation to their starting points and capability
- Leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if the grade awarded for equality and diversity is inadequate.

12. The inspection of the safeguarding and looked after children inspections will normally take place at the same time.

Inspectors will also have access to information that Ofsted already holds:

- the Ofsted performance profile²
- findings from other relevant Ofsted inspection and regulatory activity, including notifications.
- summary of judgements made in serious case review evaluations.
- Ofsted's fostering and adoption datasets (completed by providers).
- views of service users, social care staff and third sector organisations gathered through new questionnaires.
- summary of substantiated complaints about the council and its partners made to Ofsted that relate to safeguarding and looked after children.
- local area agreements.

13. The outcome of the most recent unannounced inspection – Oxfordshire December 2009 inspection:
[http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxcare_providers/la_download/\(id\)/5915/\(as\)/CAR/car_200](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxcare_providers/la_download/(id)/5915/(as)/CAR/car_200)

¹ Children are safe: the effectiveness of services in taking reasonable steps to ensure that children and young people are safe; children and young people feel safe: the effectiveness of services in taking reasonable to ensure that children and young people feel safe.

² *Comprehensive Area Assessment: annual rating of council children's services for 2009*, Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090024.

[9 931.pdf](#) and progress with action plan will be evaluated. Progress made in implementing recommendations from SCRs will also be evaluated.

14. Inspectors will speak with children and young people and parents and carers.
15. Activities during the inspection will include reviewing case files and documentation, conduct meetings and hold discussions with users, managers, health professionals and agencies, other staff and stakeholders.

Following the inspection:

16. A single report will follow the inspection, it will contain separate sections and grades for safeguarding and looked after children, the report will set out inspection findings using text and grades.
17. Draft report will be sent within five working days after the inspection to the Director of Children's Services for a factual check.
18. Director of Children's Services must return the draft with any comments on factual accuracy within five working days.
19. Final report setting out the inspection findings will be sent to the Director of Children's Services within 15 working days of the end of the inspection, copied to lead member, chair of safeguarding board and chief executive of the local authority.
20. Final report will be published on Ofsted website within 20 days of the inspection (irrespective of appeals or complaints).

Timetable Overview

Day	Activity
1	Notification of the inspection and accompanying documentation sent by email to Director of Children's Services, including arrangements for children's surveys, social worker and community and voluntary sector questionnaires.
2	Lead inspector telephones office of Director of Children's Services to agree date and time of set-up meeting. Council sends lead inspector copy of core set of documents as set out in pages 1 and 2.
3	Council sends Ofsted letter to looked after children and children who have left care in the past 12 months, which explains how their views are to be gathered and invites them to complete a children's survey.
4	Council provides the lead inspector with a list of current cases, including any analysis.
5	Set-up meeting with the lead inspector includes outline of particular areas for enquiry. Inspector informs council of initial case files selected for audit and review (see Annex 4).
6–10	Council prepares audit of initial case file selection.
11–19	Fieldwork starts and inspectors on site. Additional case files selected by inspectors. Case file audits received by inspectors.
20	Inspectors conclude fieldwork in the morning and provide feedback to council and its partners in the afternoon. Feedback of results of children's surveys provided to council.
21–25	Drafting and quality assurance of report. Draft report sent to local authority copied to

Local Safeguarding Children Board for factual accuracy check on day 25.

- 26–30 Local authority completes the factual accuracy check and inform lead inspector of any concerns.
- 35 Final report sent to local authority.
- 40 Report published on the Ofsted website.

Update on Preparation

A small multi-service task and finish group has been formed which is meeting weekly to focus on the key issues and ensure that we are well prepared. The group is currently focusing on ensuring that our staff are briefed and this report is part of that briefing.

Role of the OCYPT / OSCB

The inspection will specifically evaluate the effectiveness of the work of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) and the Children's Trust Board, including the impact the boards have on improving outcomes for children and young people. All members of both boards need to be clear with respect to roles and responsibilities and understand how the two boards link to one another.

Recommendation

Members of the board should therefore:

1. familiarise themselves with the detailed framework and grade descriptors:
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/content/download/9517/105616/file/Inspections%20of%20safeguarding%20and%20looked%20after%20children%20services.doc>
2. use this briefing note to inform key colleagues within their own organisations;
3. familiarise themselves with the new inspection section on the OCYPT website.

Sian Rodway

Strategic Lead, Performance

Commissioning, Performance and Quality Assurance

sian.rodway@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Annex 1

Key Colleagues / Partners who will definitely be involved in either preparation for, or be responsible for documentation

	Document	Owner
1.	Minutes of last six Local Safeguarding Children Board meetings.	Chair – OSCB / Business Manager, OSCB
2.	Details of Children’s Trust Board membership, and minutes of last six meetings.	Chair – OCYPT / OCYPT Project Officer
3.	Children and Young People’s Plan and the latest review of Children and Young People’s Plan, including any updates to the plan.	Strategic Lead, Performance
4.	Lists of existing groups of service users and their parents/carers.	Service Manager – Communications and Performance / Strategic Lead, Play and Participation
5.	Summaries of the views of service users and other stakeholders, as collected by the council.	Service Manager – Communications and Performance / Strategic Lead, Play and Participation /participation sub group
6.	Local performance management and quality assurance information, including case-related audit evidence, relating to safeguarding, child protection and looked after children services.	Head of Service/ Performance leads across the partnership via the performance subgroup
7.	Data relating to the common assessment framework.	Strategic Lead, Locality and Workforce Development
8.	Workforce data and current pressures and priorities.	Strategic Lead, Children’s Workforce Development / Strategic HR Business Officer/Workforce Subgroup
9.	Summaries of any management reviews of safeguarding and looked after children services conducted in last two years.	Strategic Lead, Safeguarding / Strategic Lead, Children Looked After
10.	Management reports of the independent reviewing officers.	Strategic Lead, Safeguarding
11.	Details of placements in council, voluntary or private children’s homes, fostering or adoption agencies.	Strategic Lead, Prevention and Protection / Strategic Lead, Children Looked After
12.	Arrangements for identifying and responding to missing children and young people.	Area Service Manager, Central and Local Authority Designated Officer, Schools
13.	Organisation charts for council and partner agencies.	Service Manager – Communications and Performance co-ordinating

Annex 2

Focus Groups – Safeguarding		
	Group	Owner ie the person responsible for co-ordinating and preparing colleagues on behalf of the Trust
1.	Chair and members of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trust Board.	Strategic Lead, Safeguarding / Strategic Lead, Performance
2.	Children, young people, their parents or carers receiving children in need services.	Strategic Lead, CLA / Strategic Lead, Prevention and Protection
3.	Any existing groups of users.	Strategic Lead, Play and Participation / Strategic Lead, CLA
4.	Lead manager(s) for safeguarding and common assessment framework.	Heads of Service (Strategic Lead, Safeguarding / Strategic Lead, Locality and Workforce Development)
5.	Managers responsible for commissioning, planning and monitoring services.	Strategic Lead and Head of Joint Commissioning / Strategic Lead, Performance
6.	Director of Children's Services, Lead Member (and where appropriate support members) and Chief Executive.	DCS / LM / Chief Executive
7.	Managers of Primary Care Trust and police responsible for reviewing points of referral and the quality of risk assessments, decision-making and multi-agency working.	PCT / police manager
8.	Managers of the accident and emergency department of the local hospitals.	A & E managers
9.	Strategic group responsible for tackling domestic violence.	Strategic Lead, Prevention and Protection
10.	Focus group of designated headteachers, teachers and support teachers.	Head of Service, Raising Achievement
11.	Focus group of independent reviewing officers.	Strategic Lead, Safeguarding
12.	Focus group of social workers involved in safeguarding and protecting children.	Strategic Lead, Prevention and Protection
13.	Focus group of social work team managers for child protection and children in need.	Strategic Lead, Prevention and Protection / Strategic Lead, CLA
14.	Multi-agency staff focus group for early intervention and prevention	Strategic Lead, Locality and Workforce Development
15.	Health focus group for safeguarding, including general medical practitioners (GPs) and designated health professionals.	Health
16.	Focus group of staff responsible for the education of young people excluded from education or educated other than at school.	Head of Young People and Access to Education Service
17.	Representatives from the community and voluntary sectors.	Assistant Delivery Director (VCS Consortium) for Connexions)
18	Manager/staff of the independent advocacy service.	tbc

Focus Groups – Looked After Children		
	Group	Owner
1.	Representatives of the Corporate Parenting Board.	Strategic Lead, CLA
2.	Meetings with looked after children.	Strategic Lead, CLA
3.	Meetings with care leavers.	Strategic Lead, CLA
4.	Heads of service and lead manager(s) for looked after children, including for educational achievement.	Head of Service / Strategic Lead, CLA / Strategic Lead, Prevention and Protection
5.	Managers responsible for commissioning, planning and monitoring placements.	Strategic Lead and Head of Joint Commissioning / Strategic Lead, Performance
6.	Director of Children's Services, Lead Member (and where appropriate, support members) for looked after children and Chief Executive.	DCS / lead member / Chief Executive
7.	Lead officers for attainment and attendance, to include the virtual headteacher.	Head of Service, YPAE / Head of Raising Achievement Service / Headteacher, Virtual School for Looked After Children
8.	Lead officers for the physical and mental health of looked after children, including a designated doctor and nurse.	tbc
9.	Focus group of designated teachers and support teachers.	Strategic Lead, School Improvement
10.	Focus group of independent reviewing officers.	Strategic Lead, Safeguarding
11.	Focus group of managers responsible for corporate parenting.	Strategic Lead, CLA
12.	Focus group of parents, for example, where appropriate, parents of children included within the case-tracking sample, parents of children on care orders placed at home, or parents whose children have been accommodated.	Strategic Lead, Play and Participation
13.	Multi-agency staff group for looked after children and care leavers, which will comprise those staff involved in the cases selected for examination.	Strategic Lead, CLA
14.	Hold discussions with focus group of social work team managers.	Head of Service
15.	Meeting with manager/staff of the independent advocacy service.	tbc
16.	Representatives from the community and voluntary sectors.	tbc
17.	Visit a social care or multi-agency looked after children's team, to include support for children on the edge of care.	Head of Service
18.	Hold discussions with staff at the care leaving service.	Strategic Lead, CLA
19.	Visit a targeted service for looked after children (this will depend on the particular services available in the area).	Strategic Lead, CLA

Annex 4

Following notification of the date of the inspection, the council will be required to provide the lead inspector with a list of the following cases:	
1.	All children and young people currently subject to a child in need plan.
2.	All children and young people currently subject to child protection plans.
3.	All looked after children and young people, including those in external placements and care leavers.
4.	Any unallocated cases or cases awaiting transfer to another team.
For all children, councils will be asked to supply the following information, as recorded on the integrated children's system:	
5.	Child's unique identifier
6.	Date of initial referral
7.	Date of birth
8.	Gender
9.	Ethnicity
10.	Legal status
11.	Details of any disability.
For the safeguarding case files, councils will be asked to detail whether the child is:	
12.	Subject to child protection plan
13.	Previously subject to a child protection plan
14.	Subject to a child in need plan
For looked after children, councils will be asked to clarify the current placement using the categories within the integrated children's system:	
15.	Placement with parent(s)
16.	Placement with relatives/friends
17.	Foster placement with relatives/friends
18.	Foster placement
19.	Placement with adopters
20.	Residential placement (children's home)
21.	Specialist residential placement (therapeutic)
22.	Specialist residential placement (residential school)
23.	Specialist residential placement (health, including child and adolescent mental health services)
24.	Secure accommodation
25.	Supported lodgings
26.	Other – please specify.