

CAA and Ongoing Ofsted Inspection Arrangements

General Points

- The new regime is at least as heavy for children's services as the previous framework APA, JAR and CPA.
- CAA reports will be published in November each year taking into account the annual score for children's services. This means that assessment activity will take place mainly between April and September.

CAA Area Assessment

- Pilot authority experience suggests that it is very similar to JAR except it is very desk based.
- The Local Strategic Partnership will play a major role in Area Assessment. One of the key factors for inspection will be how far the Strategic Partnership has met LAA and Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. ***Thus whilst all 198 NIs are important, the NIs in the LAA will attract most attention.***
- Inspectors will be assessing how well local public bodies are working together and prospects for future improvement. They will expect partners to be aware of how well each other's services are performing.
- The Area Assessment will be reported as a narrative, not a numerical score and will contain red and green flags:
Green flag – "exceptional performance" or "outstanding achievement".
Red flag – "significant concerns about outcomes and future prospects for outcomes which are not being tackled adequately".

Because inspectors will look at different things in different authorities, there is unlikely to be much comparability between authorities with regard to Area Assessment. (Although the press and others are likely to do so).

CAA Organisational Assessment

- Very similar to the CPA judging:
 - Capacity to improve.
 - Action planning.
 - Success of interventions to address poor performance but with a bigger focus on OUTCOMES.
- Data heavy exercise. Data quality is high on the agenda.
- Part of the "Managing Performance" evidence will include specific assessment of the performance of children and young people's services, undertaken by Ofsted when determining the annual score for children's services.

Children's Services Ofsted Inspections

- 1) The **annual grading of children's services** will be based exclusively on data and information drawn from a variety of sources with NO FIELDWORK.
- 2) The three-yearly **inspections of safeguarding and looked after children** will be more like the JAR, though concentrating on these specific areas.
- 3) **Unannounced inspections of "front door services"**, i.e contact referral and assessment arrangements for children in need and children who may be in need of protection and guidance for local authorities and partners. One in every 12 month period and they could be at more than one office at the same time.

1. Annual Rating of Council's Children's Services – including new Performance Profile

- Annual rating will come from a new Ofsted profile of the quality of services and outcomes for children and young people in each LA area.
- Three blocks in the profile:
 - findings from regular inspections. (A)
 - findings from safeguarding and LAC inspections, unannounced front door inspections, findings from recent JAR, findings from triggered inspection. (B)
 - performance against ECM indicators from the NIs. (C)
- Four fixed performance bands:

80% good or better	–	Dark green	} To be reviewed annually.
65-79% good or better	–	Light green	
50-64% good or better	–	Amber	
Under 50% good or better	–	Red	
- Comparisons will be made with statistical neighbours and national figures.
- First profile will be available in June 2009 via Ofsted SharePoint site. Content will be reviewed annually.
- Ofsted will use the profile to arrive at the annual rating. Emphasis will be on Sections A and B.
- The first annual performance rating will be published at the end of November 2009 and evidence will be considered right up to the point of publication.
- Pre publication rating will be sent to the LA in mid September, to allow for the 2008/09 social care NI data to be included (We will have five working days from receipt to appeal in writing).
- The annual rating will use CAA scoring:

- performs excellently – significant minimum requirements
 - performs well – exceeds minimum requirements
 - performs adequately – meets only minimum requirements
 - Performs poorly – does not meet minimum requirements.
- Will be reported in CAA Organisational Assessment of the council. It will carry significant weight. If in the lowest categories this will have a significant bearing on the overall managing performance score and therefore on the council score.

2. Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services

- All LA areas will have at least one inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services in a three-year period following 1 April 2009. Timing will be influenced by evidence from other inspections and regulation including the annual unannounced inspection of "front door services".

If overall effectiveness of safeguarding or looked after children is judged to be inadequate a further inspection may follow.

- A maximum of 10 working days notice will be given (exception to this would be where there has been an inadequate judgement or serious concerns raised).
- It will be a single inspection and findings from the "front door" inspection will feed into this.

- **Inspections of safeguarding will assess the effectiveness of children's trusts and local children's organisation and assess whether policies comply with statutory requirements and guidance. In doing this inspectors will take a broad view of the following:**
 - **how well agencies and professionals work together to identify, safeguard and promote the welfare of potentially vulnerable groups of children and young people that live in their area. These groups might include asylum seeking children, children in secure settings, disabled children and children treated by health services.**
 - **how well practice is supported and underpinned by effective local policy making and implementation.**
- **It will evaluate the impact of safeguarding systems and framework across local public services on safeguarding and protecting children. This will include:**
 - **outcomes for children and young people.**
 - **how well safeguarding is prioritised.**
 - **whether child welfare concerns are identified and responded to appropriately by the relevant agencies.**
 - **the extent to which public agencies discharge their responsibility to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.**

- **Looked after children's elements will focus on outcomes, impact of services, quality of risk management / decision making, quality of care planning, review and support, placement strategy, safeguarding of looked after children, school attendance, support for families, effective corporate parenting, preparation and after leaving care.**

- Four-point scale: Outstanding, Good, Adequate, And Inadequate.
- There will be limiting grades in both elements of the inspection.
- There is a list of the documents required. Note that information Ofsted already has will also be used. Case files will also be analysed. Implication for recording on ICS. The guidance lists details which we will need to provide on each child requested.
- Set-up meeting (similar to JAR) will take place four days before inspection.
- Inspection itself will have a similar approach to JAR.
- Full evaluation schedule will enable us to ensure that we have information on and a story for each.
- Illustrative grade descriptors are available.
? We could do a "dry run" now against these to see where we currently stand.
- Children will be asked to complete a questionnaire.
- A single report with separate sections including text and grades will follow inspection.
- Inspection will span 40 days from notification email to DCS to published report.

3. Unannounced Inspections of Contact, Referral and Assessment (front door services / office)

- Inspection of front line practice.
- From 1 April 2009, by two suitably experienced HMIs which will feed into Annual Review and CAA.
- All LAs will have an unannounced inspection in any one 12 month period. The schedule will be based on evidence of performance **and** the new Ofsted whistleblower hotline. A follow-up inspection could take place.
- We will be notified immediately before the inspection (same day) that inspectors will carry out the inspection at **one** or **more** of our offices.

- **The scope of the inspection will include:**
 - **looking at practice in relation to contact, assessment and referral processes and how well practice supports the effective management of risk and minimises the incidence of child abuse and neglect.**
 - **inspectors' activity will focus on analysing and discussing case files.**
 - **inspectors will consider any evidence as to how well initial assessment informs case planning.**
 - **the main focus will be on local authority services, but findings about partners' contribution to the quality and multi-agency prevention and support for safeguarding including the impact of the LSCB and Children's Trust Board will also be reported.**
 - **quality and timeliness of references and assessment:**
 - **quality of management oversight and decision making**
 - **quality of case file recording and arrangements for informing and involving senior managers in decision making.**

- Case files – current and closed in the previous six months that proceeded / did not proceed:
 - CAF
 - Contracts
 - Referrals
 - Initial Assessments
 - Care Assessments
 - Section 47 enquiries

- Inspectors will meet with the manager on arrival and make arrangements to meet workers to read files and discuss caseload.
- If any unresolved issues of significant risk to a child or young person are identified, the relevant senior manager will be informed immediately and this will be confirmed in writing.
- Oral feedback will be given to DCS and / or Head of Service before leaving at the end of the inspection and where possible chair of the local safeguarding board.
- Letter will follow (within five days to DCS), there will not be a grade and will be published on Ofsted website within 20 days.

*Siân Rodway, Lead Officer – Performance
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