

Briefing note on the new JTAI inspection

This note is based on a discussion about the new multi-inspectorate Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) at the ADCS Standards, Performance and Inspection Policy Committee at the end of May. It includes hints and tips from LAs that have already been inspected.

The JTAI includes inspectors from Ofsted, the CQC, HMI Constabulary and HMI Probation plus data analysts and QA staff. Each JTAI includes a 'deep dive' theme, which is currently CSE and missing from care, home or education. Future themes will be announced by Ofsted in due course.

This multi-agency inspection seeks to establish the quality and impact of assessment, planning and decision making in response to notifications and referrals; the partnership response to all forms of child abuse, neglect and exploitation at the point of identification and the leadership and management of this work (including the LSCB).

The JTAI inspection framework and guidance is available [here](#).

Methodology

Week one

The inspection team will review a suite of information in advance of the notification call being made. This includes the results of recent inspections, SCRs and any other relevant intelligence. The notification period for the inspection is nine days however the first two weeks of this four-week process are conducted off site and a great deal of activity will take place during this time.

During week one the inspection team will request the LA's Annex A data, they'll also ask for a list of all children and young people deemed to have been at high risk of CSE in the last 12 months (please note the deep dive element of the JTAI will change regularly). A short summary of actions, data and decisions for each child is then required.

From this list the lead inspector will select 20 children and request further information on them. Five to seven cases will ultimately be selected for a comprehensive 'end-to-end' review of the experiences these children and young people have had in the local area.

Schools are not directly involved in this process however case tracking will involve schools, GPs, commissioned providers and voluntary sector partners as well.

Week two – multiagency audit / evaluation

A multi-agency audit looking at the experiences of children and young people is the key focus in week two of the JTAI. This process can be very time consuming. Audit is a routine activity in children's services but some of our partner agencies aren't used to undertaking intensive case reviews or doing things in the way Ofsted expects them to be done. Partners must be prepared for this.

Week three – on site

The inspection is focussed on the 'front door' of each agency, for the local authority this feels very much like the old 'contact and assessment' inspection. There was a significant focus on

access arrangements for children with disabilities and CQC inspectors were involved in this alongside Ofsted. The focus on CSE cases meant that social work teams from all parts of the service can be involved.

A series of focus groups and meetings will need to be arranged for the inspection team to gather further information and explore any issues that have emerged in weeks one and two. Frontline practitioners are interviewed separately to their managers. The LA will be tasked with leading the timetabling of these meetings. This is a complex task.

Keep in Touch (KiT) meetings during week three will involve reps from all inspectorates and all partner agencies too – a large room is required. These meetings offer an opportunity for the partnership to challenge emerging opinions and judgements; don't wait until the draft letter is received during week four.

Week four – feedback and QA

Each individual safeguarding agency in the local area receives a letter at the end of the inspection outlining strengths and areas for future improvement. A single thematic report will be published at the end of each block of six JTAI inspections outlining the findings of the 'deep dive' element of this activity; the purpose of this is to drive improvement (the first one is expected in September 2016).

Tips and observations from the inspected

Ofsted will set up Huddle for all partners to use but the logistics of working across different systems and organisations mean this technical process will be far from smooth and access requests take time.

The quality of data and if / how this is being used intelligently really comes to the fore in the JTAI. Inspectors are looking for evidence of positive outcomes not just compliance and outputs. Have some real life examples ready that demonstrate how performance indicators have been used to improve children's lives.

Ensure the detail of Annex A matches up with the other evidence provided for the deep dive exercise.

A tremendous volume of data is requested throughout the inspection, this needs carefully managing. Ideally the LA's performance team should own this task but that the senior leadership team in children's services should be kept fully informed – no surprises!

The inspection process was intensive and some partners can be surprised at the level of challenge from the different inspectorates, however, the local safeguarding partnership has been strengthened by the experience and feels like an 'agency team.'

It's a marathon, not a sprint! Take care of yourself and your teams.