



JOINT INSPECTION OF SERVICES TO PROTECT CHILDREN

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DUNDEE INSPECTION OF CHILD PROTECTION

Why are services to protect children and young people being inspected?

In 2002 the Scottish Executive commissioned an audit and review of Child Protection across Scotland. One of the recommendations of the report of this audit and review "*It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright*" was that "a further national review of child protection should be undertaken".

In March 2004, Scottish Ministers announced a multi-disciplinary inspection, which would cover all relevant services in each local authority area and would take place over a three-year period.

The Services for Children Unit (SfCU) within Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) was established to undertake this task. The aim of the Inspection is to ensure that children are being protected, to help agencies improve their service and to share good practice.

Information about the Services for Children Unit

The inspection team, which will usually include associate inspectors (current practitioners), will be multi agency including inspectors with backgrounds in education, social work/social care, the police, health and the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration.

Dundee Inspection Arrangements

The Dundee inspection will include a number of phases as detailed in the following pages.

What will the Inspectors look for?

The inspection will focus on all services that impact upon the well being of children and families in Dundee. This will include services provided by health, the police, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and voluntary and private organisations as well as those provided by the local authority. The inspectors will look to evaluate the impact of services on children and families and answer the key questions set out in the publication *How well are children and young people protected and their needs met?* <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/hwcpnm.pdf>.

The five key questions are as follows:

- ◆ How effective is the help children and young people get when they need it?
- ◆ How effective do agencies and the community work together to keep children and young people safe?
- ◆ How good is the delivery of key processes?
- ◆ How good is operational management in protecting children and young people and meeting their needs?
- ◆ How good is individual and collective strategic leadership?

Announcement of inspection and information gathering

The chief officers of relevant agencies in the Dundee will be notified, 12 weeks beforehand, of the exact date on which inspection in Dundee will commence. Formal notification will be received about November 2008.

Inspectors will visit Dundee to meet Chief Officers and others as part of their preparations, in the first week of January 2009. The first phase of inspection (case record reading) will take place during week commencing 23rd February 2009.

A pre-inspection return (PIR) involving all agencies has to be completed for return within a specified period of the date on which the above notification is received. The PIR provides details of cases in specific categories (e.g. children whose names have been on/added or removed from the Child Protection Register and any referrals made to Police, Social Work, Health & SCRA in the preceding 12 months), and information regarding agency and interagency policies and protocols. This will assist the planning of the inspection and the identification of the case sample the inspectors will consider during their time in Dundee.

Each agency has nominated a key person who will assist the inspection team. The nominated key people in Dundee will work together as a Link Group to ensure the completion of the PIR and to assist with co-ordination of the Inspection. Every effort will be made to avoid asking for information that can be readily accessed in other ways. Members of the Link Lead Officer Group are outlined at the end of this newsletter.

Phase One

Case and Information analysis

From the PIR information supplied the inspection team will select a sample of cases that they wish to analyse in greater detail. Nominated key staff will be notified of the cases that have been selected in advance. They will be asked to move relevant case records to a central location (still to be identified) where the inspectors will be located. Desk space for 10/12 people, locked filing facilities and computer access will have to be provided in this location.

During this first phase a questionnaire will be sent out to identified groups of staff. Analysis of the information provided by the PIR, the questionnaire and from other relevant public documents will be analysed prior to the start of phase two of the inspection. Phase one will last for approximately 5 working days.

Phase two

Interviews, focus groups, observations and visits

Phase 2 inspection activity, which will take place a number of weeks after Phase 1, will be determined by findings from the PIR and phase one research as well as by the range of service provision within Dundee. A number of staff, children, young people and parents, identified from the cases considered in phase one, will be interviewed.

Focus groups will be held with a range of staff, carers and service users. Inspectors will attend meetings including child protection case conferences, reviews and children's hearings. A number of senior and specialist staff, including elected members and chairs of management committees and boards, will be interviewed. At the end of this phase inspectors will give verbal feedback on their findings to the chief officers of the services inspected and to the chair of the Children & Young Persons Protection Committee (CYPPC).

What happens after the Inspection?

Following inspection, a draft report will be produced which will be checked for accuracy with the agencies involved in the inspection. The final report is expected to be published within 12 weeks of the end of the inspection. The report will be published on the HMIe website.

Follow through inspections will take place to ensure that recommendations in the report are being carried out. The timing of this will depend on the balance between strengths and areas for improvement in the original report.

What about confidentiality?

Inspectors will normally keep confidential any personal information they access during the inspection. If they identify information which leads them to believe a child or young person is at risk of harm, this information will require to be discussed further and may be shared more widely. Inspectors will not use names or describe individuals in their report. All children and their families involved in the inspection will be sent a leaflet outlining the process.

Further Information

Further information about the Inspection can be found on the HMIE website www.hmie.gov.uk.

The Lead Person for contact between HMIE Inspectors and the Inspection Link Group is:

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If you have any queries, please contact Dawn Doherty in the CYPPC Office, contact details below

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Frequently Asked Questions

Will the Inspectors want to speak to me?

Will the Inspectors know the names of the children?

Will the Inspectors identify me in their report?

If the Inspectors are critical of my work, will they contact my manager?

These questions will be answered in our next edition. If you have a question you would like answered in our newsletter, please email: dundeeprotects@dundeecity.gov.uk

Do you know of anyone who would be interested in receiving this newsletter. If so, please email: dundeeprotects@dundeecity.gov.uk