



JOINT INSPECTION OF SERVICES TO PROTECT CHILDREN

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DUNDEE INSPECTION OF CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

Welcome to this second Newsletter from the CYPPC. The aim is to keep you informed about the Joint Inspection of Child Protection Services that will take place in Dundee in the first part of 2009.

How Are we Doing So Far?

The multi-agency group established to get us ready for inspection has now met 5 times and will continue to meet monthly up to the end of the year.

The group is now well into the first phase of activity, which is identifying and gathering the information that requires to be included in the Pre-Inspection Return (PIR). At the moment, this is focused on such things as gathering information about key people and groups; all agencies and services in Dundee that have a remit for protecting and supporting vulnerable children; child protection policies, procedures and guidance; information about complaints and allegations against employees; details about complaints procedures and recruitment practices; and details of our work in raising public and professional awareness about child protection.

All the information about children and families who have been involved with services will be gathered in once the Formal Letter of Notification that the inspection is taking place, has been sent to the Chief Executive of Dundee City Council by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe). From these lists of children and young people, HMIe will select a sample of cases that they want to look at. We will then be arranging to have all the case records relating to that child and family, from all the agencies involved, collated and ready for the inspectors to read.

When do they Arrive and When does it all Start?

The details of the inspection programme will not become clear until after the formal Letter of Notification is received from HMIE. We expect the letter to arrive during the week commencing 10 November 08. The pre-inspection return must then be submitted within a specified time period.

The initial briefing by HMIe to key contacts in Dundee will take place during the week commencing 5 January 09. The first phase of inspection (case record reading) is expected to commence on 23 February 09. This will take a week.

Then, some weeks later, the second phase will commence. This second phase (fieldwork) will include interviews with those involved in cases, focus groups, and meetings with children and families. The CYPPC office will be setting up calendars and managing the appointment schedule for inspectors.

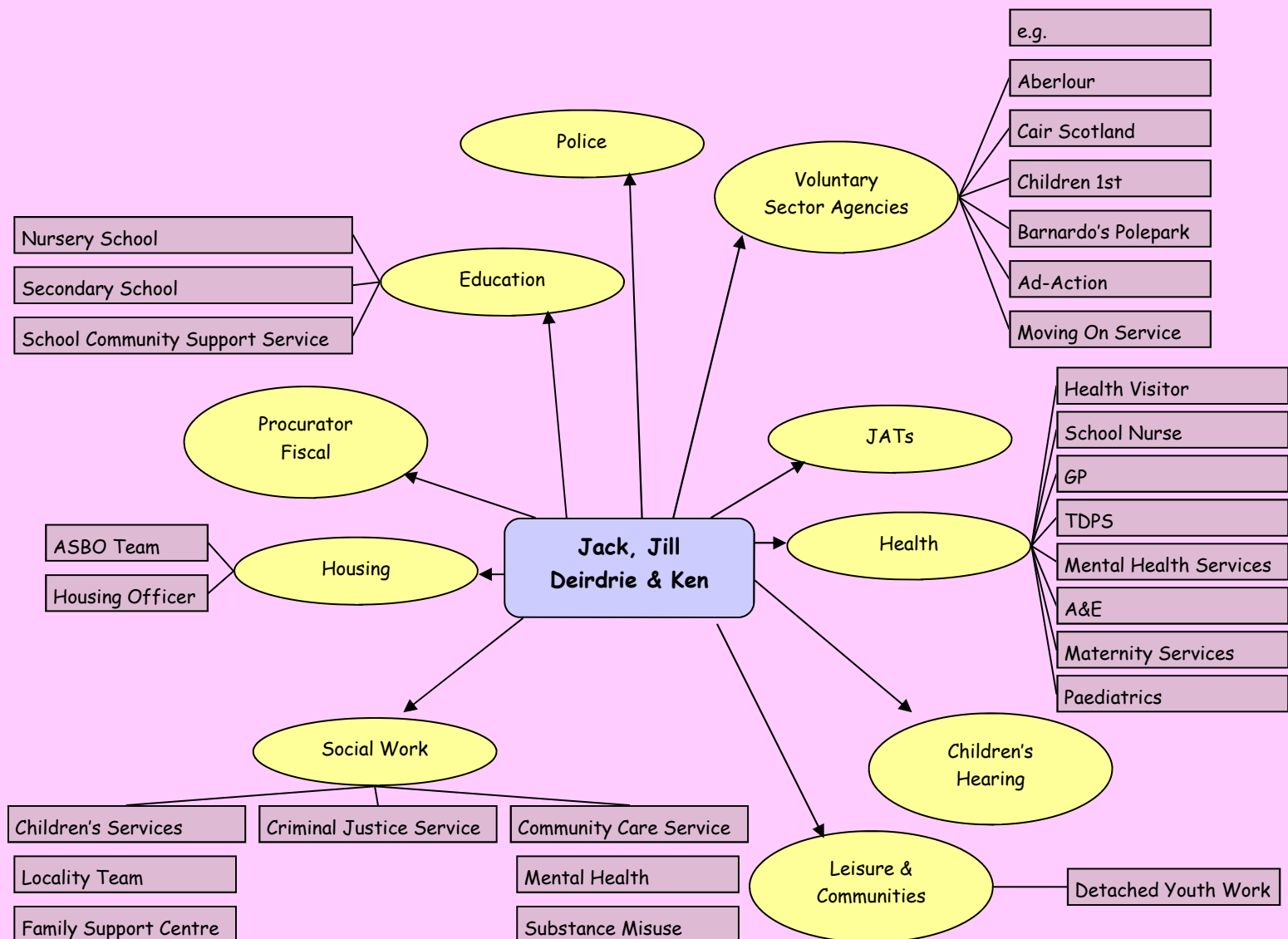


Its Everyone's Job Case Study

Some people might think that the scope of inspection will be confined to the agencies seen as those that deal with child protection; i.e. social work, education, police and health. However, this is far from the case. Inspection reflects government policy that 'Its Everyone's Job' and, as the following illustrates, the attention of inspections will fall upon many more people and services.

Jack (13) and Jill (41/2) live with their mum Deirdrie (29) and her partner Ken (37). Dierdrie is pregnant and the birth is due in 2 months time. Jack and Jill have been the subject of supervision requirements for just over a year. This is because of concerns about their care. Their names are also currently on the child protection register as a result of concerns that they are at risk of significant harm through neglect and because of concern following Ken's physical abuse of Jill. Issues connected to this are Deirdrie's and Ken's substance misuse and their criminal behaviour that seems to be connected to substance misuse. This, along with their rent arrears and repeated complaints from neighbours is putting their local authority housing tenancy at risk. Ken is a Schedule 1 offender following his conviction 3 months ago for a physical assault on Jill. He is on probation. Ken is also involved with social work and health services as a result of his long-standing mental health problems. The children have a very poor attendance record at school. Jack is often out on the streets and has had contact with detached youth workers.

So, who are the range of agencies and people who might be involved, whose records inspectors will want to read and whom inspectors may chose to meet?



Frequently Asked Questions

In the first edition of this Newsletter, we said that we would answer some questions that had been posed about inspection.

Will the Inspectors want to speak to me?

Possibly, If you are involved in a case that the Inspectors choose to examine in close detail during phase 2 of the inspection, then it is almost certain that they will want to talk to you. Remember, the cases selected for examination during phase 2 are a sample of those read in phase 1 which, in turn, are a sample of those listed on the Pre-Inspection Return.

You may also be asked to take part in a more general, group discussion with Inspectors in order to contribute your views about the quality of child protection services in Dundee.

Will the Inspectors know the names of the children?

The very large lists of cases that will be recorded on the Pre-Inspection Return do not include any names, only a reference number. When the Inspectors arrive for phase 1 of the inspection (case reading) then they will become aware of the names of the child, his or her family and all those involved with them. Remember, the members of the inspection team are bound by very strict rules of confidentiality. So, whilst they will know the names, nobody else will.

Will the Inspectors identify me in their report?

No. No identifying information whatsoever is included in the report prepared at the end of the inspection. If you're not sure what the final report looks like, go to <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/servicesinspections.aspx> where you will find all the reports published so far.

What will happen to my case records?

If a case with which you are involved is chosen in the sample for phase 1, then the CYPPC office will be arranging for those records to be delivered to a central location. All the records from all the cases will be stored at the place where the Inspectors will be based. The records will be signed in and out from the host agency/service and will only be accessed by members of the inspection team. There will be a high level of security put in place to protect the records.

In exceptional cases, if there are particular procedures ongoing at the time and the records are required for that purpose, then they may not have to leave their "home" location. Instead, the Inspectors will go to the records, rather than the other way round.

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

Inspectors have a responsibility to alert a senior officer in an agency if they think circumstances indicate that a child is at imminent risk of significant harm and they feel that appropriate action is not being taken to address that. They also have a duty to report practice that they consider to be dangerous. However, the overall purpose of inspection is not to try and find fault with individuals. The purpose is to check Dundee's performance against the 5 key questions to which the inspectors will continually refer during the inspection.

The 5 key questions that all Joint Inspections address are:

- 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?

All of the activity undertaken during the inspection is geared towards answering these questions.

If you have any questions then contact the Inspection Link Group Member from your agency (see page 4) or get in touch with the CYPPC Office.

If you have a question you would like answered in our newsletter, or if you know of anyone who would be interested in receiving this newsletter please email: dundeeprotects@dundeecity.gov.uk

Further Information

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

Members of the Inspection Link Group are as follows:

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