



One minute guide

Joint Targeted Area Inspection—Domestic Abuse

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What is the Joint Targeted Area Inspection—Domestic Abuse?

In January 2016, the government introduced a new inspection framework, for [Joint Targeted Area Inspections](#) (JTAs). The JTA programme runs alongside other Ofsted programmes, for example full Children's Services inspections and inspections of services and support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

JTAs are joint inspections carried out by Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. The scope is to look at multi-agency arrangements, including the quality and timeliness of assessments, and to carry out a 'deep dive' investigation of the response to specific children and young people (usually described as the 'theme' of the inspections).

The theme of JTAs from September 2016 to March 2017 and February to September 2018 was Domestic Abuse. The guidance is available [here](#). In addition to the focus on children, inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of interventions for victims of domestic abuse and for adult perpetrators. The inspectorates published a report on the findings of the first six JTAs on this theme, called 'Prevent, Protect and Repair'. The report can be accessed [here](#).

JTAs are unannounced and Leeds should expect (alongside any other local authority in England) that we will be chosen for inspection.

How does the inspection work?

There are usually three inspectors from each of: Ofsted, HMICFRS and the CQC; and two from HMI Probation; with a lead inspector from Ofsted. Time spent onsite is over a three week period. Subsequent weeks are concerned with writing the 'letter of findings' and quality assurance processes. Notification of inspection takes place on a Tuesday before 9:30am by the Lead Inspector contacting the Director of Children's Services (DCS). The other inspectorates contact their relevant agencies. A detailed 'set up' meeting then takes place.

Based on lists of children provided by the local authority, inspectors select 20 children, ask for further information about them to be provided and then refine their selection for between five and seven children. The local partnership is then asked to jointly evaluate the experiences of these children and to share the outcomes in the second week.

Each partner agency must provide a range of strategic documents. Inspectors review effectiveness by case tracking and sampling individual children's experiences and through interviews. Inspectors observe planned multi-agency meetings, examine key documents, interview staff, review the partnership evaluations, and meet senior officers and relevant staff involved in services related to domestic abuse and children and parents.

Inspectors review evidence against the evaluation criteria, identifying areas of good practice, areas for development and, where appropriate, priority action for the partnership and present their findings.

What are the evaluation criteria?

The full evaluation criteria can be found at point 12 of the [guidance document](#). Here is a summary of the criteria:

Practitioners see incidents of domestic abuse **through the eyes of the child**. They are well trained, confident and knowledgeable and understand the impact of domestic abuse. This helps them know how to help and protect children and take action to do so.

Children who live with domestic abuse experience a **child-centred approach** from all practitioners and the risks to them and needs are assessed effectively and responded to appropriately.

Risks are prevented and reduced. The needs of the child, their non-abusive parent and the perpetrator are met early on through timely access to effective help.

Children living with domestic abuse receive the right help and protection at the right time because **timely information sharing and interventions** take place. Approaches, tools and services are evidence based and reduce risk and meet their needs.

Risk of harm to children is reduced through the identification and assessment of the risks that perpetrators and adult offenders pose. This leads to appropriate and targeted interventions by practitioners.

Children's welfare is promoted and protected through **effective and timely identification, assessment and response** to the risks to, and the needs of adult victims of domestic abuse. Practitioners recognise that **abuse does not necessarily end** when people stop living together and may in fact escalate.

Multi-agency domestic violence responses support the protection of children through timely sharing of information, assessment of risks to children and through developing effective action plans.

The **Police investigate** cases of domestic abuse in families with children effectively.

Schools have effective systems to identify children living with domestic abuse. They make appropriate, timely referrals to early help or children's social care and children receive support within school.

Children and their families feel that their **views have been heard**. This leads to improvements in the help and support that they receive.

The impact of domestic abuse on children is reduced because they, their families and the perpetrators can access a sufficient **range of commissioned local services**.

Leaders and managers understand the **prevalence** of and **experiences** of children living with domestic abuse; recognise the **challenges** in working with domestic abuse; and provide appropriate support, training and challenge so effective practice can flourish.

The **LSCP actively monitors, promotes, coordinates and evaluates the work** of the statutory partners that help and protect children, including working effectively with other multi-agency groups that have responsibility for responding to domestic abuse.

Further information

You can find a wealth of information on the Leeds City Council [Domestic Violence and Abuse Webpage](#). There are also a number of other one minute guides on topics related to domestic violence and abuse, which you can find via the one minute guides homepage.

[One minute guides
homepage](#)

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