One minute guide

Joint Targeted Area Inspection—Child sexual abuse in the family environment

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What is the Joint Targeted Area Inspection—child sexual abuse in the family environment?

As part of the new Ofsted inspection framework ‘Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services’ ([ILACS](guide)) all local authorities may be subject to a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI). These JTAIs are unannounced thematic inspections and Leeds should expect (alongside any other area in England) that we will be chosen for inspection.

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

The JTAI themes have changed every six months over the last few years; the theme between September 2018 and March 2019 is [Child sexual abuse in the family environment (guide)].

There are One Minute Guides available on the previous JTAIs for children living with domestic abuse ([guide]), CSE (and children associated with gangs at risk of exploitation and children missing) ([guide]) and children living with neglect ([guide]).

Reports and guides on the findings from these inspections are also available: ‘[The multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse— prevent, protect and repair](guide)’; ‘[Time to listen’- a joined up response to child sexual exploitation and missing children](guide)’ and ‘[Growing up Neglected—a multi-agency response to older children.’](guide).

How does the inspection work?

There will usually be three inspectors from Ofsted and CQC, four from HMICFRS and two from HMI Probation; with a lead inspector from Ofsted. Time spent in Leeds would be over a three week period. Notification of inspection will usually take place on a Monday before 9:30am. Notification is through the Lead Inspector contacting the Director of Children’s Services (DCS). The other inspectorates contact their agencies; though for this JTAI, Community Rehabilitation Companies will not receive notification. A detailed ‘set up’ meeting will take place.

Based on lists of children provided by the local authority, inspectors will select 20 children, ask for further information about them to be provided and then refine their selection for between five and seven children. Agencies will then be asked to jointly and individually 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 will review effectiveness by case tracking and sampling individual children’s experiences and through interviews. Inspectors will observe planned multi-agency meetings, examine key documents, interview staff, review the partnership evaluations, and meet senior officers and relevant staff involved in services working with children and parents. Inspectors will review evidence against the evaluation criteria, and identify areas of good practice, development and priority action for the partnership and present their findings.

Following the inspection, the inspectorates spend a few weeks writing the letter and findings before the outcome letter is published on the Ofsted [website](#).
What are the evaluation criteria?
Definition of ‘family environment’ can be found at point 4 and the full evaluation criteria can be found at point 11 of the guidance document. Here is a summary of the criteria:

All agencies identify and respond appropriately to any risk in relation to child sexual abuse in the family environment and support those children—this includes disabled children and those displaying harmful sexual behaviour; and children and young people receive a timely assessment and effective intervention;

Achieving best evidence interviews are timely and well managed;

Any concerns raised through whistleblowing about the protection of children have been responded to;

Children who have suffered sexual abuse in the family environment have access to post-abuse therapeutic help and good quality support that meets their needs;

Families are given timely support (including foster families and staff who support children in residential placements) to enable them to safely help the children who are at risk or who are subject to sexual abuse in the family environment and children who have displayed sexually harmful behaviour (guide);

Children and their families feel that their views have been heard and this leads to improvements in the help and support that they receive;

Schools have effective systems to help identify children at risk of or subject to sexual abuse in the family environment. They make timely referrals to early help (guide) or children’s social care (guide) so that support is provided; and they contribute to inter-agency working to improve outcomes for children;

The workforce meets its responsibilities to children at risk of or subject to sexual abuse in the family environment and children who have displayed sexually harmful behaviour; the roles and responsibilities of support staff are identified, and the training and support they receive meets their needs and impacts positively on the quality of service delivery;

Leaders and managers know and understand the experiences of children at risk of or subject to sexual abuse in the family environment, and the prevalence of these issues in their area and use their knowledge to challenge and support practitioners and promote continuous service improvement;

Local safeguarding partners (LSCP) actively monitor, promote and coordinate and evaluate the work of partner agencies to help, protect and care for children who are at risk of or subject to sexual abuse in the family environment;

The cases of children who are subject to sexual abuse in the family environment are investigated and adult perpetrators are arrested and prosecuted. Where investigations conclude that evidence insufficient for arrest or prosecution and concerns remain, multi-agency working is effective in reducing risk;

Work with adult offenders, which may stem from the adult’s offences or their role as a parent/carer, is reducing risks of harm to children; and

Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) effectively assess and manage risks from adults in relation to child sexual abuse in the family environment.

Key contacts and for more information?
The key contact is farah.husain@leeds.gov.uk and you can read the Joint Targeted Area Inspection guidance for child sexual abuse in the family environment here.