

# Conducting full joint inspections of youth offending work

Guidance for Ofsted inspectors in carrying out full joint inspections of youth offending work from October 2012

---

This guidance is designed to assist Ofsted inspectors in their work. It indicates the main activities that need to be undertaken prior to and during inspections until the publication of the inspection report. Those working in youth offending services and local authorities can use the guidance to see how inspections will be conducted.

**Published:** August 2012

---

**Reference no:** 120146



Corporate member of  
Plain English Campaign  
Committed to clearer communication

**361**

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conducting-full-joint-inspections-of-youth-offending-work>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at <https://www.gov.uk/email-signup?link=/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

No. 120146



# Contents

---

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Scheduling</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>5</b>
Notification	5
<b>Pre-inspection activity</b>	<b>7</b>
Pre-inspection preparation	7
<b>The fieldwork</b>	<b>8</b>
Interviewing staff and stakeholders	8
Case sampling	8
<b>Views of children and young people, their families and carers</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Issues of concern</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Recording evidence</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Findings</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Feedback</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Writing the report</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Quality assurance</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Complaints</b>	<b>14</b>

## Introduction

1. Full joint inspections of youth offending work are led by inspectors from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) assisted by inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). This guidance is designed to assist Ofsted inspectors in their work. It should be read in conjunction with the *Framework for full joint inspection (FJI) of youth offending work* and the *Inspection criteria for full joint inspection*.<sup>1</sup> Professionals working with youth offenders and local authorities can use this guidance to see how the inspections will be conducted. Ofsted is committed to ensuring that all guidance used by inspectors is published.
2. HMIP is mandated by the Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice to carry out these inspections. Ofsted will use its powers under section 149 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This power enables Ofsted to carry out inspections with other specific authorities, of which HMIP is one. Ofsted will also apply paragraph 8 of schedule 13 of the Act so that His Majesty's Chief Inspector may provide 'advice or assistance for other public authorities'. The CQC and HMIC are to draw upon their relevant powers to allow them to carry out the inspections in accordance with the requirements of the framework document.
3. The purpose of joint inspections of youth offending work is to assess the quality of practice in youth offending teams (YOTs) with children and young people who have offended and are subject to a court imposed community or custodial sentence.
4. Each inspection will comprise core and additional modules. The core modules are set out in the *Inspection criteria for full joint inspection*. Two additional modules will be chosen in most inspections and criteria will be published as they are developed. The provisional list of additional modules is:
  - Early prevention, out of court disposals and court work
  - Interventions
  - Drug and alcohol work
  - Access to statutory and specialist services
  - Governance
  - Parents and carers
  - Victims and restorative justice.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Framework for full joint inspection (FJI) of youth offending work* and the *Inspection criteria for full joint inspection*; [www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation/inspection-programmes-youth/full-joint-inspection-fji-of-youth-offending-work](http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation/inspection-programmes-youth/full-joint-inspection-fji-of-youth-offending-work).

5. Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Framework for full joint inspection (FJI) of youth offending work*.<sup>2</sup> The details of the inspection arrangements are set out in this document. All inspectors should be conversant with these and apply them rigorously.
6. This guidance seeks to balance the need for consistency in inspections with the flexibility required to respond to the individual circumstances of each youth offending service to be inspected. It should be regarded as guidance on the procedures normally governing inspection, rather than a set of inflexible rules.

## Scheduling

7. Decisions on scheduling the five inspections that will take place in England each year will be made by HMIP in regular consultation meetings held every three months with all partner inspectorates, including Ofsted. Final decisions on the location and timing of inspections will take account of previous inspection findings and the timing of other HMIP, Ofsted, CQC and HMIC inspections, particularly the inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children. In addition, an inspection may take place if there is evidence of serious concerns about the quality of work in a particular youth offending service.
8. The inspection of youth offending work will be carried out as a stand-alone inspection. The inspection will take place over two fieldwork weeks separated by a one week gap. The first week will be undertaken in entirety by HMIP inspection staff supported by one or more trained assessors seconded for the purpose from another youth offending team. Their work will have as its primary focus the inspection of practice. The second fieldwork week, which will incorporate the work of two Ofsted HMI to review child protection and learning and skills practice and management, will also involve two inspectors from HMIP and one inspector each from CQC and HMIC. In total, Ofsted's contribution to this inspection will be 10 days. This includes preparation, the on-site inspection activity and the work to complete the report. The two Ofsted inspectors will be on site for the equivalent of 4.5 days each, during which time they will prepare to inspect, carry out their inspection responsibilities and complete their written contributions to the evidence base, the final feedback document and the draft report.

## Timeframe

### Notification

9. The HMIP lead inspector will make contact with the YOT manager 11 working days before the start of the first inspection week.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Framework for full joint inspection (FJI) of youth offending work*, [www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation/inspection-programmes-youth/full-joint-inspection-fji-of-youth-offending-work](http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation/inspection-programmes-youth/full-joint-inspection-fji-of-youth-offending-work).

10. The timeframe for the inspection, including preparation, on-site work and the publication of the report is as follows.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Activities</b>
-3	Friday	HMIP gives notice of the forthcoming inspection by telephone and email.
-2	Monday	YOT is provided with inspection planning documents and asked to make the required arrangements.
	Monday to Thursday	YOT identifies a long-list sample of cases and submits it to HMIP by 5pm on Thursday evening.
-1	Monday	YOT receives selected case sample from HMIP by 9am.
	All week	YOT creates inspection schedule for first fieldwork week using template provided by HMIP.
	All week	YOT undertakes logistical preparation for first fieldwork week (arranging IT access, interview rooms, building access and so on).
	Thursday	YOT sends draft case assessment schedule to HMIP.
0	Monday	Inspection team from HMIP arrives at 1:30pm and receives health and safety and IT briefing.
	Monday 2pm to Friday lunchtime	Inspection fieldwork – inspection of cases.
	Monday	Briefing meeting at 2pm between lead inspector, deputy inspector, YOT manager, chair of management board, Director of Children’s Services, lead member and significant others to introduce the inspection team and confirm arrangements for week 2 of the fieldwork.
	Monday	Planning meeting at 3.15pm between the lead inspector and YOT manager to confirm week 1 arrangements.
	Friday	Meeting at 11:30am between the lead inspector and YOT manager to confirm requirements for week 2. Inspectors leave the site at lunchtime.
1	Monday to Thursday	YOT arranges schedule of meetings requested by inspection team for week 2.
	Friday	YOT sends week 2 schedule to the lead inspector, which is distributed to partner inspectors. Ofsted HMI undertake half-day preparation for inspection fieldwork.
2	Monday	Lead inspector and YOT manager meet at 2pm to deal with outstanding planning for the week.

	Monday to Thursday	Inspection team on site at 1.00pm to conduct meetings, examine arrangements, undertake a further inspection of cases (see item below) and user engagement. This will include inspection by partner inspectorates of the specialist elements of a sample of cases, with relevant specialist staff, as well as engagement with service users – victims, children and young people, and parents and carers. It may also include observation of work delivered by partners with children and young people known to the YOT along with interviews with providers.
	Friday morning	The inspection team present the inspection findings at approximately 10am. The following are invited to this meeting: Local authority chief executive Chair of management board Director of Children’s Services Members of YOT management board (particularly statutory partners) Lead elected member with responsibility for children/crime YOT management team. The inspection team leave the site by 12pm.
3 and 4		Inspection team complete and agree draft report.
5	Monday	Draft report sent to YOT manager for comment.
6	Friday	Deadline for return of factual inaccuracies by YOT.
7 onwards		Publication process underway.

## Pre-inspection activity

### Pre-inspection preparation

11. Each Ofsted inspector is allocated half a day to prepare for the inspection, which takes place on the Friday afternoon immediately preceding the second fieldwork week. The inspectors should carry out an analysis of:
  - previous inspection reports, including the previous YOT inspection (if one has occurred), children’s services assessment letter and reports of safeguarding and looked after children inspections
  - contextual information regarding the local authority
  - the findings from week 1 inspection activity
  - the YOT’s reports to its management board, the chief executive, councillors, the Director of Children’s Services and the Local Safeguarding Children Board

- publicly available information provided by, or about, the YOT.
- 12. Each HMI will decide in light of their preparation whether any adjustment to the week 2 programme is required and, if so, will notify the lead inspector of the required detail and engage with the appropriate YOT lead to effect the necessary programme changes.
- 13. Inspectors must be able to confirm their identities by producing both their Ofsted Inspector Authorisation and Identification cards and their identity badges. It is not necessary to carry paper copies of Criminal Records Bureau checks.

## **The fieldwork**

### **Interviewing staff and stakeholders**

- 14. Inspectors will interview staff who are able to give an informed view of the youth offending service. This will include staff or managers who are responsible for identifying and managing children and young people deemed to be in need of additional social care services, which might include safeguarding and child protection services.
- 15. In addition, inspectors will speak to other stakeholders, including representatives from education, colleges, children's social care and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 16. Inspectors will be sensitive to the potential pressures on, and the apprehension of, staff being interviewed. They will explain that the purpose of the inspection is to look at the impact of the way YOT carries out its responsibilities and duties to children and young people. It is not to make judgements about individuals.
- 17. Staff at different levels will usually be interviewed individually by the inspector. Staff should be interviewed in surroundings that offer privacy. Staff will be given an explanation of the process together with the contact details of the inspector should they wish to discuss any issues outside this interview.
- 18. Partner inspectors should always take account of privacy and confidentiality when talking to stakeholders on the telephone. Where a call back is requested, Ofsted's HMI should always use a number provided by the local authority or Ofsted's national number 0300 123 1231.

### **Case sampling**

- 19. HMIP inspectors and staff who are on site during the first fieldwork week will examine a sample of cases selected against criteria developed for this inspection. Those cases in the sample with safeguarding or child protection concerns or those which show additional social care involvement with the child or young person will be summarised and drawn to the attention of the Ofsted social care HMI. Following further consideration of the identified issues, the



Ofsted social care HMI will judge the quality of work against the relevant inspection criteria. The Ofsted learning and skills HMI will also select cases from the original sample and examine some of the same cases as their social care colleagues. It is anticipated that most young people will be in part or full-time education or training and/or employment or involved in work-based placements. The learning and skills HMI will assess the quality of this provision from file reading, interviews and focus groups, and from direct observations against the criteria set out in the methodology.

20. If possible and appropriate, case files (either electronic or paper-based) will be examined in the presence of the relevant staff member, using their knowledge of the case, file structure and recording systems. If possible, inspectors will speak to some of the children and young people and their parents or carers. Learning and skills HMI will visit some providers of services, such as colleges and workplace learning providers, to enable judgement to be made about the quality of teaching, training, learning and assessment.
21. In examining and discussing cases, Ofsted social care HMI will assess in relation to child protection/safeguarding:
  - the quality and timeliness of assessments, planning and interventions with particular reference to:
    - the identification of safeguarding and child protection risks
    - access to early help services
    - the YOT's understanding of referral arrangements to social care services
    - the YOT staff's contributions to the development and implementation of child protection plans
    - how far the particular needs of children, such as age, disability, culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith, religion and language, are taken into consideration
  - the quality of supervision and decision-making, with particular reference to:
    - the quality of case-file recording, including evidence of supervision, oversight and sign-off
    - the availability of support and advice for those involved with children and young people about whom there are child protection or safeguarding concerns
    - processes and practices for decision-making
    - the arrangements for information sharing
    - whether sufficient attention is given to issues of vulnerability and well-being where these act as a barrier to engagement in learning
  - the quality of leadership and management, with particular reference to:

- the priority given to protecting children and young people, including arrangements to monitor their progress
  - the use of performance management information
  - the contribution of service users to service improvement
  - the YOT’s contribution to partnership work and local child protection arrangements.
22. In relation to the education and training of children and young people, learning and skills HMI will assess:
- outcomes for young people in education, training and employment, and examine how well:
    - young people make progress and achieve relative to their starting points and learning goals
    - education, training and employment outcomes are sustainable and relate to reducing the likelihood of reoffending
    - young people develop personal, social and employability skills
    - young people progress to training and/or courses leading to qualifications and into jobs that meet local and national needs
  - the quality of teaching, training, learning and assessment, and examine how well:
    - young people benefit from realistic expectations, engagement, care, support and motivation from staff
    - staff use their skills and expertise to plan and deliver teaching, training, learning and support to meet each learner’s needs and to reduce their likelihood of reoffending
    - staff initially assess learners’ starting points and monitor their progress, set appropriate tasks, and build on and extend learning for all young learners taking account of family and/or care circumstances
    - young people understand how to improve as a result of frequent, detailed and accurate feedback from staff following assessment of their learning
    - teaching and learning develop English, mathematics and functional skills, and support the achievement of individual learning goals and employability
    - appropriate and timely information, advice and guidance support education, training and assessment effectively and relate to reducing reoffending
    - equality and diversity are promoted through teaching, training and learning
  - the effectiveness of leadership and management, including how well they:

- develop quality partnerships, including effective links between mainstream schools, training providers and the juvenile custodial institutions
- review, at appropriate times, the effectiveness and appropriateness of intervention plans
- evaluate the quality of the education, training and employment programme taking account of users' views, and use the findings to promote and develop improvements in the provision
- develop plans for education, training and employment and social care intervention which are multi-agency based, contain clear and specific goals that meet the needs and interests of young people, employers and the local and national community and clearly focus on reducing re-offending.

## **Views of children and young people, their families and carers**

23. Wherever it is possible to do so, all inspectors must take into account the views of children, young people and their families and carers. Managers should be invited to provide evidence that demonstrates how the views of the users have been taken into account to secure improved services and outcomes. There is an expectation that service users and their families will be engaged in the inspection process and Ofsted HMI will have direct contact with some of them.

## **Issues of concern**

24. Issues of concern about the protection of children and young people that arise during the first fieldwork week will be dealt with in accordance with HMIP's alert process. The details and outcome will be shared with the inspection team at the start of week 2. Where similar concerns arise in the second fieldwork week, for example in relation to a failure to follow child protection procedures and/or where a child is discovered to be at immediate risk of significant harm, the HMI concerned must notify the lead inspector as soon as possible so that immediate action is taken to ensure that the local authority children's service is informed. Inspectors should be aware of the *Ofsted safeguarding policy and procedures*.<sup>3</sup> When the matter relates to the immediate safety of children, the YOT, in conjunction with the local authority, will be asked to take necessary action and provide a written response and explanation. The concern and request for a response will be confirmed in writing by the lead inspector to the YOT senior manager and the Director of Children's Services at the earliest opportunity. It is expected that the social care HMI will assist in drafting the confirmation document.

---

<sup>3</sup> *Ofsted safeguarding policy and procedures* (100183), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/ofsted-safeguarding-policy-and-procedures](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/ofsted-safeguarding-policy-and-procedures).

## Recording evidence

25. Throughout the inspection process, inspectors will maintain contemporaneous records, in accordance with Ofsted guidance, of the evidence obtained from all aspects of the inspection process. Evidence may be scrutinised for quality assurance monitoring and will be considered in the event of any complaint.
26. The inspection record should include details of all the case files that have been seen and interviews, meetings, focus groups and observations that have been carried out. Inspectors should take account of the following points.
  - Evidence should be clear and legible. The date and time of each activity must be noted together with an evaluative record of the evidence that has been obtained. These records should be clearly cross-referenced to the appropriate numbered section of the inspection criteria.
  - As far as possible, evidence should not include anything that could identify individual staff, individual children, young people or family members, unless necessary for the protection of a child. Only job titles of staff, case reference numbers and/or initials of cases should be used.
27. Inspectors must submit all evidence to the quality assurance manager if required. All inspection records compiled by Ofsted inspectors will be retained by Ofsted in accordance with its published retention policy. However, the lead inspector will be given full access for the purposes of finalising the inspection report and responding to any complaint about the inspection.

## Findings

28. Ofsted's social care inspectors will formulate evidence and make judgements on:
  - the arrangements to protect the child or young person.
29. Ofsted's learning and skills HMI will formulate evidence and contribute to judgements on:
  - outcomes for young people in education, training and employment
  - quality of teaching, training, learning and assessment
  - effectiveness of leadership and management.
30. In addition, Ofsted HMI will contribute to the work of other inspectorates involved and contribute to judgements on:
  - reducing the likelihood of offending
  - protecting the public
  - ensuring that the sentence is served.

31. The *Inspection criteria for full joint inspection* (of youth offending work) sets out illustrative criteria for use in the core module against which the youth offending service will be judged. Inspectors will use this document to formulate their findings and judgements on performance relating to the different strands of the service. These judgements will be subject to scrutiny and team agreement at the inspection challenge meeting. In addition, they will be used to prepare oral feedback to the youth offending team and, following discussion, in preparation of the inspection report. Ofsted's contribution to oral feedback will largely centre on their specialist findings about the child's or young person's experience of protective services or of education, training and learning. However, there will be circumstances where their findings extend into other judgement areas and they may reasonably be expected to make a contribution.
32. HMIP will judge the quality of services using a star system, with four stars as the highest award and one star the lowest. This rating system will be illustrated in the text by additional use of grade descriptors. For example, one star will equate to a judgement requiring a YOT area to make immediate and major improvement and four stars will describe an outstanding service.

## Feedback

33. Feedback to the youth offending team at the end of the last fieldwork day will be chaired and managed by the lead inspector. The lead inspector and the senior manager responsible for the YOT will agree who will be present but at a minimum the local authority chief executive, the chair and members of the (YOT) management board, the Director of Children's Services, the relevant council member and members of the YOT management team are expected to attend.
34. The feedback should allow inspectors to:
  - cover the main findings of the inspection against the inspection criteria, including both strengths and weaknesses
  - indicate likely recommendations thereby providing a clear agenda for improvement
  - use the inspection criteria to indicate how inspectors have arrived at the judgements
  - confirm that the report will be sent to the manager in draft for comments on factual accuracy.
35. The inspection team will not provide a written summary of the inspection or written feedback in advance of the inspection report. Providers may choose to take their own notes at feedback.

## Writing the report

36. After the site inspection visit, the HMIP lead inspector will complete the inspection report, which contains the key findings and judgements. The lead inspector will take full account of Ofsted's written contribution and will not change the text without reference to the HMI concerned. Should there be a lack of agreement about aspects of the report, the matter will be referred to the respective quality assurance managers (or equivalent) and, if necessary, to the responsible senior managers for resolution. It is not anticipated that this process will cause any unnecessary delay in the production of inspection reports. The draft inspection report will be sent to the YOT manager 16 working days after the completion of fieldwork. The YOT manager will have 10 working days to consult with colleagues and notify the lead inspector of any factual inaccuracies. Corrections and amendments to the draft report will be undertaken by the lead inspector but it is expected that partner inspectors will always be consulted about changes to be made to the sections they have drafted.
37. The inspection report will be published in electronic rather than paper format on the HMIP website to ensure that its content and judgements are accessible to a wide audience that includes children and young people and other interested parties.

## Quality assurance

38. Quality assurance will be undertaken in line with the HMIP quality assurance strategy and action plan for the current year. All staff are responsible for achieving a high level of quality in their own work and for helping their colleagues to do the same. HMI will be responsible for producing high-quality contributions to the inspection evidence base and to the draft and final reports and this work will be subject to challenge and verification by the quality assurance process.

## Complaints

39. It is anticipated that the great majority of inspections will be carried out without any concerns on the part of the YOT or its partners and service users. If concerns do arise during an inspection, the lead inspector will consider the concern and do all that is possible to remedy the problem at the earliest opportunity, obviating the need for escalation. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the inspector's response and the complaint relates to the work of an Ofsted HMI, the lead inspector should ensure that the complainant is fully informed of the procedures for making complaints and take steps to refer the matter appropriately. The complainant will be made aware of Ofsted's

complaints procedure.<sup>4</sup> Where complaints relate to more than one inspectorate, the relevant inspectorates will liaise with one another as appropriate to achieve timely and co-ordinated resolution.

---

<sup>4</sup> 'Complaints about Ofsted', Ofsted, 2013; [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted)