

**Joint inspection of services for children at risk of harm**

**Quality Assurance Arrangements**

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**Joint inspections of children in need of care and protection – Quality assurance arrangements:**

**Publication code: 008**

This paper outlines quality assurance arrangements for joint inspections of children in need of care and protection. Each report of a joint inspection will be subject of discussion at a quality and consistency panel.

**1. The remit of the quality and consistency panel is to**

* quality assure joint inspection reports including progress reports and agree any amendments to ensure key messages come across clearly and the report tells a coherent story
* test out the team’s evaluations to satisfy themselves these are robust, evidence based and support the story of the inspection, making any necessary adjustments
* benchmark the inspection findings and evaluations against previous joint inspection reports to achieve consistency
* consider the need for a progress review or post inspection improvement support including the timing, focus and approach

**2. Membership of the quality and consistency panel**

 **Chairperson**

* the quality and consistency panel is chaired by the Chief Inspector Strategic Scrutiny from the Care Inspectorate or the Executive Director of Scrutiny and Assurance in their absence

 **Scrutiny partner membership**

* the quality and consistency panel has a member representing each of the scrutiny partners Education Scotland (ES), Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) and His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary Scotland (HMICS) of equivalent seniority to the chairperson

 **Peer reviewer**

* a strategic inspector who has not been on the inspection team takes on the role of peer reviewer. The role of the peer reviewer is to contribute their expertise to reaching the evaluation of QI 2.1 on the 6 point scale, support the benchmarking process and provide feedback on the expectations of the quality and consistency panel to the scrutiny partner quality group.

**3. Attendees at the quality and consistency panel**

Quality and consistency panels are attended by the following representatives of each joint inspection and progress review

* Service Manager Strategic Scrutiny: Children and Young People
* Inspection Lead
* Depute Inspection Lead

**4. Timing of the quality and consistency panel for joint inspections**

* the inspection lead, depute inspection lead and team members representing ES, HIS and HMICS meet with community planning partners three weeks after the fieldwork is completed to discuss the key messages and high-level findings of the joint inspection
* the quality and consistency panel takes place following completion of the first version of the draft inspection report
* after making any changes agreed at the quality and consistency panel, community planning partners are sent the draft inspection report by post for an accuracy check. The draft report includes evaluations on the 6 point scale.
* the inspection lead, depute inspection lead and link inspector meet with community planning partners a week later to discuss the draft inspection report

**5. Amendments to the draft inspection report proposed by community planning partners**

* any proposed amendments to the text of draft inspection reports are submitted by community planning partners on a response template
* proposed amendments to the text are carefully considered and either accepted or not agreed and the draft report amended accordingly by the inspection lead with the approval of the service manager
* the rationale for decisions taken in response to any proposed amendments to the text are recorded and sent to community planning partners along with the advanced publication
* amendments may also include a proposed change to the evaluation on the 6 point scale when the partnership considers:
* it does not reflect the evidence; or
* is inaccurate because it does not reflect a factual interpretation of the evaluation scale criteria.
* Partners should state why they consider the evaluation to be erroneous and provide a clear rationale in support of a revised evaluation. When community planning partners choose to accompany the completed response template with additional supporting evidence, this will only be considered if:
* the evidence existed on or before the end of fieldwork activity
* the evidence is additional to that already considered by the joint inspection team

**6. Response to community planning partners when a change is proposed to an evaluation on the 6 point scale**

* The inspection lead reviews partner’s rationale for the proposed change in the evaluation and any additional supporting evidence forwarding comments for consideration to the service manager. The inspection lead and service manager decide whether to recommend to the chair of the quality and consistency panel adjusting or denying the proposed change to the evaluation. They provide a report to the chair of the quality and consistency panel in support of their recommendation. The decision made by the chair is final.
* The chair of the quality and consistency panel writes to the chair of the community planning partnership to provide partners with the outcome of the proposed change to the evaluation and any change to the publication date as a result of this process

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