

Birmingham Law Society Response to consultation Proposals for the joint inspection of multi-agency arrangements for the protection of children

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the inspectorates have correctly identified the children and young people who should be within the scope of this inspection (as outlined in paragraphs 28 and 29)?

Agree but why not simply include as a category children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and abuse rather than referring to children who are the subject of plans. Some children may be suffering or likely to suffer harm but are not subject to plans or action

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to inspect the contribution of the police to the protection of children (as outlined in paragraphs 30 and 31)?

Agree

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to inspect how well children and young people in either a youth offender institution, an immigration removal centre holding children and young people, or a mother and baby unit in a prison are protected (as outlined in paragraph 32)?

Agree

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to inspect the contribution of the CPS to the protection of children through proposed or actual criminal justice proceedings (as outlined in paragraph 33) as a triggered activity following these joint inspections?

Agree but the suggestion should include not just CPS contribution to decision making in respect of prosecutions but also in respect of disclosure of information to assist safeguarding and engagement with civil proceedings to protect children in the family courts

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to structuring the inspection so that not all inspectors are on site at the same time and there is a phased approach to the inspection (as outlined in paragraphs 34–39)?

Agree

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to select a sample of children's social care cases that inspectors will examine together (as outlined in paragraph 43)?

Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for an additional sample addressing the effectiveness of professional help and support for children and young people known to other local services (as outlined in paragraph 44)?

Agree but do not understand why the family court and HMCTS are not specifically mentioned here. The Family Justice Review has identified Local Family Justice Boards as one of the key players in effective and timely decision making for children. Why is there no mention of this and why is HMCTS not included in these inspection arrangements.

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the key areas listed in paragraph 45 are those that the inspectorates should examine through the shared case sample of children and young people?

Agree but as stated in previous response there is a major gap in relation to the work of the Family Justice Board and the impact of the Family Justice System all the way down the line into the risk assessment process.

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to evaluating the quality of practice and in particular the proposals to shadow staff and observe meetings (as outlined in paragraphs 46 and 47)?

Agree

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the correct specialist areas (as outlined in paragraph 48)?

Agree.

In the first paragraph of this section why only protection from adults?

GPs should be specifically mentioned

There is no mention of thresholds. There should be mention of the shared understanding and application of agreed local threshold models to ensure appropriate intervention.

Do Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our intention to make each judgement one that considers the contribution of all agencies (as outlined in paragraphs 49 and 50)?

Agree but should include contribution of local family justice system and should make a judgement on the correct implementation of thresholds for intervention.

Do you have any other comments on this proposal? Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for one judgement about the quality and effectiveness of the leadership, governance and partnership in the local authority area (as outlined in paragraphs 51–57)?

Agree but once again make the point that the Family Justice Board is a significant omission

Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to reporting (as outlined in paragraphs 58 and 59)?

Need more detail

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

