



Joint inspections of services for children and young people subject to compulsory supervision orders living at home with their parents

Partnership briefing

Selecting local record readers

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The purpose of this briefing document is to provide clarity for partnerships about the role of local record readers during the inspection and assist partnerships with their selection of staff.

The Care Inspectorate is fully committed to openness and transparency of the inspection process, supporting learning and dissemination of good practice across the country. We aim to work collaboratively with partnerships, building capacity and bringing added value to the scrutiny process wherever possible.

Since 2015, we have involved local record readers in our joint inspections. This has provided local practitioners and first line managers with opportunities to work alongside inspectors when reviewing practice through reading children's records. Local record readers have brought valuable insight into current practices and processes within their local area.

Feedback from local record readers following inspections has been very positive with some telling us of their plans to implement new quality assurance approaches in their place of work as a result of their learning experience. Others gained a greater appreciation and understanding of the tools and guidance used to review practice.

Skills, knowledge and experience required

During the joint inspections, partnerships have the option to provide up to four local practitioners or first line managers to work with the inspection team to review children's records. They are involved in up to four days of week 8 of the inspection programme.

Local record readers gained most from their inspection experience when they had the right combination of skills, knowledge and personal characteristics. These can be summarised as:

- Currently practising in as a frontline practitioner or first line manager in children's services
- Direct experience of working with children subject to compulsory supervision orders and supporting families.
- Previous experience of case audit work within their own service.
- Good analytical skills and effective written communication skills
- IT skills – accessing and reading documents from a variety of IT systems
- Ability to work well independently

In recognition of the commitment given by chief officers to release local staff to take part in the records reading phase of the inspection, we recommend that on completion of their inspection experience, local records readers collectively prepare a short report for chief officers outlining their key learning and how this relates to aspects of service delivery with their own respective areas.

Local record reader training and support

- Following the identification of four record readers and two reserve record readers we will provide four hours of local training for these staff members.
- In addition to the local record readers, to help build capacity and bring added value to the partnership, we will extend this opportunity to others with a quality assurance role to take part in this training day (up to 15 staff).
- We will match local records reader to an inspector for the duration of the record reading activity. We will ensure a high degree of moderation and discussion to promote learning through this process.

Important information for training attendees

We ask that the partnership provides an anonymised child's assessment and plan that can be used for training purposes. The assessment and plan should be recent (completed within the last 12 months) and include a chronology. The child's assessment and plan must not have been completed by anyone attending the training session.

Prior to training, attendees need to have made themselves familiar with the Care Inspectorate's record reading template and guidance, which is available on our website. They also will be expected to read the anonymised children's assessment and plan which the partnership coordinator will circulate in advance of the training.

The inspection lead and strategic support officer are available should you have any queries.

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