

# GATHERING EVIDENCE OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL SERVICES TO IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## Neighbourhood Studies

This document describes the methodology for the neighbourhood study and includes the purpose of the study, the process for selection of a neighbourhood and the key ingredients of a neighbourhood study.

### 1. The purpose of a neighbourhood study

The neighbourhood study is a key part of the joint area review and enables inspectors to obtain first hand evidence of:

- the views of children, young people and their parents/carers (at least 40% of the time available for meetings and observations);
- how local services contribute to improving outcomes for children and young people; and
- how local services work together.

It is a unique opportunity for inspectors to hear and see 'what life is like' for children, young people and their parents/carers and to talk with front-line staff in a neighbourhood. It allows inspectors to compare and contrast what they find with the vision, strategies and policies of the local authority and its partners.

### 2. Criteria for the selection of the neighbourhood

The neighbourhood is a well-defined local area such as a housing estate, ward or rural community with these characteristics:

- the percentage of children and young people (0-19) is broadly in line with the average for the local authority area;
- the outcomes for children and young people in one or more of the five areas are significantly below the average for the local authority area.

As part of the self-assessment process, the local authority working with its partners is asked to identify 3 neighbourhoods that meet the above criteria and which will provide opportunities for inspectors to observe and discuss work that has been undertaken by the local authority and its partners in response to the findings of previous assessments of council services, health services and the police. See Appendix 1

The final selection of a neighbourhood for further study will then be made with regard to the 10 most significant key judgements for the local area and confirmed at the set up meeting. Aspects of 'staying safe' will always be included. The local authority is asked to work with its partners to provide more detailed information about the neighbourhood for the analysis stage. See Appendix 1, section 3.

At the set up meeting, the programme for the neighbourhood study is discussed so that the local authority can contact local services and stakeholders to begin to arrange a programme of meetings and visits. An exemplar programme is attached. The final programme needs to be with the Lead Inspector at least two weeks before the fieldwork stage.

### 3. Key ingredients of a neighbourhood study

Inspectors from a range of inspectorates work in the neighbourhood over a three day period. They talk with children and young people, parents and carers, as well as front-line staff and volunteers. They also visit a number of settings providing services for children and young people

**The programme for each neighbourhood study is unique but inspectors always begin by talking with groups of children and young people.**

All neighbourhood studies include:

- an initial tour of the neighbourhood escorted/guided by young people; and
- listening to the views of children and young people; parents and carers; and front-line staff.

Depending on the particular areas of enquiry, the programme will include some of the following:

- talking about 'what life is like' in the local neighbourhood with small focus groups of children and young people, and parents and carers in a range of settings;
- talking with children and young people from specific groups such as :
  - looked after children and care leavers;
  - young offenders;
  - minority ethnic groups and faith groups;
  - children with learning difficulties and disabilities;
  - excluded children and young people;
- visiting a health-focussed service within the neighbourhood;
- visiting co-located services such as:
  - a children's centre;
  - a full service extended school; and/or
  - a Sure Start project
- visiting before- or after- school provision;
- visiting voluntary sector provision e.g. YMCA, faith groups;
- meeting with local councillors.

Inspectors will meet with all or some of the following front-line staff who are working in the neighbourhood:

- school nurses, health visitors and community midwives;
- social workers and community psychiatric nurses;
- head teacher/college principal/work-based learning providers and teachers/lecturers;
- Connexions personal advisers/learning mentors;
- youth and community workers;
- named professionals for child protection;
- community learning difficulties team and named professionals for Special Educational Needs;

- the local police and youth offending team;
- early years and day care providers.

## Appendix 1

Pro-forma for neighbourhood profiles to inform the selection of the neighbourhood.

Please complete sections 1 and 2 for three suggested neighbourhoods before the set-up meeting with the lead inspector.

Section 3 is to be completed only for the neighbourhood that inspectors will visit.

Section 1
Name and location of neighbourhood
Section 2
Three main reasons for suggesting this neighbourhood.

## Appendix 2: Exemplar Programme for a Neighbourhood Study

### Monday – visits

Time	Team 1	Team 2
11:30 to 14:00	Inspection team briefing and lunch	
14:00 to 16:00	Neighbourhood tour	1 Neighbourhood tour
16:30 to 18:00	1. After- school activity event or sports centre (children and parents)	1/2 Co-located service (see list)
18:30 to 20:00	1 Youth work session	1 Group of parents and carers

### Tuesday – visits and interviews

Time	Team 1	Team 2
09:00 to 10:30	1 Inspection team meeting	1 Inspection team meeting
11:00 to 12:30	3 Community learning difficulties team and named professionals for special educational needs	1 Connexions
12:30 to 13:30	Lunch	Lunch
14:00 to 15:30	2/3 Health focussed service	3 School nurses, health visitors and

		community midwives
16:00 to 17:30	2 Voluntary sector activity	1/2 Specific groups of children (see list – Briefing for local services)
18.00 to 19.00	Inspection team meeting	

**Wednesday – interviews based at one venue**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Team 1</b>	<b>Team 2</b>
09:00 to 09:45	3 Head teachers group (Meeting held off school site)	3 Named professionals for child protection
10:00 to 10:45	3 Early years and day care providers	3 Social workers and community psychiatric nurse
11:00 to 11:15	Coffee	Coffee
11:15 to 12:00	3 Local police and YOT	1/2 Services for specific groups of children (see list – as above)
12:15 to 14:00	Inspection team meeting	

N.B. This is only a model. The final programme will take account of times of existing activities in the neighbourhood.

The focus will be on:

1. gathering the views of children, young people, parents and carers;
2. observing settings & activities; informal discussions with children, young people and staff if appropriate; and
3. talking with key staff from service providers.