



Joint Area Review: Staff Newsletter No. 2

We've now had a briefing conference with the JAR inspectors and we've got a lot more detail on what will be happening.

The inspectors will take a selection of 100 case studies of young people from 0 to 18 years old and follow up 10 in detail.

These follow-up interviews will include the professionals working with the young people - from Devon County Council and beyond - the young people themselves and their parents or carers. This means some of you will be involved.

We got the list in on time and we'll know the final selection on April 3.

The inspectors will also be seeking the views of 600 young people from Devon schools who will be part of a Tellus Survey. Our role here will be to encourage young people to participate if we are able to do so. The actual process will be directly between Ofsted and schools.

The selection of areas for the neighbourhood studies is almost complete. We have explained Devon's geography to them. Incoming inspectors often have no concept of the distances and travel times involved so this is quite critical to planning their programme of visits.

When they visit the chosen areas - we hope for two to be accepted - they will want to drill down into what it's like to live there and what sort of experience young people and families have in accessing services.

The inspectors have also indicated that they will try to visit any provision we would like to 'showcase' anywhere in Devon - do talk with your managers if you think there are some good examples. Your contact for suggestions is Julie Mitchell.

Devon County Council has in previous years had feedback from a Schools' Survey prepared by the Audit Commission. This year we decided to design our own, to make it a more useful tool for actually informing improvement. It was sent to schools on March 1.

You will want to consider what you personally can contribute to the JAR, especially if you are invited to a focus group or asked to be part of the inspectors' more detailed discussions - they will be based in the Committee Suite at County Hall from June 12 to 23.

The most important thing is to be clear about the contribution you make in your job to improving outcomes for children and young people. I'm sure all teams will be discussing this over the next few weeks.

Further detail can be found on the JAR website: the address is www.devonjar.org.uk

Ingrid Fisher
Assistant Director, Policy and Strategy