



Joint Area Review: Staff Newsletter No.3

CYPS Launch:

It's been an interesting time! On the one hand we spent March finalising the close-down of old Directorates in DCC and establishing the frameworks for our new CYPS Directorate; on the other we were finalising the requirements and logistics of the forthcoming inspection. 'Hopes and fears' indeed!

The two came nicely together on 3 April. As it was both the first working day of the new Directorate and the JAR set-up meeting! The lead inspector, Lisa Williams, attended the official CYPS launch in the morning, where the theme was celebration of what people have already achieved in their previous Directorates.

Although preparing for an inspection is always demanding we have turned it into a positive piece of work in helping us to think through what will bring most benefit achieving the objectives of the new CYPS.

The set-up meeting

This is the first formal part of the process. Over 30 delegates attended, from DCC and partner agencies, and from the Youth Parliament. On the JAR side Lisa Williams (from Ofsted) was joined by Heather Brown (from the social care inspectorate, CSCI) who is the Assistant Lead Inspector; and Gordon Brown, Lead Inspector for the whole DCC inspection, (the CPA), which is happening alongside the JAR: the JAR findings will influence the CPA score, and we all want to retain our four-star rating.

Anne's presentation at the launch can be found at

<http://www4.devon.gov.uk/private/eal/staff/cyps/launch.pdf> along with a summary of the speech at <http://www4.devon.gov.uk/private/eacl/staff/cyps/cyps-update-apr06pdf>

The self-assessment

Following the launch on the morning of the 3 April senior managers spent the afternoon and evening reviewing the data for our self-assessment document. Our own evaluation of how well we are doing is a central focus of the JAR, and it has to be supported by evidence.

Next day, 4 April, our own views were tested at a Partners' Conference: other agencies had contributed to the self-assessment evidence and we needed to ensure we reached a shared opinion on our performance. This is very much about how we all contribute to outcomes for children.

We will also have the opportunity in presenting our evidence to show-case areas of work we are proud of. We achieve so much that is good – but we don't always shout about it.

Analysis week 22 – 26 May

During this week Inspectors will look closely at ten case files of children and young people who have had need for one or more specialist service. If you work in social care you will already have been notified if one of your cases is included.

Fieldwork weeks 12 – 23 June

Inspectors will visit two neighbourhoods: Wonford (Exeter) and Bideford (the learning community). The lead officers, who are preparing for this and who will brief you as necessary are Liz Hitchins for Bideford, and Anne Beveridge for Wonford. Many of you who work in these areas will find yourselves involved.

I am writing to senior and middle managers separately to give them further details of the judgement areas the inspectors are most interested in, and the members of the Inspection Team, in case you find your own work in the spotlight.

If you have any specific questions about the JAR please email the JAR Team on jar.team@devon.gov.uk

It feels good to me to be part of an official CYPS Directorate at last. We know that what we do makes a real difference to young people and families in Devon. Let's make sure the inspectors hear about it!

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