



Update

Joint Area Review: Managers Briefing No.5

Reminder of timetable:

The Inspectors have two fieldwork weeks from 12 - 23 June, where they visit two 'neighbourhoods' and track some cases through the files. They will also be conducting interviews and focus groups. On 23 June they will give some headline feedback on their overall judgements.

If you have staff involved in any aspect of the JAR please set aside some time to give them support. **And please ensure that they have some time set aside to prepare for interviews or focus groups.** This is a specific instruction from the Chief Executive and the Director.

SLG welcomed the Team back to County Hall on Monday 12 June through a short meeting with the Lead Inspectors. Interviews started on 13 June although most are later.

Please explain to any staff who were expecting to be in focus groups and are now not, or whose group composition or date have changed, that the JAR Team has been asked by the Inspectors to make many alterations. I will tell staff this directly in the next newsletter but it would be helpful to reinforce the message. It's rather encouraging to know that some people were disappointed **not** to meet the Inspectors! but for those who are nervous about it, please do give time to supporting them. The best possible way to feel confident is to feel well-prepared: we have very good stories to tell.

Remember that Inspectors will want to know **outcomes and evidence of impact** from people's work. Ensure the data is available. They will also want to know how we manage our performance, so ensure your staff do understand how we know when we've delivered a good job: what measures do we use? how often do we check we're on the right track? what do we do about it if we're not? how effective are performance appraisals?

All staff due to meet Inspectors should be familiar with the main themes in the CYPP, the Business Plan and the Workforce Strategy (obviously they interrelate), so that they can identify the priorities for 2006/07 and how their work fits.

Lastly, it is important that Inspectors get a feel for how ambitious we are in Devon to make progress with our plans. We know that we have a lot of work to do, starting from raising aspirations in some of our communities and with some of our families and young people. This is a long-term piece of work, but we do intend to do it. We want to be excellent, not average, and all our planning in the new CYPS is to make sure we do.

The key priority for DCC in supporting children and young people is to target our efforts on better outcomes for those most vulnerable or at risk of disadvantage. That's what we're going to do and we **will** do it.

Please ensure that message is well understood!

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