

Inspections of children's homes

Consultation questionnaire

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Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
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Inspection of children's homes

1. This is a significant period of change for children's homes and an opportunity to improve the life chances of the vulnerable children and young people who live in residential care. We want children's homes to provide the best possible care and experiences, while improving the children's life chances and helping them to successfully manage their lives as young adults.
2. Between December 2013 and February 2014, we consulted on a new inspection framework that had a much stronger focus on the experiences of children and young people. We received 123 responses to our online consultation and secured the views of 207 children and young people. The majority of respondents were in agreement with our proposals. We decided not to implement the new framework at that time because we wanted to align more closely with the full package of regulatory reform led by government. We considered that two rapid changes to the inspection framework would be both destabilising and unhelpful.
3. Now that government has made clear its intentions for the regulations, the quality standards and the new guidance, we are able to consult on an inspection framework. It is fully informed by the previous consultation, takes into account the new regulations and is well informed by the headline responses to the Department for Education (DfE) consultation conducted in September this year.
4. In this consultation we set out how we will make inspection judgements and how we anticipate putting the new quality standards into operation. Professional judgement, accountability and the relationship between the regulatory framework and Ofsted inspections are at the heart of this consultation.
5. We set out our proposed criteria for each of the judgement areas. We want you to tell us if you think we have got these right. We also set out how we intend to ensure that we provide the best scrutiny of those homes that give us the most concern by providing inadequate care. We want to hear your views on this proposal.

This consultation

We want to make sure you understand:

- how we intend to make judgements using the grade criteria in a 'best fit' model
- the relationship between the regulations, the government guidance and the inspection framework.

We would also like your opinions on:

- the grade criteria for each inspection judgement
- our approach to homes judged inadequate.

Your views will help to refine and develop our framework for inspecting children's homes.

This document should be read alongside the full consultation document:
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140174.

How to submit your views

There are three ways of completing and submitting your response.

- Complete the online questionnaire:
www.surveymonkey.com/s/childrenshomes
- Download this document from: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140174, complete it on your computer and email your response to socialcare@ofsted.gov.uk with the subject line 'Inspections of children's homes consultation'.
- Print this document, complete it by hand and post it to:

Social Care
Ofsted
8th floor
Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

The consultation will be open until **13 January 2015**

Confidentiality

The information you provide will be held by Ofsted. It will only be used for the purposes of consultation and research to help us to become more effective, influence policies and inform inspection and regulatory practice.

We will treat your identity in confidence, if you disclose it to us.

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

Yes please complete Section 1 and the related questions
 No please complete Section 2 and the related questions

Section 1

Which organisation are you responding on behalf of?

Organisation: MsUnderstood_____

Would you like us to consider anonymously publishing your views?

Yes
 No

Section 2

Please tell us in which capacity you are completing this survey (please choose one option):

a child or young person	<input type="checkbox"/>	the parent or carer of a child or young person living in a children's home	<input type="checkbox"/>
the registered provider of a children's home	<input type="checkbox"/>	the registered manager of a children's home	<input type="checkbox"/>
a social worker who places or is responsible for children and young people living in children's homes	<input type="checkbox"/>	local authority Chief Executive	<input type="checkbox"/>
local authority Director of Children's Services or their representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Safeguarding Children Board Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
practitioner in social care		practitioner in education	
practitioner in health	<input type="checkbox"/>	prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please tell us Policy and Campaigns Co-ordinator			

Making judgements and using the grade descriptors

Paragraphs 15–20 of the full consultation document explain how we will implement the 'best fit' model in our children's homes framework. We want to make sure you understand how inspectors will use the new inspection framework to make judgements.

Q1a: Is the way we have described making judgements and using the grade criteria in a 'best fit' model clear?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Q1b: If not, what further clarification is needed?

Comment:

About Us: The MsUnderstood Programme aims to improve local and national responses to young people's experiences of gender inequality. MsUnderstood is a three year partnership between the University of Bedfordshire, Imkaan and the Girls Against Gangs project, to improve responses to peer-on-peer abuse in young people's relationships and peer groups through:

- Intensive support of local areas to review and improve their strategic and operational response to peer-on-peer abuse
- A national assessment of provision for boys and young men who perpetrate gender-based violence
- Paid internships and volunteer placements for young people to influence policy and service development locally and nationally

MsUnderstood welcomes Ofsted's consultation on the inspection framework for care homes, which has critical role to play in assessing the levels of safety and support provided to all children and young people, and particularly those who experience peer-on-peer abuse. With reference to question 1a, it is important that inspectors are adequately trained to understand the dynamics and impact of all forms of abuse experienced by children and young people including child sexual exploitation, gang associated sexual violence and teenage relationship abuse. This will help to ensure that inspectors understand the needs of children experiencing abuse, and are able to give 'professional judgement' when grading and judging the performance of children's homes in providing help and protection to all children.

The relationship between the regulations, the government guide and the inspection framework

In paragraphs 21–24 of the consultation document we have set out:

- how inspectors will use the new regulations, quality standards and accompanying guidance and how this will influence inspection judgement
- how the quality standards map into the inspection framework (diagram on page 10).

Q2a: Is the way that we have explained the relationship between the regulations, the government guidance and the inspection framework clear?

Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Q2b: If not, what further clarification is needed?

Comment:

Proposal 1: The grade criteria for each inspection judgement

Q3. Do you agree or disagree with how we have described what 'good' looks like for the 'overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home' judgement (paragraph 28)?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Q4. If you disagree, are there any criteria you think we should amend and, if so, how? Please provide the criteria reference and your suggested amendment.

Comment:

We agree with the description, with the following suggestions/amendments:

Paragraph 28a - important to consider whether children and young people are encouraged and supported to build trusted and secure relationships outside the home as well as within the home?

Paragraph 28d - do children and young people know who they can turn to for support when they want to make a complaint?

Paragraph 28e - beyond educational achievement, also need to be concerned about school safety and links to vulnerability/risk of harm. Attendance, progress and achievement at school will also be impacted by experiences of abuse - are vulnerabilities and possible impacts of abuse adequately identified and responded to by staff and managers at the home?

Paragraph 28f - the home should be aware of local youth services, have good relationships with youth workers, and actively encourage children and young people to participate in local groups.

Vulnerability/risk to children and young people may occur beyond the home, within their friendship group. Important to consider how the children's home identifies and reduces risk of harm within friendship groups, within and external to the home, and any visitors to the home.

Paragraph 28g - how can young people 'protect themselves' from unsafe situations/people if these contexts remain unsafe? Unsafe environments must be identified and intervened with. Children's homes must be aware of the local profile - do they understand what is happening in their local area and how to respond? e.g. awareness of local gang affiliations, where child sexual exploitation is taking place. How do they make sure they have up to date knowledge about the area? Do they know where to refer if in need of specialist support?

Paragraph 28i - staff and managers should have up to date knowledge of specialist services and good relationships with such services. Specialist support should be age and gender appropriate. Consideration should be given to whether the interventions provided are actually helping the child/young person.

Paragraph 28m - as above, unsafe environments must be identified and responded to.

Paragraph 28n - it would be interesting to know how 'care that is sensitive and responsive to identity and family history' is assessed and recorded.

Paragraph 28p - important to look at how vulnerability/risk within friendship groups is identified and responded to.

Q5. Are there any criteria you think we have missed out? If so, please provide the detail.

Comment:

Q6. Do you agree or disagree with how we have described what 'good' looks like for the 'how well children and young people are helped and protected' judgement (paragraph 32)?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q7. If you disagree, are there any criteria you think we should amend and, if so, how? Please provide the criteria reference and your suggested amendment.

Comment:

We agree with the description, with the following suggestions/amendments:

Paragraph 32a - it is important that the children's home is aware of and updated on the local context and risk of harm outside of the home in schools, peer groups and neighbourhoods. Are staff and managers adequately identifying and responding to harmful environments outside the home? Have they established good relationships with police safer neighbourhood teams, schools, youth workers and social workers? Are staff and managers trained on all forms of abuse experienced by children and young people including child sexual exploitation, gang associated sexual violence and gender-based violence in order to identify and support children and young people experiencing abuse.

Paragraph 32f - how can children 'keep themselves safe' from bullying and other forms of discrimination in environments where discrimination continues? It is important that harmful environments are identified and intervened with, twinned with 1:1 interventions where appropriate, to keep children safe.

Paragraph 32o - consider safety and security of physical and social environment both within and beyond the home.

Q8. Are there any criteria you think we have missed out? If so, please provide the detail.

Comment:

Q9. Do you agree or disagree with how we have described what good looks like for the proposed 'impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers' judgement (paragraph 36)?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q10. If you disagree, are there any criteria you think we should amend and, if so, how? Please provide the criteria reference and your suggested amendment.

Comment:

We agree with the description, with the following suggestions/amendments:

Staff and managers should be trained on all forms of abuse experienced by young people, understand the dynamics and impacts of abuse and how to respond appropriately.

Paragraph 36j - robust action should also be taken on issues arising outside of the home that put children and young people at risk of harm.

Paragraph 36k - do staff receive regular supervision, training and salary/support that reflect their responsibility to deliver high-quality stable care?

Paragraph 36q - this is crucial - risk may well be located outside of the home and must be identified and addressed with multi-agency partners by staff/managers/leaders who have a good understanding of the local context.

Paragraph 36r - where progress is not being made, are staff appropriately identifying and supporting children and young people experiencing harm?

Paragraph 36s - effective working relationships should also be built with teachers, youth workers and police.

Paragraph 36t - beyond attendance and achievement at school also need to be concerned with school safety and vulnerability/risk of harm.

Q11. Are there any criteria you think we have missed out? If so, please provide the detail.

Comment:

Proposal 2: Our approach to homes judged to be inadequate

Q12a. Do you agree or disagree that we should take a risk-based approach in our follow-up to homes judged to be inadequate (paragraphs 40–48)?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Comment:

Q12b: Do you agree that in some instances (where the criteria outlined in paragraph 45 of the consultation document are met) inspectors should be able to give an improved inspection judgement without undertaking a further full inspection and where all requirements have been met?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Comment:

Any other comments

Q13. Do you have any other comments about this consultation?

What did you think of this consultation?

One of the commitments in Ofsted’s strategic plan is to monitor whether our consultations are accessible to those wishing to take part.

Please tell us what you thought of this consultation by answering the questions below.

How did you hear about this consultation?

- Ofsted website
- @ofstednews (twitter)
- Ofsted News
- Ofsted conference
- Another organisation (please specify, if known)
- Other (please specify)

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
I found the consultation information clear and easy to understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found the consultation easy to find on the Ofsted website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I had enough information about the consultation topic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would take part in a future Ofsted consultation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is there anything you would like us to improve on or do differently for future consultations? If so, please tell us below.

Additional questions about you

Your answers to the following questions will help us to evaluate how successfully we are communicating messages from inspection to all sections of society. We would like to assure you that completion of this section is optional, you do not have to answer any of the questions, and all responses are confidential.

Please tick the appropriate box.

1. Gender

Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/>
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2. Age

Under 14 <input type="checkbox"/>	14–18 <input type="checkbox"/>	19–24 <input type="checkbox"/>	25–34 <input type="checkbox"/>	35–44 <input type="checkbox"/>	45–54 <input type="checkbox"/>	55–64 <input type="checkbox"/>	65+ <input type="checkbox"/>
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3. Ethnic origin

How would you describe your ethnic group?

Asian		Mixed ethnic origin	
Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian and White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black African and White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Caribbean and White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other Asian background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other mixed ethnic background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black		White	
African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any White background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other ethnic background	
Any other Black background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese			
Any Chinese background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

4. Sexual orientation

Heterosexual <input type="checkbox"/>	Lesbian <input type="checkbox"/>	Gay <input type="checkbox"/>	Bisexual <input type="checkbox"/>
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5. Religion/belief

Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other, please state:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>	None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>		

6. Disability

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Thank you for taking part in our consultation.