

<i>item:</i>	13
<i>report:</i>	CYP26/06

JOINT INSPECTION MODEL

By Bill Alexander

Summary

This report proposes a response to the consultation on generic quality indicators for the inspection of integrated children's services.

1. Background

- 1.1 HMIe published a consultation document on *Generic Quality Indicators* in April 2006. It is available at:
<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/Consultation%20on%20Generic%20Indicators.doc>
- 1.2 An earlier HMIe consultation paper *A Common Approach to Inspecting Services for Children and Young People*, set out proposals for developing and implementing an outcome-focused, intelligence-led and proportionate approach to the inspection of services for children and young people. It included a development and implementation timetable leading up to the introduction of a coherent system of inspection by the end of 2008.
- 1.3 The first commitment in that timetable was to consult on draft generic quality indicators for services for children and young people. This further consultation document fulfils that commitment.
- 1.4 Like the earlier consultation paper as a whole, the proposals on indicators received an overwhelmingly positive response from respondents. In developing the draft generic quality indicators and associated guidance contained in this paper, HMIe have taken account many comments and suggestions previously made by respondents.

1.5 Following responses to this consultation document, HMIe will revise and further develop the indicators and associated material, with a view to publishing a definitive document by autumn 2006.

2. The Generic Quality Indicators

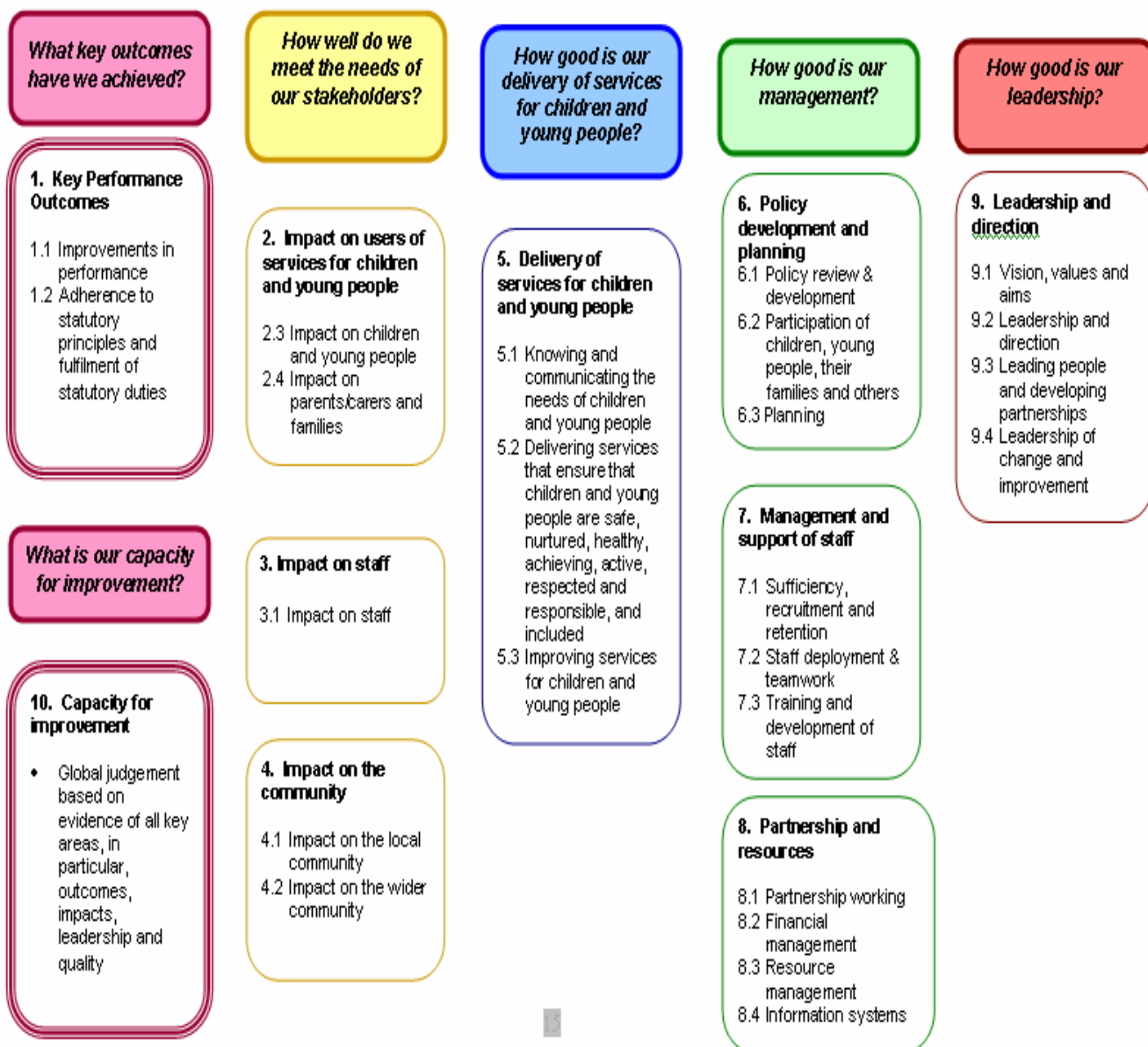
2.1 Organisations providing services for children and young people are asked, individually and collectively, to answer *six high-level questions*:

- *What key outcomes have we achieved?*
- *How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?*
- *How good is our delivery of services for children and young people?*
- *How good is our management?*
- *How good is our leadership?*
- *What is our capacity for improvement?*

2.2 Inspectorates concerned with services for children and young people have agreed that, within the coherent system of inspection which will be introduced in 2008, inspection processes should contribute information which will enable the same six questions to be answered. Answering these questions will also be at the core of the integrated inspections of services for children which will be introduced as part of the coherent system of inspection.

2.3 Generic quality indicators are intended to give focus to the collection and evaluation of evidence required to answer each of the six high-level questions. While they should be applied by all organisations in answering the six high-level questions, there will be situations in which evaluations will have to be informed by use of specific indicators, standards or other protocols. These include indicators which are used in a specific sector such as care or health, or which have been developed to allow a particular focus, such as child-protection.

2.4 The following chart identifies how each of the high level questions is broken down to the generic quality indicators.



Each indicator is then in turn, broken down into a number of themes that point to aspects of that indicator which may merit closer examination. For example, the indicator: 6.1 Policy review and development, has four themes. The relationship between high-level question, key area, indicator and themes is shown as follows:

Key Area 6. Policy development and planning

No	Quality Indicator	Themes
HOW GOOD IS OUR MANAGEMENT?		
6.1	Policy review and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Integrated Children's Services Plan • Range and appropriateness of policies for integrated service delivery • Coherence of policies • Managing, disseminating, evaluating and updating policies

2.5 Finally, the generic quality indicators are designed to be applied at three related levels of service provision:

- at the level of **strategic** management across a range of services or organisations, for example in the formulation and implementation of an Integrated Children's Services Plan;
- at the level of **operational** management of services or organisations within a broader structure, for example where schools, social workers, primary health care professionals and police officers work together to deal with the operational management issues associated with providing an integrated service in a given area;
- at the level of **delivery** of a specific service, for example where inputs from social work services and housing within a Council combine with police and the Reporter service to deal with children and young people involved in anti-social behaviour.

3. Using the framework

3.1 This framework provides a systematic structure for self-evaluation and Quality Assurance. It can help evaluators to diagnose the features of the strengths and weaknesses evident in practice. Further, those using the framework are encouraged to arrive at an evaluation of the overall capacity to improve.

3.2 The framework has been described and considered at a number of meetings with practitioners and managers in Highland. This has included first line managers in Social Work and Health and the Child Protection Lead Officers Group. These consultations have confirmed the appropriateness of the framework over a range of settings.

- 3.3 The framework has also been used to evaluate and learn lessons from practice in cases where children and families have been subject to child protection processes. This has proved extremely effective, and the outcomes have been fed back into appropriate management systems.
- 3.3 Accordingly, the Child Protection Committee has agreed to adopt this model and use it as the basis for strategic and operational self-evaluation.

4. The Inspection Programme

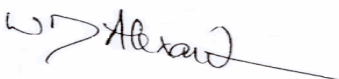
- 4.1 This framework is intended to support the rationalisation of the inspection programme across all services and agencies.
- 4.2 While the Joint Committee has welcomed the intent of all regulatory bodies to reduce the inspection burden, the reality is that services and agencies are experiencing increased numbers of inspections, and more detailed and longer inspections. For example, the Education, Culture & Sport Service experienced 291 separate inspections in the year 2005/06. In the current calendar year, the Social Work Service will experience a Criminal Justice Inspection, a Child Protection Inspection and a Performance Inspection - in addition to the Best Value Report by Audit Scotland.

5. Response to Consultation

- 5.1 Accordingly, it is proposed that the Joint Committee:
- welcomes the model of generic quality indicators to support an outcome-focused, intelligence-led and proportionate approach to the inspection of services for children and young people;
 - indicates that this model of inspection can only be achieved with a rationalisation and significance reduction in inspection activity, involving a fully joined up approach by the regulatory agencies.

Recommendation

The Joint Committee is asked to agree this response to the HMIe consultation on generic quality indicators.



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