

Joint Area Review

Update no 4



Key Messages from this newsletter

Latest JAR news • Adoption, Fostering and Youth Offending inspections • Partnership pages

Councillor Joyce Bosnjak is Nottinghamshire County Council's cabinet member for Children and Young People's Services



As lead member for Children & Young People's services in Nottinghamshire I meet many people across the Partnership who are working to improve the lives of our children and young people. I work with members of the public, councillors and lead officers, and visit many workplaces and projects to see frontline workers in action.

My role includes ensuring that services provided in Nottinghamshire are of a high standard. The JAR will be one of the ways that we can assess the

quality of our services, the way we manage them, the way we work together to provide them and whether they are improving.

Like many of you I will be interviewed by the JAR inspection team, and asked to prove that we are delivering the best we can for Nottinghamshire children and young people.

I shall be telling them about the many examples of good practice I have seen across the County, and about the way that staff of all our organisations have embraced the agenda for change.

I shall also be making sure that they are aware of the exciting developments we have planned to work more closely together, to listen to children and their families, and to continue to improve the quality of our services.

I know how dedicated you are to providing the services those children and their families need, and I sincerely hope that when the JAR takes place in a few weeks time that the inspectors will see this too. Please make sure that you are ready to respond to questions about your service if asked. Thank you for the contribution you are making to this important process.

Joyce.

Joint Area Review

Keep up to date

Your own organisation will circulate JAR updates to you through your usual communication routes. You'll also be invited to attend briefing sessions and be able to find information in the CYP Partnership area of the County Council's website which will be regularly updated

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/jointareareview

Those who will be formally interviewed will receive additional briefings.

You can contact the JAR team administrator on 0115 977 2276 or e-mail emma.jenkinson@nottsc.gov.uk

What will the Joint Area Review cover?

The JAR inspectors will make judgements about the way we work together as partners to deliver services and improve outcomes for children and young people across Nottinghamshire. All JAR inspections result in grades for the following five main areas of partnership working:

- Looked after children and young people
- Children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Safeguarding
- Service management
- Capacity to improve

In Nottinghamshire, we have been advised that there will be two additional lines of enquiry:

- The effectiveness of the partners' strategy in countering the impact of deprivation on health outcomes for children and young people (with particular reference to Mansfield, Ashfield and Bassetlaw)
- The impact of the partners' 14-19 strategy in improving outcomes for young people.

Who are the inspectors?

Martin Ayres our Lead Inspector and his deputy Stella Butler, both from Ofsted, will lead a team of eight inspectors. Other members of the team will be drawn from Ofsted (including education, social care and adult learning specialists), the Healthcare Commission (HC), the Audit Commission (AC) and possibly Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)

We hope to bring you more information about the inspection team in the next JAR Update.

How will the JAR be carried out?

From 17-23 April 2008 JAR Inspectors will look at our key documents and read a sample of children's case records. Then, from 12 -23 May, inspectors will spend two weeks on site undertaking a range of fieldwork activity. So if you work with or for children and young people in Nottinghamshire you could be approached by one of the inspectors. They will compare what they have read and what we say with what they see of actual practice and publish their report on 9th September on the Ofsted website.

How might you be involved?

The inspectors will interview staff, managers and elected members, meet focus groups and visit services across the County talking to staff as well as children and families. The inspectors will provide us with a draft list at the set up meeting on 3 March. They have already identified a list of voluntary and community organisations and a briefing meeting is being arranged for them. The JAR project team will also identify all the professionals involved with the selected case files and invite them to an additional briefing event.

Although some meetings and visits will be pre-booked, the inspectors will be able to go wherever they choose to ask questions. They will want to hear your views about the work we do and how it is making a difference to improving outcomes for children and young people. They will want to know how well we are working with other agencies and co-ordinating activities so that children and young people and parents and carers feel well supported.

Make sure you know:

- how your work helps children, young people and their families to achieve these objectives of the Children and Young People's Plan
- how partner agencies' work contributes to achieving these objectives
- how children and their families can influence the services they receive

... and how you can prove all of the above

Joint Area Review

The vision for our Partnership

We will work together to provide integrated services for all children and young people in Nottinghamshire to improve their life chances and to help maximise their potential.

***"This can only be achieved by staff across all our organisations working together in new and imaginative ways."* - Lead member for Children & Young People's Services, Councillor Joyce Bosnjak**

Ofsted Inspection of Fostering and Adoption Services

This year's inspections of Fostering and Adoption services have been timed to fit in with the JAR. Results from these inspections will contribute to our JAR grades.

The Fostering Service was inspected in January and involved two inspectors spending three days at the County Council. During this time they looked at records, and met foster carers and key staff. Following the inspection the service was judged as 'satisfactory'.

The service was commended for being well managed and promoting stability for children in care. The report says *Young people are well supported by their carers to access appropriate health care, to achieve academically, to engage in leisure and sporting activities and to retain contact with their family and friends.*

The responsiveness of the electronic recording system to the needs of the fostering service, evidence of safe recruitment practices on personnel files, and providing carers with timely information to enable them to care properly for children and young people were identified as areas for improvement.

The Adoption Service is to be subject to inspection in April. The set up meeting has already taken

place and a series of visits and interviews are being arranged over a three day period.

Alison Shield, Service Head

Inspection of the Youth Offending Service

The Youth Offending Service (YOS) will be inspected separately, but in connection with, the Joint Area Review. The main inspection activity is during the week of the 21st April. The lead inspector for the YOS will also return during the Joint Area Review to follow up on issues raised, across the work of the partnership.

Inspection bodies for Police, Probation, Health and Children's Services will all be involved. There are national criteria for all YOS inspections against which judgements are made.

The YOS inspection includes an in depth audit of 92 case files involving interviews with staff of agencies, young people and their families. There are also questionnaires for a proportion of victims. Inspectors will visit all aspects of the Youth Offending Service.

Some initial feedback is presented at the end of the inspection week in April, and at the end of the JAR inspection in May, with a final judgment published in August.

Joint Area Review

JAR Team members:

Les Cowling	Project Lead
Alison Bromberg & Sarah Craven	Co-ordination and Project Management
Sue Dryden	Health Lead
Carol Angharad & Simon Ray	Case files
Ty Yousef	Documentation
Emma Jenkinson	Administration
Michèle McIntosh	Communications

Partnership Pages

The CYP Partnership web site is now live and will soon be the place to go to find all the Partnership information you need.

Plans for the site include Partnership news and information, examples of good practice, a document store and links to partners' web sites.

The web site is the new home of the Children and Young People's Plan, and you can find information about the JAR and the latest copies of JAR Update. The site will be under development for some time, so please visit often as new information is being added all the time.

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nottsCYPpartnership

Key Dates in 2008

Please note. These dates have been updated and may be subject to further changes.

- January** Briefing pack issued by Ofsted requesting a list of 100 'cases' of vulnerable children and young people.
- 3 March** Setup meeting for senior officers/members with the Lead Inspector for a timeline of the key lines of enquiry for the inspection.
- 31 March** Submission of CYPP review and Enhanced Youth Inspection self assessment.
- 17 - 23 April** Analysis Week. Inspectors onsite from 21st April to review documents and case files. At the end of this week the JAR team will confirm the programme for their fieldwork inspection.
- 12 - 23 May** Fieldwork Weeks – inspectors undertake a range of evidence gathering activities around Nottinghamshire.
- 30 June** Draft Report sent to Director of Children's services who then has 10 days to make written comments.
- 4 July** Meetings with Director of Children's Services and members of the Partnership to discuss findings.
- 6 August** JAR findings form part of pre-publication report sent to Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council.
- 9 September** Report is public and published on web sites. Action plan needed within 70 days.

Contact: Emma Jenkinson, JAR Team Administrator on 0115 977 2276,
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JAR Update is published by Children & Young People's Services, Nottinghamshire County Council,
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