



One minute guide

Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) — serious youth violence

No. 208, September 2023

What is the Joint Targeted Area Inspection— serious youth violence?

As part of the current [Ofsted inspection framework](#) 'Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services' ([ILACS](#)), all local areas may be subject to a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI).

JTAIs are unannounced joint inspections carried out by Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The scope of the inspection is to look at multi-agency arrangements, including identification of risk, the quality and timeliness of assessments, and to carry out a 'deep dive' investigation of the response to specific children and young people.

JTAI themes change annually, with previous themes including neglect, domestic abuse and exploitation. Inspections taking place between September 2023 and May 2024 will be on the theme of serious youth violence, and carried out in line with the [published inspection framework](#).

These themed inspections take place alongside an ongoing programme of JTAI inspections into the effectiveness of the [multi-agency response to identification of initial need and risk](#); this is often referred to as the 'front door' for concerns about children to be responded to. Leeds could be subject to either a 'themed' JTAI or a 'front door' JTAI at any time.

What do the inspectorates mean by 'serious youth violence'?

The framework specifies that inspections will focus on children aged ten and over, and notes that: *'For the purpose of this JTAI theme, when referring to serious youth violence we will include specific types of crime committed by and affecting children outside of the home. We will use the scope outlined in the government's [Serious Violence Strategy](#), which includes homicide and knife and gun crime, as well as emerging threats, such as the use of corrosive substances as weapons. We will also include intervention in localities in areas where violent crime is prevalent, for example in relation to county lines and drug-dealing activity.'*

(Please see the [Child Criminal Exploitation one minute guide](#) for an explanation of county lines). The framework notes that inspectors will consider the impact of strategic responses to criminal exploitation on practice, where this is apparent through individual children's cases.

The framework also provides an overview of the prevalence, context and impact of serious youth violence, including:

- A link to [research carried out by the Youth Endowment Fund](#) which found that 39% of those children surveyed had been a victim or witness of violence in the last 12 months;
- Data released by the [Office of National Statistics](#) indicates that the number of deaths by knives is increasing, particularly for young people under the age of 18.
- The consequences for children who are victims of serious youth violence can include death, life-changing injuries, poor mental health (including trauma) and, for some, long-term difficulties, including drug and alcohol misuse;
- Language in the framework refers to 'children affected by serious youth violence'. This is used to cover: children who are victims of violence, children who cause harm to others through violence, and children who are both victims and perpetrators of violence; and
- The causes of serious youth violence are complex and multi-faceted, including societal causes such as inequality, poverty and structural racism, which can make some children more vulnerable to being affected by serious youth violence. This is not to suggest that those who commit violent acts should never be held responsible, or that violence only occurs in certain sections of society.

Focus of the JTAI serious youth violence inspections

The framework states that serious youth violence JTAIs will focus on the following:

Strategic partnership responses to serious youth violence, including how partnerships:

- collate and share information and intelligence to understand risk and the implications of serious youth violence within the local community/ies;
- use this information and engage with communities to inform their decision-making in relation to interventions and commissioning services;
- engage meaningfully with children and families to understand their needs and views;
- develop and implement approaches to prevention, including the role of education providers and multi-agency interventions to address risk and improve safety;
- support the workforce to have the skills and knowledge to help and protect children; and
- evaluate and oversee their responses to serious youth violence

Intervention with individual and groups of children affected by serious youth violence and criminal exploitation, including how partners:

- respond to all forms of serious youth violence and child criminal exploitation at the point of identification;
- assess, plan and make decisions in response to notifications and referrals of children at risk of/ subject to serious youth violence and/ or criminal exploitation; and
- protect, support and care for children who are at risk or have been harmed by serious youth violence and/ or criminal exploitation, including looked after children.

Explore intervention in places and spaces, to include consideration of:

- what information and intelligence partners are using to inform their decisions about interventions in places and spaces;
- whether this is a partnership approach, what methodology/approach they use and what the aim of the intervention(s) is;
- how partners consult and engage children and communities in relation to this work;
- how partners are making sure that children and places and spaces are safer; and
- what the outcome is and how partners evaluate their interventions.

What will the inspection look like?

The inspection will take place over three weeks, though inspectors will only be onsite during week three. Agencies are usually notified of the inspection on a Monday.

Based on lists of children provided by the local authority, inspectors will select a small number of children to evaluate, asking the agencies to jointly audit the experiences of these children and provide documents from their case records. Inspectors will speak to these children and their families and practitioners working with them during week three. In addition, partner agencies must provide a range of strategic documents.

Inspectors will carry out case tracking and sampling of individual children's experiences. They may observe planned multi-agency meetings, examine key documents, interview staff and senior leaders and may speak to children and parents. Inspectors will review evidence against the evaluation criteria to identify the partnership's strengths and areas for development, which will be outlined in the inspection report, published on the Ofsted website. There are no graded judgements (i.e. outstanding, good requires improvement, inadequate) for JTAI inspections.

Key contacts and further information

The key contact for JTAI preparation in Leeds is farah.husain@leeds.gov.uk and you can read the Joint Targeted Area Inspection guidance for serious youth violence [here](#).