

The social care common inspection framework (SCCIF)

www.gov.uk/government/collections/social-care-common-inspection-framework-sccif



Social care common inspection framework (SCCIF)

The SCCIF applies to inspections of:

- children's homes, including secure children's homes
- independent fostering agencies
- boarding schools and residential special schools
- voluntary adoption agencies
- adoption support agencies
- residential family centres
- residential holiday schemes for disabled children
- further education colleges (residential provision).

Consultation on the future of social care inspection – a reminder

We made proposals about:

- Our principles for inspection
- A new approach to inspections of local authority children's services from 2018
- A new common inspection framework for all social care establishments, agencies, boarding schools, residential special schools and further education colleges (residential provision) from April 2017
- Changes to inspections of independent fostering agencies (IFAs), including a shorter notice period for inspections and earlier returns to IFAs judged as less than good.

Consultation and pilots

- 218 replies to online consultation
- Meetings/webinars/events with 250+ individuals, including:
 - children and young people
 - providers
 - representative groups, e.g. ADCS, Alliance for Children in Care, LandEx, National IRO managers group
 - social workers
 - foster carers
- Eight pilot inspections testing the SCCIF and short notice inspections of independent fostering agencies (four IFA pilots)

Our inspection principles



Focus on what makes the most difference in children's lives: rigorous focus on progress and experiences across all of our inspection frameworks.

Being clear about our expectations of providers: bringing commonality into our expectations on inspection wherever we can

Prioritise inspection where improvement is needed most: risk-based and proportionate.

- the SCCIF and local authority inspections will embody these principles

Our response to the consultation and pilots

- Principles agreed, with slight amendments for clarity
- Publication of the SCCIF on Wednesday 22 February, for use from 1 April 2017
- Common judgement structure:
 - Overall experiences of children and young people, taking into account:
 - How well children are helped and protected
 - The effectiveness of leaders and managers
- Evaluation criteria amended to take account of feedback
- A reduced notice period for independent fostering agencies – now two working days
- We will re-inspect IFAs judged as inadequate within 6-12 months, and IFAs judged as requires improvement within 12-18 months

Full consultation outcomes report available at:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-social-care-inspection

Principle: to focus on the things that matter most to children's lives

- the experiences and progress of children and other service users will be central to SCCIF inspections
- there will be key areas of evidence that we will usually report on at each inspection.

Principle: to be consistent in our expectations of providers

- the same judgement structure for all settings
- the evaluation criteria and the accompanying guidance will be, wherever possible, consistent across settings
- information requirements clearly set out

But the SCCIF is not a 'one-size-fits-all' framework

- When it is necessary, the SCCIF will reflect and address the unique and distinct aspects of each type of provision, e.g.
 - specific evaluation criteria are added or amended where necessary
 - judgements will take account of the experiences of adult service users, where relevant

Principle: to prioritise our work where improvement is needed most



- A proportionate, risk-based approach to inspections
- We will usually visit children's homes and independent fostering agencies that are not yet good more frequently than good or outstanding homes/agencies
- We retain the right to return earlier to good or outstanding providers where we have concerns

What do we mean by progress?

- We recognise that for some children, because of their previous life experiences, progress is not always straightforward - progress in one area may result in deterioration in another as they work through the impact of their past experiences
- Even slight progress in a particular aspect of their lives may represent a significant improvement for some children
- Inspectors take into account individual children's starting points and circumstances, e.g. educational attainment and experiences

Does the SCCIF raise the bar for good and outstanding?



- We have not intended to raise the thresholds for good or outstanding judgements by introducing the SCCIF
- But any changes to the way we inspect will have an impact
- We will continually review the impact of the SCCIF, including any changes in inspection outcomes, with a formal review after 12 months – please let us know your views

Inspections of local authority children's services



Creating environments where social work can flourish

- Career progression
- Supervision
- Learning and development
- Clinical input



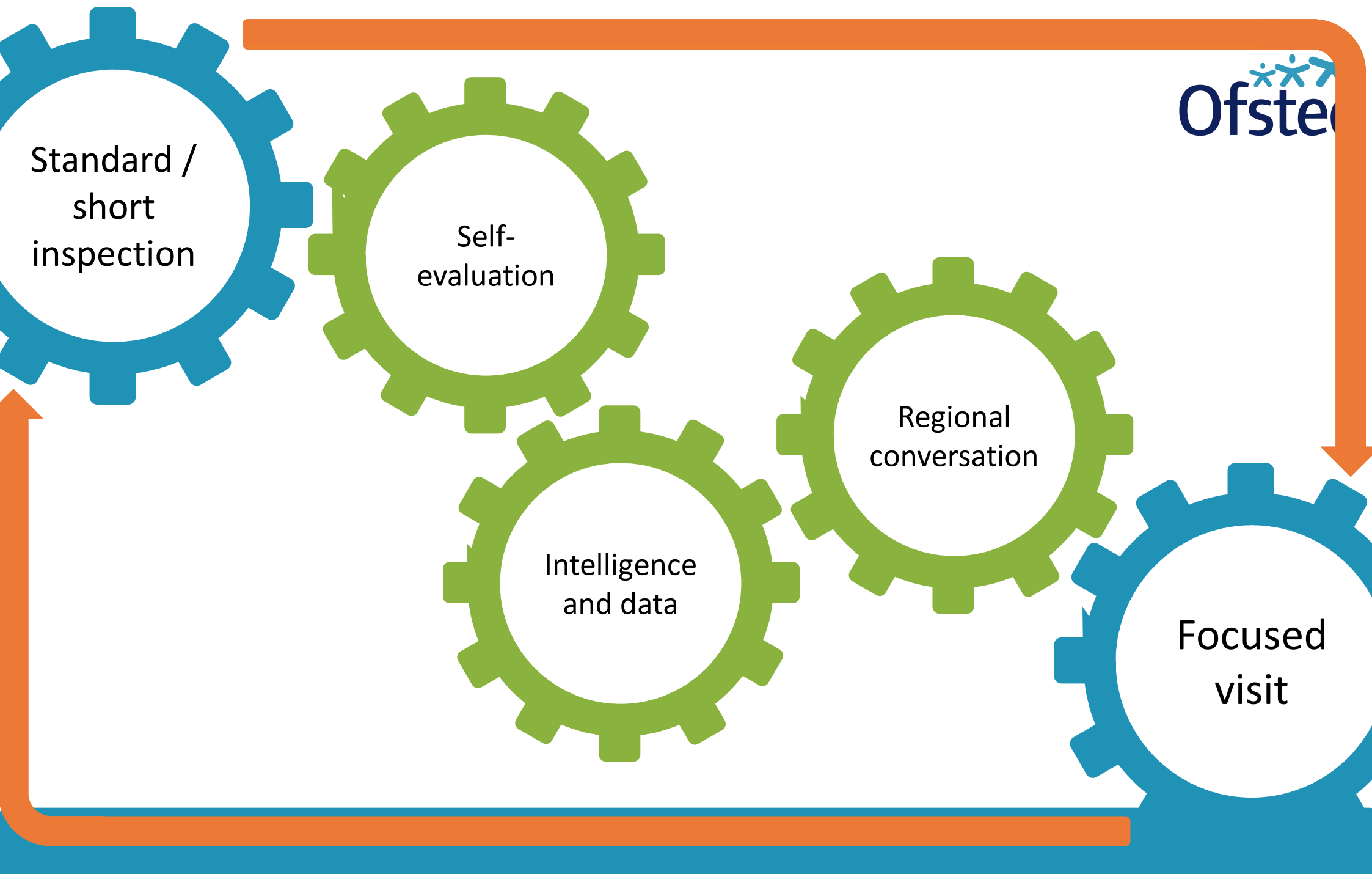
- Caseloads
- Workload management
- Unblocking the system
- Social work model
- Commissioning

- HR processes
- IT systems
- Office environment
- Corporate decision-making

- Leadership of DCS
- Role of chief executive and elected members
- Role of other key agencies
- Resources
- Management oversight

Inspection of local authority children's services

- **All** local authorities **judged on a four-point scale.**
- **Length and intensity of the judgement inspection** based on **what we know** about the local authority including previous inspection judgements.
- In addition, **short, focused visits** with a '**strengths and areas to improve**' narrative. Focused on 'catching before you fall' and **identifying what needs to improve *before*** the next **judgement** inspection.
- **Same arrangements for inadequate local authorities:** quarterly monitoring followed by SIF/post monitoring SIF.



Standard /
short
inspection

Self-
evaluation

Intelligence
and data

Regional
conversation

Focused
visit

Inspection of local authority children's services

Standard and short inspections

- All LAs
- Length and intensity is proportionate (e.g. one week vs two week)
- Judgement on a four-point scale

Focused visits

- Support improvement and find and test good practice
- Short, sharp and focused (2-3 days on site)
- Cohorts of children/areas of practice
- Narrative findings

Monitoring visits

- For inadequate LAs only
- Quarterly monitoring
- Narrative findings

SIF/post-monitoring SIF

- For inadequate LAs only
- Route out of inadequate
- Judgements on a four-point scale

JTAI

- Up to ten local areas per year
- Changing 'deep dives'
- Narrative findings

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