

A COHERENT FRAMEWORK FOR INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN



For Scotland's Children : better integrated children's services, 2001

‘A Scotland in which every child matters, where every child regardless of their family background, has the best possible start in life.’

For Scotland's Children : better integrated children's services, 2001

‘We need a much more robust approach to putting children and families at the centre of the service network. That will be facilitated by treating all services for children as part of a Children's Services System by all staff perceiving themselves as operating within that single system.’

Wider Strategy

- Reform of the delivery of children's services
- Vision for Scotland's Children
- Getting it right for every child
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Public service reform agenda

Services for Children at HMIE

- A multi-disciplinary team
- Based in and led by HMIE with strong links to other inspectorates and regulators including Audit Scotland and NHS QIS
- Inspectors seconded at various times from HMIC, SWIA, the Care Commission
- Associate Assessors

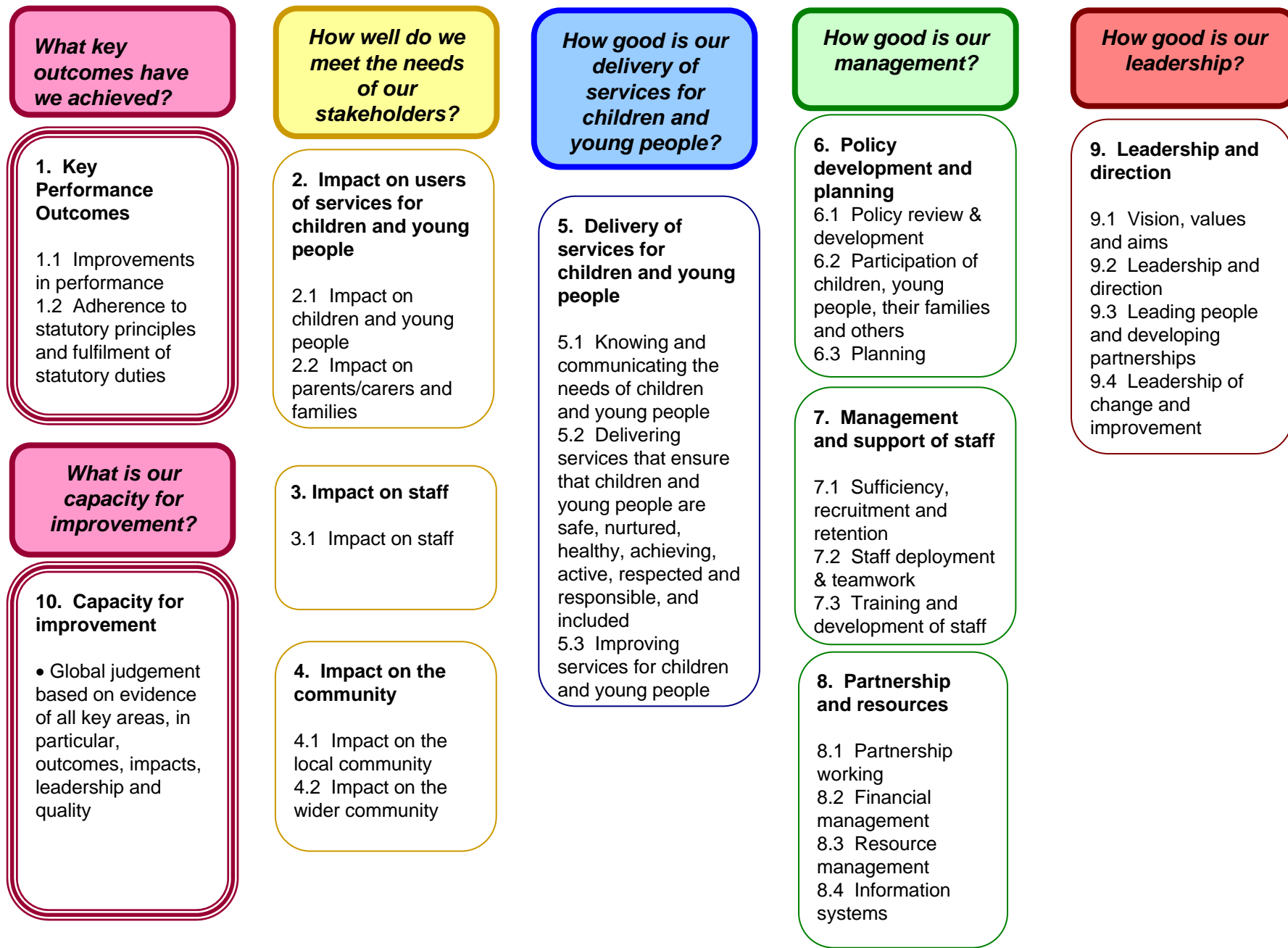
An integrated approach to inspection

Services for children inspections, including child protection, focus on the impact of services and outcomes for children. Vulnerable children including the very young are given a voice in and through the inspection process. The inspection identifies and reports publicly on how well the needs of these vulnerable children are being met, starting from the child's experiences, and makes specific recommendations to further secure their wellbeing.

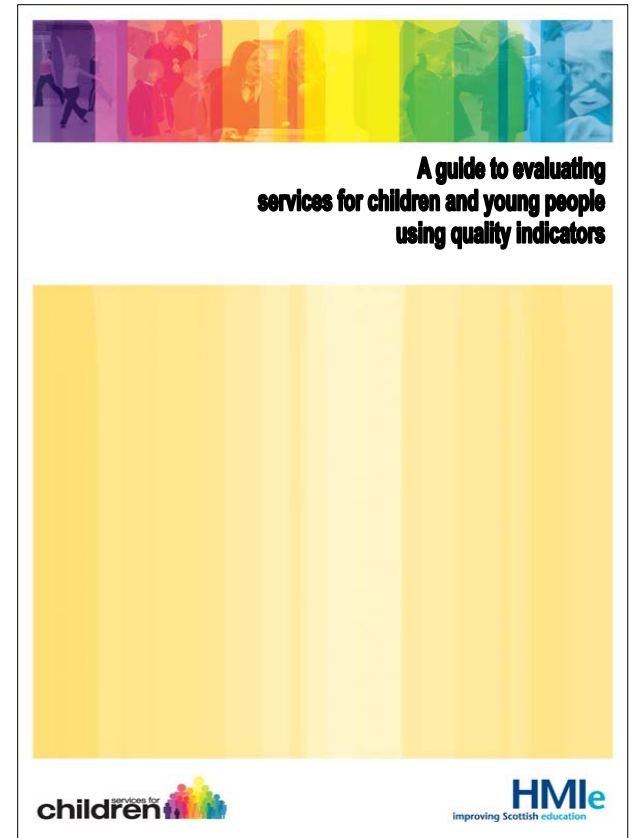
Direction of Travel

- **2005/06** - **Introduction of cycle of inspections of child protection**
- **Spring 2006** - **Consultation of development of coherent system of inspection**
 - **Consultation draft generic quality indicators for services for children**
- **Autumn 2006** - **Publication of 'A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators'**
 - **Arrangements for inspection of services for children**
- **June 2007** - **Inspection modelling at a neighbourhood level**
- **Autumn 2007** - **Self- evaluation materials, services for children**
- **Spring 2008** - **Pilot integrated inspection of services for children building out from school inspections**
- **April 2009** - **Introduce full programme of integrated inspections of services for children**

Figure 2: High-level questions, key areas and generic quality indicators



A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators



Characteristics of inspection models

- Be streamlined
- Be proportionate
- Be intelligence led
- Targeted where it is most needed
- Avoid unnecessary activity where quality is high
- Assure service users that services are of a high quality
- Generate continuous improvement.

The leadership imperative

- The greatest task faced by leaders in children's services is to create genuine and lasting cultural change.....
- Sometimes it seems that the best heads and leaders are those who manage to cope with the barrage of policies targeted at them without losing sight of the core purpose of their organisation

Child Protection Inspection Programme

- Publications
 - 2006 – 2007 9 reports and 2 pilot
 - 2007 – 2008 7 reports so far from 11
 - 3 follow through
 - 2008 – 2009 10 inspections
 - 9 follow through
- Three year programme, including follow through

Post 2008 Inspection Landscape

A future system of external inspection in areas such as education and children's services needs to build on existing effective practice, align well with the context, and manage risk around the key purposes of these services.

Getting it right for every child

- A programme for change that will revolutionise services for children.
- A way of thinking and working, not a bureaucratic process

Multi-agency Services

Dealing with blending a universal service – like schools - with a service that's often caught up with crisis interventions – like social services – has been a real challenge. A lot of that is about risk.

Key strengths

- Strong strategic leadership from the child protection committees and/or lead officers
- Effective partnership working promoting supportive intervention
- High level of staff awareness and commitment
- Good approaches to inter-agency training
- Clear procedures and policies

Main points for action

- Effective meeting of longer term needs is constrained by limited use of joint planning and comprehensive assessments
- Improvements required in self-evaluation and in performance management
- Seeking children's views on the impact of services and seeking children's participation in policy planning is still to be developed
- Some continuing challenges in information sharing

From follow through

- Recommendations have acted as a stimulus to secure improvements in services
- Involvement of health in initial discussions
- Improved information-sharing
- Renewed focus on assessment
- Greater partnership with families