



*Independent inspection of
adult and youth offending work*

HM Inspectorate of Probation

6th Floor, South Wing
Trafford House
Chester Road
Stretford
Manchester
M32 0RS

Tel: 0161 869 1300

Fax: 0161 869 1350

Mobile: 07973 384751

Email: liz.calderbank@hmiprobation.gsi.gov.uk

11th October 2012

Dear Colleague,

**Arrangements for the Inspection of Youth Offending Work –
Short Quality Screening (SQS)**

This is an update on developments since I last wrote to you in July. We have now piloted our Short Quality Screening inspection (SQS) and this letter outlines how we will proceed with these in the future.

The SQS visits are part of our programme of inspections of youth justice coupled with the handful of Full Joint Inspections outlined previously. We will undertake 20-30 SQS per year, choosing areas on a random basis to reflect a range of performance.

On Friday 19th October, the inspection documents relating to the SQS will be placed on our website (<http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation>) so that you can access them. Documents will include the Criteria with a Guidance Framework which includes detailed information about how the SQS will be conducted.

Any YOT subject to an SQS will receive two weeks notice of our intention to inspect. This letter briefly alerts you to the actions that you would find helpful to have in place if you are selected for one of these visits.

The first visits will take place on week commencing 5th November and will continue throughout the year, sometimes two a week during our inspection periods which exclude bank holiday weeks.

The visit will focus on the assessment of cases, through examination of the case files and interviews with the case managers. We are retaining this methodology as we think (and you thought), that it was a good basis on which to assess practice. The number of cases will vary according to the throughput in your area - those who have been supervised, post court, for at least four weeks prior to the announcement of the inspection. We have focused on these cases, as in our view, good quality assessment and planning at the start of a sentence is critical to increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes.

HMI Probation inspection staff will be on site from Monday lunchtime to Wednesday evening. We will continue to invite YOT staff outside the area to

join us as Local Assessors; training for this role is currently taking place and will do so periodically throughout the year. This offers a useful development opportunity for your staff and enables our processes to be open and transparent.

Planning for a visit – what to have set up

In case you are chosen for an inspection it would be helpful for you to be 'inspection ready' by doing the following:

- ❖ **Identify two liaison members of staff** – a manager who will liaise with our lead inspector and an administrator who can work with our Manchester based inspection support staff
- ❖ **Have available two organisational charts** – one showing the YOT, or its equivalent, with posts and names, and a second which illustrates how youth justice fits into the various partnership structures
- ❖ **Be ready to allocate confidential workspaces with access to the IT system (YOIS/Careworks/Childview)** on a read only basis that can be used for the inspection – likely to be 3 staff, (but this will vary depending on the size of the YOT).
- ❖ **Ensure you have easy access to some key policies and procedures** that we might request (existing documents) as context for the inspection e.g. public protection and safeguarding

Shortly after notification we will arrange a telephone planning meeting with the two liaison members of staff.

Feedback

The lead inspector will report the findings from the SQS in a letter to the Chair of the YOT Management Board (copy to the YOT Manager) sent the week following the visit. The letter will be placed on our website but not otherwise circulated. We will, however, publish an aggregated report on the findings from the SQS each year but, as with our thematic inspections, this report will not normally identify the performance of individual teams except to highlight good practice.

We look forward to working with you on this programme. Should you have queries, Julie Fox, the lead Assistant Chief Inspector would be happy to answer your questions - please contact her at julie.fox@hmiprobation.gsi.gov.uk or on 07973 264412. Alternatively, contact our Manchester office: 0161 869 1300.

With best wishes,

E. G. Calderbank

Liz Calderbank

HM Chief Inspector

Cc YOT Managers, Association of YOT Managers (Cymru and England), Local Authority Chief Executives, YOT Board Chairs, Directors of Children's Services, Local Government Association, Association of Directors of Children's Services, Association of Directors of Social Services (Wales), John Drew (YJB), Malcolm Potter (YJB Link), HMI Probation website and intranet.