Young Inspectors
13-19+
Project Manual
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1. What are Young Inspectors?

‘Young Inspectors’ is a project that gives young people the opportunity to be proactively involved in participation within Sheffield. Young people have been trained to inspect leisure activities, services and venues to assess how fun, inclusive and user-friendly they are. The Young Inspectors have devised a set of assessment criteria which they will use to review the services offered for young people in Sheffield. They will ‘mystery shop’ services against their criteria and award them with a star rating accordingly. Inspectors will be assessing services in both the public and private sector in an attempt to highlight good practice and any areas for development.

1.1 Background

Similar inspector programmes are being developed and rolled out across the country and Sheffield intends to be at the forefront of this development. Sheffield’s programme has an added dimension compared to other work taking place nationally, as our team of inspectors consists of disabled and non-disabled young people working together. This new angle to the Young Inspector programme will ensure that activities inspected are fully inclusive and services offer activities that are suitable for all.

The programme is being delivered by the Children’s Voices Project, utilising the project staff’s expertise in the area of children and young people’s consultation and participation. Children’s Voices previously worked with primary aged children to carry out a trial ‘Young Inspectors’ programme called ‘Check it Out!’ . ‘Check it Out!’ was a great success; it highlighted some fantastic children and young people’s services that had previously gone unnoticed and it uncovered some findings that services were unaware of. For a copy of the ‘Check It Out!’ toolkit, please contact Children’s Voices (see 8 for contact details).

2. Services to be inspected

- In the first year we aim to inspect services either commissioned or directly provided by Sheffield City Council.
- In the second year the project will expand to cover private sector services. The private sector will commission Children’s Voices to carry out the inspections.

3. The Inspectors

The inspectors consist of 12 disabled and non-disabled young people from Newfield Secondary and Talbot Special School and are all aged between 13-19 years. The inspectors have chosen to be part of the project as they all
have an interest in improving services for young people. The young people come from a range of backgrounds with an assortment of personal interests. During the second phase of the project, new inspectors will be recruited and mentored by the existing inspectors. The second group of inspectors will be recruited from different schools in another Community Assembly area.

3.1 Training
The young people have received three days of intense training. Training has included:

- Getting to know each other and exploring and understanding diversity within the group
- Learning to work as a team and appreciating the many different ways people communicate
- Discovering the array of different requirements needed to ensure that all young people can fully participate in an activity
- Exploring and evaluating similar Young Investigator programmes (see 1.1)
- Understanding the qualities and attributes that make an activity or service successful and inclusive
- Thinking about the personal qualities that members of staff display to enrich the young people’s experience
- Managing young people’s expectations of what can and can’t be changed
- Ensuring that the young people are aware that their role is to constructively think of solutions to areas they feel need improvement
- Completion of a trial inspection

Through the training the young people have developed an assessment criteria, by which to assess services against to ensure an inclusive, child and young person friendly service (see 6). They have also selected a scoring system to record their views of the services they visit (see 7).

4. Benefits of being inspected
The young people’s investigations will be an element of the Integrated Youth Support Service Performance Management Framework, and will also be of benefit for managers who are keen to improve their services and who may want to use the young people’s investigations to inform this process. The young people will highlight positive aspects of a service from a user’s perspective, and these will be celebrated, shared and promoted throughout the city. The team of inspectors will also offer feedback and suggestions for any potential areas of improvement.
Not only will this process allow services to deliver activities on actual, rather than presumed needs, it will also demonstrate at a strategic level that services are consulting with young people about their service.

When the inspection has been completed successfully, services or venues will receive a certificate to show that they have been evaluated by the Young Inspectors.

5. Inspections

- The young people decided that they would like to experience an activity without the label of being an inspector; therefore they will be reviewing the service in a ‘mystery shopper’ style.
- Young people will inspect in small groups and in most cases there will be a mixture of disabled and non-disabled young people.
- The inspectors will be supported either by members of the Children’s Voices team or personal assistants (PAs) who have previously worked with the young people and know their support needs well.
- In some cases the Children’s Voices team will need to book the young people on to sessions. In order to maintain the integrity of the inspection we will not explain to staff delivering the session that the young people are part of the Young Inspectors.
- At the end of the session the young people may wish to ask questions to staff and other young people attending sessions. This is to make sure that they obtain a well rounded view of the service.
- The young people will meet privately at the end of the session and will complete their assessment framework. They will discuss strengths and weaknesses of the service and award the service with a star rating, including constructive feedback regarding any recommendations for improvements.
- Shortly after the visit, the service will receive the original scoring sheet that the young people completed, a set of recommendations and a certificate.
- If a service has not been highly rated they will be given the opportunity to improve and be re-investigated at a later date. Once improvements have been made they will receive a certificate.

6. Inspectors’ assessment criteria

The young people’s assessment framework has been devised solely by the young people. The principles and values inherent in the assessment framework are aligned with the Sheffield Children & Young People’s Participation & Involvement Strategy and the Sheffield Participation Standards. The Young Inspector’s programme is a key priority for the 2011-2014 Children & Young People’s Participation and Involvement Strategy which is currently in development.
For a copy of the assessment criteria the young people will be using please see Appendix 1.

6.1 The assessment criteria explained

The following is an explanation of the criteria that the young people will use to evaluate services. The young people are aware of the fact that not all criteria will be relative or possible to score for every activity or venue they visit. Their scoring will reflect this and be sensitive to the uncontrollable constraints that may affect some aspects of delivery.

6.1.1 Staff

Treat everyone equally

- All young people would like to be given the same opportunities regardless of their age, gender, disability or race.
- Staff should not make assumptions about young people’s capabilities.

Listen to what I think

- Young people would like to be listened to when they have something to say.
- They would like to be able to give their opinions.

Look presentable

- Staff should dress appropriately for an activity and not show too much flesh.

Eye contact

- Young people would like to be looked at when being spoken to.

Firm but fun

- Young people would like staff to be fun with them but they should also have clear boundaries.

Friendly

- Young people would like staff to be smiley and generally happy during the session.
Nice greeting
• Young people would like to be welcomed and acknowledged when arriving.

Disabled young people are encouraged to join in with mainstream activities
• Young people want to be able to do activities with their friends.
• Staff should have a ‘can do’ outlook and always look for opportunities for everyone to be involved.
• Staff should not be afraid to ask how to support the young people.

Flexible
• Staff should be proactive and ready to make adjustments depending on the user’s needs.
• Staff should have a positive attitude to problem solving.

Help and support
• Young people would like staff to support them to take part in activities and they would like help and support in staying safe during activities.
• Staff should ask the young people how they would like to be supported.

Clear instructions
• Everyone needs to be able to understand the instructions so they need to be presented in a clear accessible way whether written or spoken.

6.1.2 Fun
Fun activities
• Young people would like to enjoy the activities they get involved in.

Everyone is welcome
• All young people should be invited to take part in an activity.

Make new friends
• Whilst taking part in the activity young people would like to meet new people and make new friends.
• Staff should encourage new friendships.
No laughing or pointing
- Young people should not be laughed or pointed at by others; if this behaviour was to happen then staff should respond.

6.1.3 Accessible

Good accessibility (e.g. ramps, wide lifts, flat paths)
- Services and activities should be physically accessible for all young people.

Good signs
- There should be clear signs directing you to where things are.

Activities are accessible for everyone
- Where possible any reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure young people can take part in an activity.

Transport for everyone
- Activities need to be as easy as possible for young people to get to, for example local transport links.

Car park close by
- Car parks have the room to safely accommodate the dropping off and collection of groups of young people.
- There should disabled spaces in the car park which are near to entrance.

Good opening hours
- The activity/service should be open at times to suit young people i.e. evenings and weekends.

6.1.4 Safety and Surroundings

Everything works
- All equipment and facilities should be in good working order.

Lots of space so everyone can move around
- There should be adequate space for a session so that everyone can move around and access the activity.
Safe activities

- All equipment should meet safety requirements.
- Staff should inform the young people on how to stay safe during an activity.

7. Scoring during the inspection

Each of the criteria will be assessed using a five star rating system. The stars sit on a sliding scale which moves from five stars to signify that the activity was excellent and needs no or very little improvement to one star which means that the activity may need to make some major changes. Once all sections of the assessment have been completed, an overall star rating will be given to the service. The overall rating will take into consideration the combined experiences of all the Young Inspectors taking part in the inspection. There is no numerical total to the assessment, i.e. sections are not worth a certain number of points but are used to reflect the strengths and weaknesses. The overall rating will be based on a group discussion that will take into consideration all aspects of their experience.

The young people will make comments in the ‘Our thoughts’ sections of the scoring sheet. Comments will include why high or low scores have been given. A final conclusion will be made at the bottom of the score sheet, this conclusion will include, if appropriate, recommendations for improvement and confirmation of what made the activity such a success.

Children’s Voices will also include a summary of experiences from an adult’s perspective; this will include how easy it was to find an activity, how easy it was to book the activity and any other issues raised during the experience. The adult’s perspective will not contribute to the young people’s overall star rating but will be included in the overall feedback.

8. Contact us

If you would like more information on the Young Inspectors programme or would like to receive a copy of the ‘Check it Out!’ DVD please do not hesitate to contact the Children’s Voices team.

Email: childrens.voices@sheffield.gov.uk
Website: www.sheffkids.co.uk
Appendix 1

Young Inspectors

Inspectors names:
Place/activity:

### Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treat everyone equally</th>
<th>Nice greeting</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen to what I think</td>
<td>Disabled people are encouraged to join in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look presentable</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye contact</td>
<td>Help and support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Firm but fun</td>
<td>Clear instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td></td>
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**Our thoughts:**

### Fun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fun activities</th>
<th>Make new friends</th>
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<tr>
<td>Everyone is welcome</td>
<td>No laughing or pointing</td>
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**Our thoughts:**
**Accessible**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good accessibility</th>
<th>Transport for everyone</th>
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<tr>
<td>- ramps, wide lifts, flat paths</td>
<td>- easy to get to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good signs</td>
<td>Car park close by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities are accessible for everyone</td>
<td>Good opening hours</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cost</td>
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**Our thoughts:**

**Safety & Surroundings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Everything works</th>
<th>Safe activities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lots of space so everyone can move</td>
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**Our thoughts:**

**Our verdict:**

**Young Inspector rating:** ★★★★★