



Young Inspectors | a guidance framework



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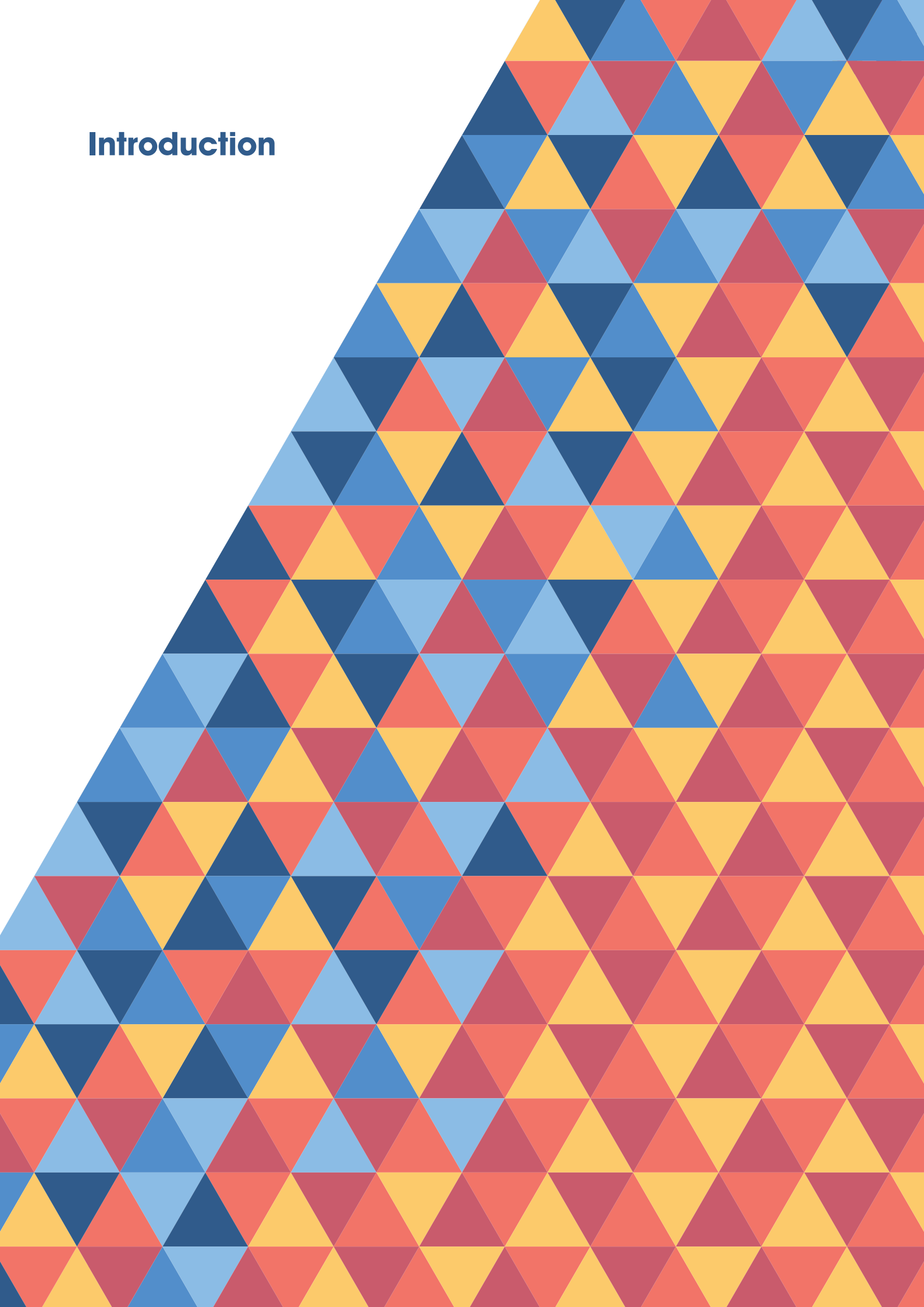
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Introduction





This document contains guidance on the delivery of youth led inspections. It is written for any organisations or individuals who are interested in setting up youth led inspections as a method of youth participation. The aim of the document is to provide a broad set of guidance principles to help improve the quality and impact of youth inspection.

The introductory section explores the reasons why a service or organisation might wish to engage in youth led inspection and gives an outline of the different actors and processes involved.

Following this, the section on 'Supporting high quality youth participation' explores some of the fundamental principles for the participation of young people and how they can be used to inform the delivery of youth led inspections.

Next, the section on outcomes and impact outlines the changes that should be seen as a result of youth inspection, if it is successfully implemented. This section includes a model theory of change for youth inspection.

This is followed by guidance on the delivery of two different models of youth inspection, development based and assessment based and the final section summarises all of the key points within this document.

Why youth inspection?

Youth inspection is a method of youth participation that is focused on giving critical feedback to projects, organisations, services, funders, institutions or other bodies that are connected to young people in order to improve the quality of their work. These can be bodies that are directly delivering an offer of services to young people or those involved at arm's length in policy, strategy or funding. We call these bodies **inspectees**.

Youth inspection provides inspectees with the opportunity to listen to the voices of young people about their work in a manner which supports detailed and rich dialogue and highlights opportunities for development. Involving young people in this way provides an opportunity to receive valuable intelligence and feedback on an inspectee's work, to help improve what they do. It also helps ensure inspectees are listening to young people when they make decisions that affect their lives, contributing to their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Commissioners or funders may wish to support youth inspection of their beneficiaries for similar reasons to inspectees. Inspections can also provide an opportunity to facilitate benchmarking and comparison between grant or contract holders as a method of quality assurance.

Young people who use the services and projects run by inspectees are the ultimate beneficiaries of youth inspections. The final impact of any youth inspection should be that the inspectee is able to improve the quality of it's work and offer to young people, providing better outcomes for the young people it supports.

Young people who become involved as inspectors will benefit from developing transferable skills, as well as gaining valuable experience. The impact of this is likely to be transformative of the young people who take part. However, as only small numbers of young people are involved as inspectors, youth inspection is not a suitable model if the education and development of young people is the primary goal.

Facilitating organisations are organisations such as youth work organisations that provide coordination, training and volunteer support to youth inspectors to enable them to fulfil their role. Any organisation which is interested in promoting children and young people's participation may find that it is useful to begin facilitating youth inspections. Inspections provide a way for young people that facilitating organisation are working with to create impact based upon their voices. Supporting youth inspections also provides opportunities to develop new volunteers and 'grow' staff members and can also act as a commissionable product offer.

Youth inspection provides inspectees with the opportunity to listen to the voices of young people about their work



Types of youth inspections

Youth inspection can be either **assessment based** or **development based**.

Assessment based inspections focus on grading or scoring inspectees against fixed criteria or set of standards. They can be used to create comparisons against a benchmark or between different services or organisations of the same type. They are particularly useful when working with multiple similar inspectees. For example inspecting how youth friendly libraries are.

Development based inspections focus on identifying areas for improvement and creating in depth recommendations on how the inspectee can improve its work. They can be used for helping an inspectee develop and design its offer to young people. They are particularly useful when working with a single inspectee that is unique or complex. For example, inspecting a city's cultural offer to young people, or a local authority's only support service for young asylum seekers.

Both models have their strengths and weaknesses and will be appropriate in different settings. They follow similar processes but the discussions young people will need to have at each stage will vary. This guidance covers both types.

**Supporting high
quality youth
participation**





Youth inspection is a process to support children and young people's participation. Article 12 of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child provides the foundation for children and young people's participation. It gives all children and young people the right to have their views taken into account when decisions are made that affect their lives.

Youth inspection enables inspectees to take into account the views of children and young people when they make decisions about their 'offer' to children and young people. In addition, young people should also be involved in decisions about how the inspections are carried out and run.

There is a number of different levels of participation in decision making. Youth inspections can be:

- **Youth led** - young people take responsibility for making all major decisions relating to the inspection and adults play a supportive role;
- **Co-produced** - young people and adults collaborate to take decisions relating to the inspection, sharing power between them;
- **Consultative** - young people advise adults on the decision that should be made.

In most situations the youth inspections will be carried out in a way which is either youth led or co-produced. The young people involved should be able to influence how the inspection is undertaken and what the findings are. However, the findings will usually only be given as advice to the inspectees, who will decide for themselves how to use them.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has produced specific guidance on ensuring children and young people's participation is meaningful and rights based. This guidance can be applied to youth inspection as a method of children and young people's participation.

Youth inspection is a process to support children and young people's participation



Ensuring high quality youth participation¹

Youth inspections should be;

1. **Transparent and informative** - young people must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their involvement in the inspection process, how this will take place, its scope, purpose and potential impact. Youth inspections should be transparent from the start about the level of involvement young people have over the design and conduct of the inspection, and the level of influence they can expect to have on the inspectee at the end.
2. **Voluntary** - young people should never be coerced into being involved in youth inspection against their wishes and should be able to cease their involvement at any stage. Young inspectors volunteer rights should be respected at all times. Payment or incentives should not be used as a method of coercion, though paid employment may sometimes be appropriate.
3. **Respectful** - young people's views should be treated with respect and they should be provided with opportunities to initiate ideas and activities themselves.
4. **Relevant** - the topics, themes and inspectees which young people are inspecting must be of real relevance to their lives and enable them to draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities. Space should be created to enable the young people to highlight and address the issues they themselves identify as relevant and important.
5. **Young people-friendly** - environments and working methods should be adapted to young inspectors capacities and abilities. Adequate time and resources should be made available to ensure the young inspectors are adequately supported and prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute their views. Consideration should be given to the fact that young people will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and evolving capacities. In general this means that young inspectors will need relevant training, support and coordination to undertake their role.
6. **Inclusive** - participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination. It should encourage opportunities for marginalised young people, including both girls and boys, to be involved in youth inspection. Young people are not a homogenous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all, without discrimination on any grounds. Youth inspections and young inspectors also need to ensure that they are culturally sensitive to young people from all communities.
7. **Supported by training** - facilitating adults and organisations need preparation, skills and resources to facilitate youth inspection effectively. Facilitating organisations and their workers should be experienced and suitably qualified for working with young people.
8. **Safe and sensitive to risk** - appropriate risk assessment and safeguarding procedures should be put in place in order to help keep young people safe from harm.
9. **Accountable** - a commitment to follow-up is essential. Young people must be informed as to how their views have been interpreted and used and, where necessary, provided with the opportunity to challenge and influence the results. Young people should be provided with clear feedback on how their involvement has influenced any outcomes. This applies to both young people involved as inspectors and any other young people who may give their views in the process, or have a relationship with the inspectee.

Youth inspections should be transparent from the start about the level of involvement young people have over the design and conduct of the inspection, and the level of influence they can expect to have on the inspectee at the end

¹ This text has been developed based on paragraph 134 of 'United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard'. Changes have been made in order to contextualise this guidance for Youth Inspection processes within the UK. The full version, which contains a number of other important elements relating to child participation is available at; <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/5040/pdf/5040.pdf>



Putting the right support in place for young inspectors

Young inspectors need to be well supported in their roles by facilitating organisations who should act to coordinate the inspections and ensure the young inspectors can undertake their role effectively.

The role of the facilitating organisation can include:

- Recruiting young people to become young inspectors;
- Ensuring that young inspectors have a named support person who will provide supervision and support throughout the process;
- Providing accessible, diversity-sensitive and youth friendly information about the inspection process and the inspectees;
- Providing training, induction and facilitation to enable young inspectors to design, carry out and report inspections;
- Providing side by side support to accompany young people whilst they carry out inspections;
- Taking responsibility for safeguarding and general welfare of the young people involved;
- Acting as a point of contact for inspectees to coordinate activities and communication.

Facilitating organisations should be appropriately resourced to undertake these tasks, and workers involved in them should have the necessary skills and competencies to work with young people.

Young inspectors need to be well supported in their roles by facilitating organisations

Volunteering, incentives and payment

Being young inspectors should be a beneficial experience for the young people involved. Benefits of participating can include, learning and development, feeling valued, enjoyment, developing new relationships and experiences or incentives and payments. Young inspectors can undertake their role on either a voluntary or paid basis; in either instance it is important for the facilitating organisation to consider how the commitments and responsibilities of the role compare to the benefits.

When volunteering, a young person's volunteer rights should be respected at all times and general principles of good practice volunteer management should be applied. Of particular importance is ensuring the young person's contribution is appreciated, valued and recognised and that volunteering should be a rewarding and fulfilling experience. In addition, it is important to ensure that young inspectors are reimbursed for any costs they may incur (such as travel costs) as a result of their involvement.

The following documents can provide useful further guidance on working with volunteers:

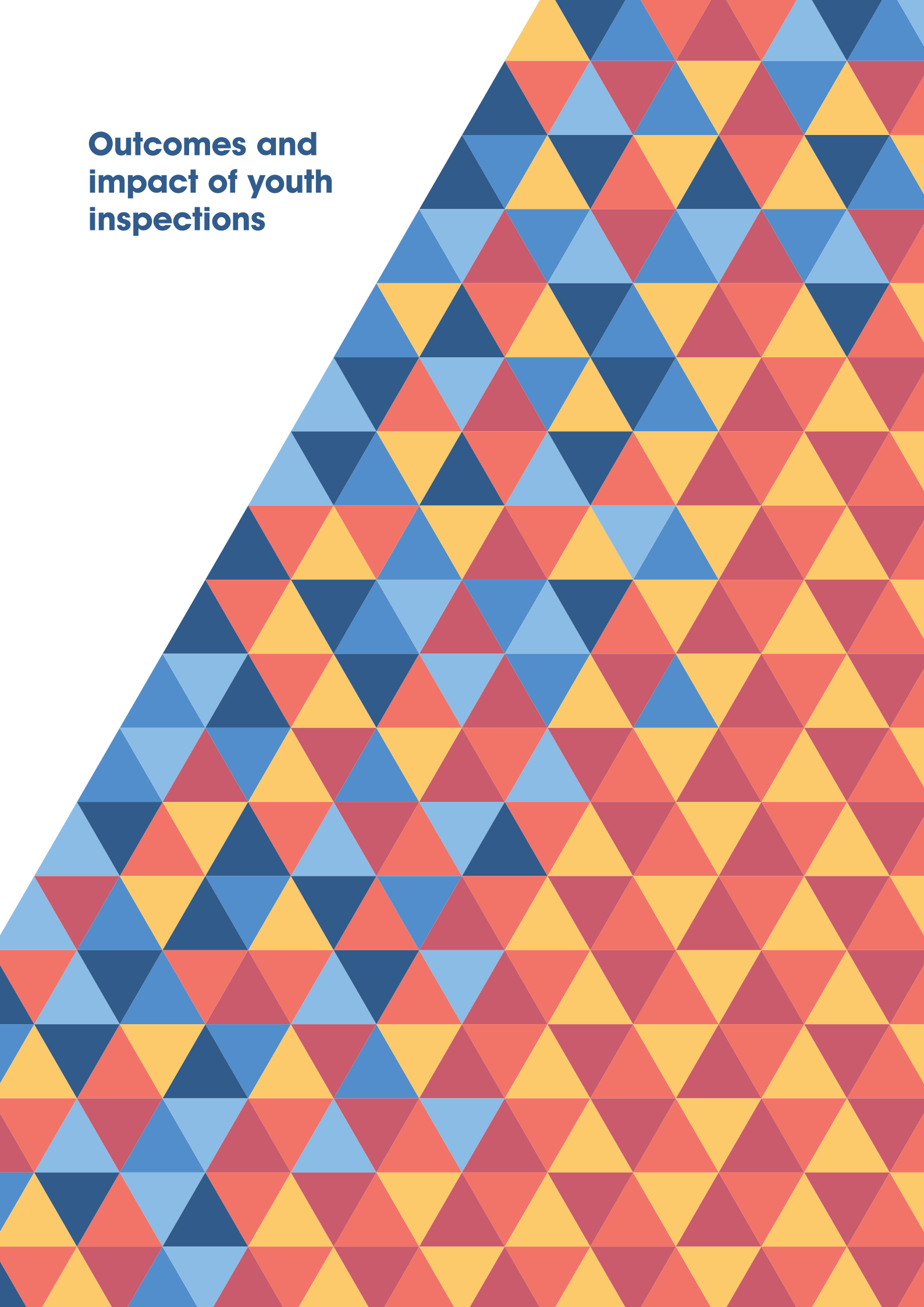
- [The European Charter on the Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/volunteering_charter_en.pdf)², published by the European Youth Forum.
- [The Volunteers Charter](https://www.volunteerscotland.net/media/1475885/volunteer_charter_-_10_principles.pdf)³, published by Volunteering Scotland.

When being paid, young inspectors should be afforded all of the employment rights to which they are legally entitled and given equal equivalent benefits and pay to workers with comparable responsibilities. They should be treated in a manner comparable to other workers and not discriminated against on grounds of age.

Being young inspectors should be a beneficial experience for the young people involved. Benefits of participating can include, learning and development, feeling valued, enjoyment, developing new relationships and experiences or incentives and payments

2 http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/volunteering_charter_en.pdf
3 https://www.volunteerscotland.net/media/1475885/volunteer_charter_-_10_principles.pdf

**Outcomes and
impact of youth
inspections**





For youth inspection, the primary outcomes and impact should be on the inspectees. The purpose of youth inspection is to create change in inspectees and improve their services for the benefit of young people.

If successful the long term impact of youth inspections should be:

- Inspectees can identify changes and improvements they implemented as a result of the inspection.
- Inspectees commitment to listening to children and young people has increased.
- The young people the inspectees works with are more satisfied with the inspectee's work.
- Inspectees are more able to deliver effective outcomes for young people.

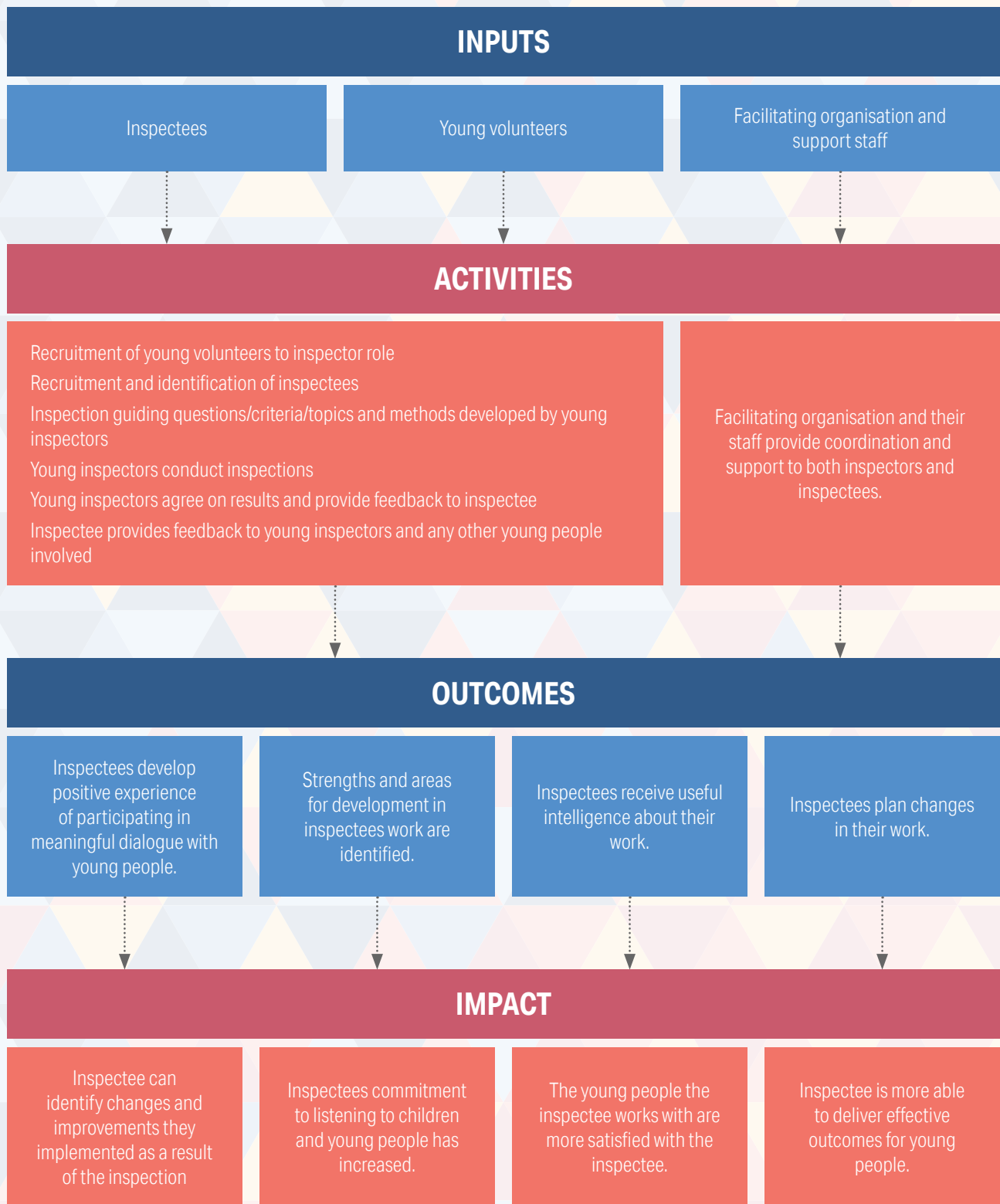
These impacts are described in a theory of change below.

There will also be outcomes for the young people who take part as young inspectors. These are an important part of creating benefit for the young people involved, and should be given due attention. However, as youth inspection typically only involves small numbers of young people, it is not a cost effective model if learning and development of young people is the primary goal. The impact of youth inspections on young inspectors should therefore be regarded as secondary outcomes within the overall project.

The Centre for Youth impacts provides further resources on outcomes measurement and theory of change models. Their [Framework of Youth Social Outcomes 2.0](#)⁴ can be used to understand the learning outcomes for young inspectors.



Theory of Change



**Model of assessment
based inspection**



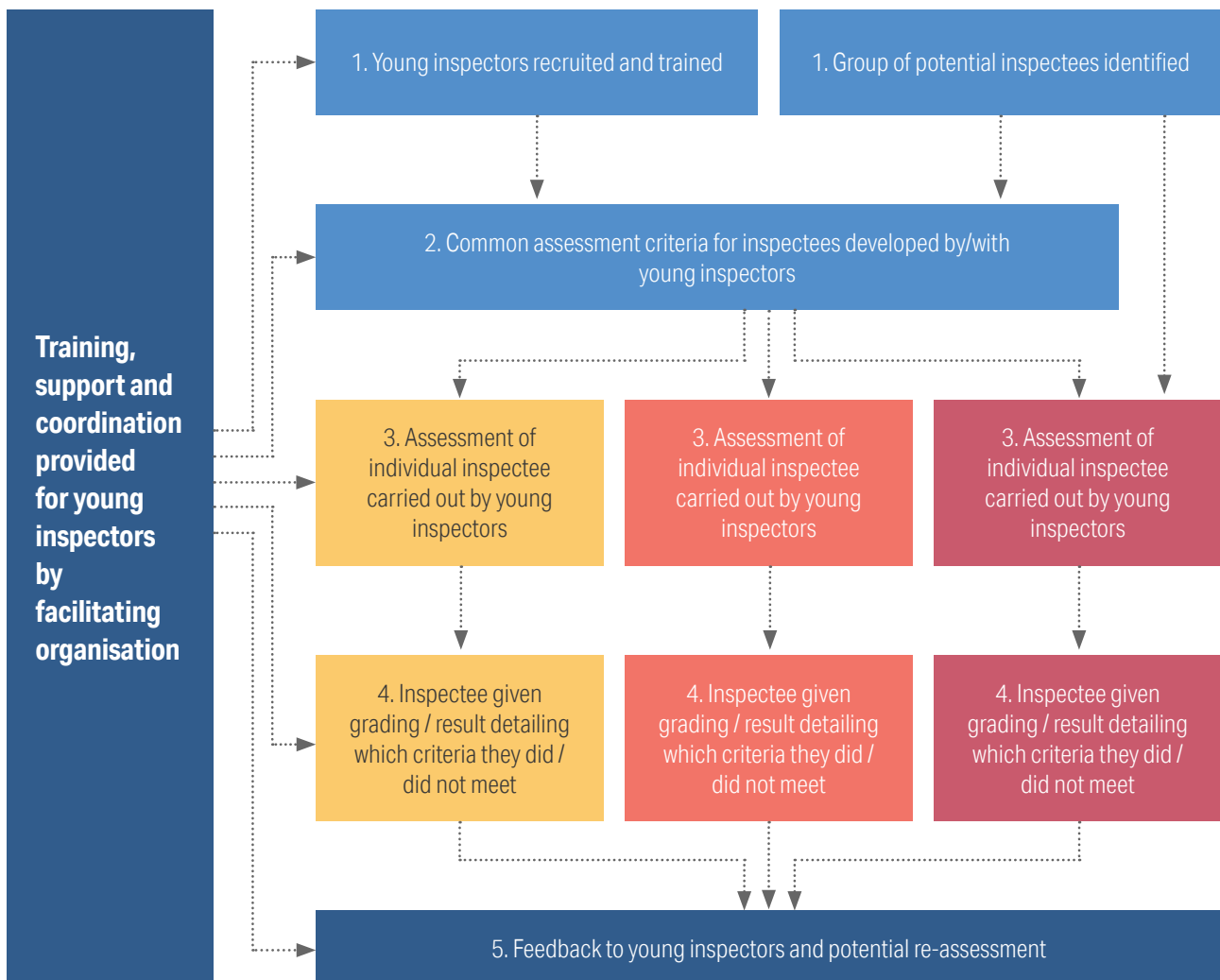


Assessment based models are built around comparing the inspectee to a set of criteria or standards to see which of the criteria they meet. A good example of an assessment based model of inspection is Ofsted’s school inspection, where schools receive a grade of ‘Outstanding’, ‘Satisfactory’ or similar based on how well they have met the criteria in the Ofsted school inspection framework.

Assessment based models will typically be carried out in a number of stages, with young people involved at every stage.

1. Recruitment of young people and identification of potential inspectees.
2. Development of assessment criteria and indicators.
3. Carrying out assessments.
4. Grading and reporting on assessment results.
5. Feedback to young inspectors and potential reassessment.

Process for an assessment based inspection





Stage 1: Recruitment of young inspectors and inspectees

Within assessment based inspection all inspectees may not have committed to being inspected at the start of the process. However, the general group of inspectees (for instance 'schools' or 'GP's') should be chosen. The inspection methods and criteria are then developed generically for that group of inspectees. Part of the role of the facilitating organisation and even the young inspectors is to recruit inspectees from this group on an ongoing basis.

Young people recruited as inspectors should have relevant lived experience of the things they are inspecting. This can come from:

- Experience of using or accessing the inspectees services;
- Experience of using services that are similar to those offered by the inspectees;
- Experience of being part of the group which the inspectee works with (e.g. being a young person with experience of living in care); or
- Experience of living in an area in which the inspectee operates.

In assessment based models, because young inspectors inspect multiple inspectees, they are unlikely to have direct personal experience of all of them.

Stage 2: Developing assessment criteria and indicators

Assessment criteria is a set of standards against which the work of the inspectees can be compared and should be developed once the group of inspectees is identified. Young people should be involved in the development of inspection criteria.

When developing criteria, it might be beneficial for the young people involved to work collaboratively or in a co-production model with experts. Input from professionals can help broaden their understanding of the things they are inspecting.

Assessment criteria will normally be comprised of a set of broad areas or themes (such as accessibility, equality, quality of provision) each of which will contain a number of specific indicators describing what it means to meet those criteria. In this way the content of the assessment criteria becomes the way by which a 'good' inspectee is defined.

Once developed, inspection criteria can be used multiple times for similar inspectees. This means the group of young people involved in developing the criteria may not always be the same group that conducts the inspections.



Setting the scope and criteria

When designing criteria it is necessary to **set a clear scope**. This means deciding two things.

- What sort of inspectees are they intended to be used with? - *Who is the group being inspected?*
- What areas or aspects of the inspectee's work do they address? - *What are the criteria areas for inspection?*

Working with a narrower scope will produce something that is more specific to the inspectee they are for. However working with a broader scope will produce something that is transferable and relevant to a wider number of inspectees. Decisions relating to this will be linked to how often inspection will be carried out and the number of potential inspectees.

Example: Choosing a scope

A group of young inspectors is planning to inspect a sexual health service for young people.

They can choose between designing assessment criteria that is intended to be used either:

1. Just with sexual health services,
2. With all health services for young people, or
3. With any type of services for young people.

They also need to decide if the criteria covers:

1. Everything the potential inspectees do, or,
2. One or more specific aspects of the inspectees work, such as:
 - a. How young people are involved in decision making,
 - b. How young people friendly services are,
 - c. More specific criteria such as the quality of the sexual health advice.

Because there is only one sexual health service in the borough they decide to concentrate on making assessment criteria for all health services for young people, focusing just on how health services involve children and young people in service decision making. This means that the criteria covers something that all health services might do and can therefore be re-used in multiple inspections.



Setting the indicators

It is important to think about **what meeting the assessment criteria looks like**. This means defining what a good result or score would be, and what a high quality inspectee would be doing. It will be necessary to **select a set of indicators or measurements** that would demonstrate the inspectee is meeting the criteria.

Example: The You're Welcome standards⁵

You're Welcome is a standards framework originally developed between groups of young people working with The British Youth Council and Youth Focus North West, and supported by Public Health England, NHS England and the Department of Health. They have been used for both youth-led and adult-led inspections.

The scope of the standards is to provide 'principles that will help health services (including non-NHS provision) become young people friendly' The standards cover ten criteria:

- Accessibility
- Publicity
- Confidentiality and consent
- The environment
- Staff training, skills, attitudes and values
- Joined-up working
- Monitoring and evaluation, and involvement of young people
- Health issues for adolescents
- Sexual and reproductive health services
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

Each topic area contains a number of indicators. For example, 'Accessibility' contains seven indicators including:

- 1.1 Where there is a choice about service location, the service is accessible to young people by public transport.
- 1.2 Young people can use the service outside school or college hours, or the service is provided on or very close to a school or college site.
- 1.3 In non-specialist services there are opportunities for self-referral, and clear lines of referral to specialist services as required.



Stage 3: Carrying out assessments

An assessment can be carried out using a number of methods but in order to ensure a consistent and fair process for inspectees, the same methods are usually used for each inspection. Young people should be involved in selecting and designing the assessment methods as well as conducting the assessments.

A combination of methods can be used for assessments:

- **Self assessment:** Inspectees grade themselves against the inspection criteria and indicators. They can be asked to provide evidence that they have met the indicators.
- **Site visits and observations:** Young inspectors visit the inspectees premises to view the physical setting and/or observe delivery of services.
- **Mystery shopping:** Young inspectors use the service or visit the site without the inspectee's delivery staff being aware that they are a young inspector.
- **Document review:** Young inspectors read and review documents sent by the inspectee such as strategies, policies or publicity materials.
- **Interviews / focus groups with professionals:** Young inspectors hold one to one or group interviews with inspectee staff and volunteers or other stakeholders.
- **Interviews / focus groups with young people :** Young inspectors hold one to one or group interviews with young people who have contact with the inspectees work, or in some cases could potentially have contact but choose not to.

Stage 4: Grading and reporting on assessment results

The report of an assessment should be produced as a record of the extent to which the inspectee has and hasn't met the criteria. In a fully youth led process, young people should make decisions regarding this, based on the findings of all of the assessment methods used. The inspectee should receive a copy of this report.

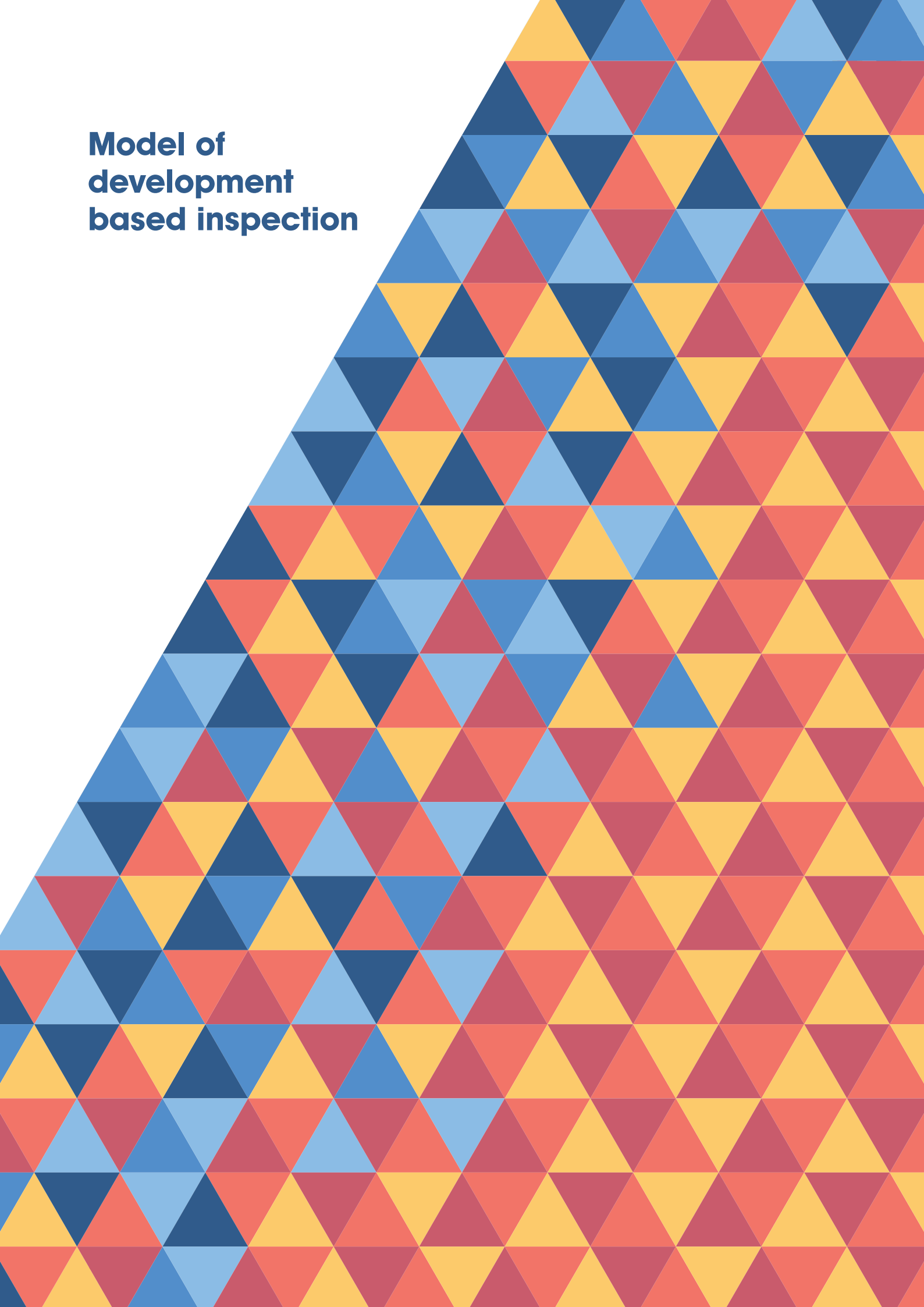
A grade or scoring system for the inspectee can be used. This enables comparison between inspectees and against a standard expected benchmark. For instance an inspectee who has met 100% of the criteria might be awarded a Gold standard, and an inspectee who met 80% might be awarded Silver. Scores against individual criteria such as 'met' or 'partially met' or even 'failed' might also be given. Any scoring systems or benchmarks should be applied consistently across inspectees and ideally set out in advance.

Stage 5: Feedback to young people and reassessment

Inspectees should be encouraged to put plans in place to improve their score and meet further indicators. It might be appropriate to offer reinspection after they have had the opportunity to put improvements in place. This is particularly useful if the inspectee is trying to achieve a sort of benchmark or grade for quality assurance purposes.

As part of making participation meaningful, the young inspectors should also receive feedback from the inspectee, on their plans for improvement. If any other young people have been involved (for instance as focus group participants) they should also receive feedback. This enables young people to see the impact of what they are doing and feel that they have made a meaningful contribution.

**Model of
development
based inspection**





Development based models of inspection are focused on identifying areas for improvement and creating in depth recommendations on how the inspectee can improve its work. Unlike assessment based models, there is no assessment criteria for the inspectee to be compared against. Instead, a set of guiding questions or inquiry topics is developed and explored during the inspection. A development based inspection is similar to carrying out a piece of research on the inspectee's work.

Development based inspection can be useful for helping an inspectee develop and design it's offer to young people. They are more useful when the inspectee is unique or complex and may not be replicated in the same way elsewhere, making comparison to other inspectees less useful.

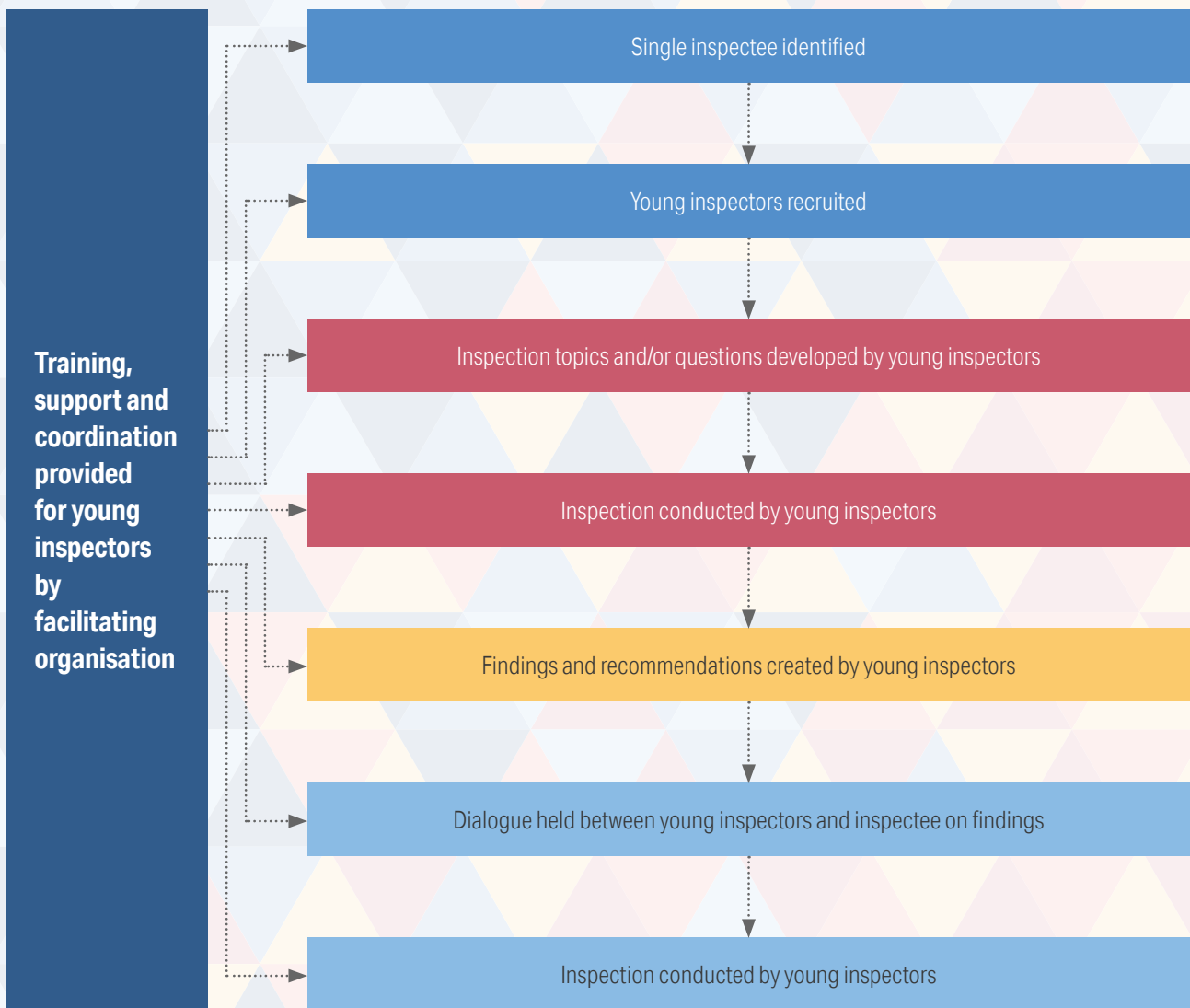
Development based models are flexible and adaptable to the specific inspection taking place. Methods, inquiry topics and questions will vary between inspections. This means they cannot be used as effectively for comparisons between different inspectees or grading. Development based inspections will typically be carried out in a number of stages.

1. Individual inspectee identified and young inspectors recruited.
2. Inquiry topics and guiding questions developed by young inspectors.
3. Inspection methods designed by young inspectors and inspection carried out.
4. Findings and recommendations created by young inspectors.
5. Feedback discussions between inspectee and young researchers.

Development based models work best when the same group of young people lead the inspection all the way from creating the initial questions and topics to making final conclusions. This enables the young people involved to follow their ideas about the inspectee and how the inspection should be done all the way from start to finish.



Process for development based inspection





Stage 1 - Identifying an inspectee and recruiting young inspectors

Within development based inspection a single inspectee should be identified at the start of the process. The inspection methods, topics and questions are then developed specifically for that inspectee.

Young people recruited as inspectors should have lived experience that is relevant to the inspectee's work. This can come from:

- Experience of using or accessing the inspectee's services;
- Experience of using services that are similar to those offered by the inspectees;
- Experience of being part of the group which the inspectee works with (e.g. being a young person with experience of living in care); or
- Experience of living in an area in which the inspectee operates.

Recruiting young people who access or use the inspectee's services may be particularly successful. These are the young people most directly affected by the inspectee's work. Supporting them to become young inspectors enables the inspectee to have dialogue directly with the young people they are working with on a day to day basis and can lead to a wider change in the way the inspectee listens to the young people it works with.

Stage 2 - Developing inquiry topics and guiding questions

It may be useful to agree an overarching theme for the inspection with the inspectee at the start of the process. Examples of this could be;

- Youth participation within the inspectee's work;
- The activities and services offered to young people by the inspectee; or
- The effectiveness of one part of the inspectee's work - such as publicity to young people.

Once the general theme is agreed, the young inspectors should be supported to choose topics of inquiry which will be explored within the inspection. It may be helpful to phrase these as guiding questions. Guiding questions are broad, well defined questions which the young inspectors can explore and come to a conclusion on during their work. Unlike survey questions or interview questions, guiding questions are not designed to be directly asked to people involved in the inspection. Instead they provide a way of describing the purpose and objective of the inspection and a framework against which the young inspectors can draw their conclusions.

Guiding questions should be:

- Clearly related to the main theme of the inspection;
- Based on topics the young inspectors think are important and relevant;
- Open and broad enough that they promote discussion, require analysis and explanation to answer; and
- Realistic to answer meaningfully through the inspection methods. (Questions about long term impact or scale can be particularly challenging.)



Example of guiding questions

Young people worked with Youth Focus North West, Youth Focus North East and Yorkshire and Humber Youth Work Unit to design an inspection for the Co-op Foundation's grant giving process. The theme of the inspection was the involvement of young people in grant giving. The guiding questions developed by the young people were:

- Why is the involvement of young people important to the fund?
- How does the fund recruit young people to be involved in its decision making?
- What steps does the fund take towards inclusivity?
- How does the fund monitor and measure young people's continuous involvement?

Stage 3 - Carrying out inspections

After guiding questions are created the young inspectors should be supported to develop and choose methods for conducting the inspection. Methods should be chosen and developed so that they can clearly answer one or more of the guiding questions. Some methods will be more suitable for some types of guiding question than others. The table below outlines potential methods and their uses.

| Potential method | Types of guiding questions useful for: |
|--|---|
| Site visits and observations: Young inspectors visit the inspectee's premises to view the physical setting and/or observe delivery of activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about the accessibility of a venue. • Questions about physical space • Questions about the offer to young people. |
| Mystery shopping: Young inspectors use the service without the inspectee's delivery staff being aware that they a young inspector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about staff attitude and relationships with young people. • Questions about the offer to young people |
| Document review: Young inspectors read and review documents sent by the inspectee such as strategies, policies or publicity materials. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about the inspectees overall approach. • Questions about the range of activities the inspectee delivers • Questions about the bigger picture or the long term aspects of the inspectees work. |
| Interviews / focus groups with professionals: Young inspectors hold one to one or group interviews with the inspectee's staff and volunteers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most forms of guiding questions, particularly good for understanding the limits and challenges an inspectee might have. |
| Interviews / focus groups with young people: Young inspectors hold one to one or group interviews with young people who have contact with the inspectees work, or could potentially have contact but choose not to. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most forms of guiding questions, particularly good for young people's experiences of an inspectee |
| Surveys: Questionnaires with young people who have contact with the inspectees work, or those in the community that are the target group for the work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about young people's experiences of an inspectee. |



Stage 4 - Developing findings and recommendations

After the inspection has been carried out, young inspectors should then be supported to analyse what they have learnt and create their findings. Guiding questions can provide a framework for this and the young inspectors should be supported to use the things they learnt from the inspection to make findings which answer each question.

As well as findings, developing recommendations for inspectee improvement can be useful. Based on each aspect of their findings young inspectors can be supported to discuss 'What could be done to improve this?' There should be a clear link between questions, findings and recommendations.

Example of guiding questions, findings and recommendations for an inspection of a leisure centre.

| Guiding question | Findings | Recommendation |
|---|---|--|
| 'How well does the leisure centre promote it's activities to young people?' | 'The publicity leaflets the leisure centre produces are good quality. They were easy to read, and appealing for young people. Our survey in the nearby high school showed that only 5% of young people had seen these leaflets.' | 'The leisure centre should work with the school to ensure that leaflets can be distributed directly to pupils during registration. A leisure centre worker could also come and give a presentation in assembly.' |

Stage 5 - Holding feedback discussions

When findings are developed it is necessary to feed these back to the inspectee. This can be done through a written report but it might also be useful to arrange round table discussions or workshops between key stakeholders and the young inspectors to discuss the findings in detail. This form of dialogue can be a particularly effective way of co-producing the recommendations for improvement between the inspectee and the young inspectors. This can help make the recommendations more realistic for the inspectee to implement and also open up new ideas.

The inspectee should be asked to provide a response to the young inspectors outlining what changes it intends to implement as a result of the findings and recommendations. If any other young people have been involved (for instance as focus group participants) they should also receive feedback.

**Summary of
guidance**





Quality of youth participation

Youth inspections should be a high quality youth participation process, this means being;

1. **Transparent and informative**

- a. Young people must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their involvement in the inspection process, how this will take place, its scope, purpose and potential impact.
- b. Youth inspections should be transparent from the start about the level of involvement young people have over the design and conduct of the inspection, and the level of influence they can expect to have on the inspectee at the end.

2. **Voluntary**

- a. Young people should never be coerced into being involved in youth inspection against their wishes and should be able to cease their involvement at any stage. Payment or incentives should not be used as a method of coercion, though paid employment may sometimes be appropriate.
- b. Young inspectors volunteer rights should be respected at all times.

3. **Respectful**

- a. Young people's views should be treated with respect and they should be provided with opportunities to initiate ideas and activities themselves.

4. **Relevant**

- a. The topics, themes and inspectees which young people are inspecting must be of real relevance to their lives and enable them to draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities.
- b. Space should be created to enable the young people to highlight and address the issues they themselves identify as relevant and important.

5. **Young people-friendly**

- a. Environments and working methods should be adapted to young inspectors capacities and abilities.
- b. Adequate time and resources should be made available to ensure the young inspectors are adequately supported and prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute their views.
- c. Consideration should be given to the fact that young people will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and evolving capacities.
- d. In general, this means that young inspectors will need relevant training, support and coordination to undertake their role.

6. **Inclusive**

- a. Youth inspection must be inclusive and avoid existing patterns of discrimination.
- b. It should encourage opportunities for marginalised young people including both girls and boys to be involved in youth inspection.
- c. Young people are not a homogenous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all, without discrimination on any grounds.
- d. Youth inspection and young inspectors need to ensure that they are culturally sensitive to young people from all communities.

7. **Supported by training**

- a. Facilitating adults and organisations need preparation, skills and resources to facilitate youth inspection effectively.
- b. Facilitating organisations and their workers should be experienced and suitably qualified for working with young people.



8. Safe and sensitive to risk

- a. Appropriate risk assessment and safeguarding procedures should be put in place in order to help keep young people safe from harm.

9. Accountable

- a. A commitment to follow-up is essential. Young people must be informed as to how their views have been interpreted and used and, where necessary, provided with the opportunity to challenge and influence the results.
- b. Young people should be provided with clear feedback on how their involvement has influenced any outcomes. This applies to both young people involved as inspectors and any other young people who may give their views in the process or have a relationship with the inspectee.

Outcomes and impact

10. Outcomes and impact for inspectees

- a. The primary outcomes and impact should be on the inspectee's themselves.
- b. The purpose of youth inspection is to create change in inspectees and improve their services for the benefit of young people.
- c. When effective, youth inspection should lead to:
 - i. Inspectees being able to identify changes and improvements they implemented as a result of the inspection.
 - ii. Inspectees being more committed to listening to children and young people.
 - iii. Young people the inspectees works with are more satisfied with the inspectees work.
 - iv. Inspectees being more able to deliver effective outcomes for young people.

11. Outcomes and impact for young inspectors

- a. Learning and development outcomes for young inspectors are an important part of creating benefit for the young people involved and should be given due attention.
- b. Outcomes for young inspectors are understood as secondary outcomes for the project overall due to small numbers involved.



Guidance for assessment based inspection

12. Recruitment of inspectee and young inspectors

- a. A general group of inspectees such as 'schools' or 'GP services' should be identified. The inspection methods and criteria are developed generically for that group of inspectees. The facilitating organisation then recruits inspectees from this group to participate.
- b. Young people recruited as inspectors should have relevant lived experience of the things they are inspecting. Because young inspectors are likely to inspect multiple inspectees they are unlikely to have direct personal experience of using all services.

13. Developing assessment criteria and indicators

- a. Young people should be involved in the development of assessment criteria and assessment indicators, working collaboratively with professionals with relevant expertise if appropriate.
- b. There should be a clear understanding of the scope and topics of the assessment criteria - ideally captured within a written document. This should include:
 - i. What sort of inspectees the assessment criteria do and do not apply to;
 - ii. What areas of the inspectee's work they do and do not cover;
 - iii. What indicators will be used to assess if an inspectee meets the criteria.
- c. Assessment should be known to everyone involved and decided before an inspection takes place.
- d. Assessment criteria should be applied consistently and fairly across inspectees of the same type.

14. Conducting assessments

- a. Young people should be involved in selecting and designing assessment methods.
- b. Assessment methods should be consistent across inspectees of the same type.
- c. Young people should be involved in carrying out the assessments

15. Grading and reporting results

- a. Young people should be involved in decisions on which criteria and indicators an inspectee has met.
- b. At the end of the inspection, the inspectee should receive a clear statement on which criteria the inspectee has met and which they have not. This should include feedback on how the young inspectors have reached this decision. If grading systems are used they should be consistently and transparently applied across inspectees.

16. Feedback and assessment

- a. Inspections should make recommendations for improvements the inspectee can implement, to meet any unfulfilled criteria in future. Inspections should be encouraged to take part in reassessment where appropriate.
- b. Young people involved in inspections should receive feedback from the inspection on how their findings will be used.



Guidance for development based inspection

17. Identifying inspectees and recruiting young inspectors

- a. A single inspectee should be identified at the start of the process. The inspection methods and topics are then developed specifically for that inspectee.
- b. Young people recruited as inspectors should have relevant lived experience of the things they are inspecting. Ideally this should come from access or use of the inspectee's services.

18. Developing inspection themes and guiding questions

- a. The overarching theme of the inspection should be agreed with the inspectee at the start of the process.
- b. Young inspectors should be supported to develop inquiry topics and guiding questions which explore areas of the theme they think are relevant and important.
- c. Guiding questions should be realistic to answer meaningfully within the inspection.

19. Conducting inspections

- a. Young people should be involved in choosing and designing methods of inspection that can meaningfully answer their guiding questions.
- b. Young people should be involved in carrying out the inspections.

20. Developing findings and recommendations

- a. Young people should be involved in developing findings and recommendations for improvement
- b. There should be a clear link between the guiding questions, the findings and recommendations for improvement.

21. Holding feedback discussions

- a. The inspectee should receive a clear report on the results of the inspection detailing the findings and recommendations for improvement.
- b. The inspectee should be encouraged to implement the recommendations for improvement and feedback any changes they intend to make.
- c. Young people involved in inspections should receive feedback from the inspection on how their findings will be used.

