

Presentation to Children's Law Centre

**Dr Michael Maguire
Chief Inspector of Criminal
Justice in Northern Ireland**

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Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland
a better justice system for all



Agenda

- Impact of devolved government
- Key messages from our inspection work to date
- Inspection agenda – key themes
- Work with children and young people
- Who do we work with



Impact of Devolved Government

- Greater political accountability and scrutiny
- Greater focus on efficiency and effectiveness and value for money
- Less acceptance of the status quo – outcomes focus ?
- Justice area contested space – goldfish bowl of political accountability
- “joined-up potential”



Key Messages from inspections

- Reduction in the number of children and young people entering custody (250 in 1990s to average of 30 in JJC)
- Care of young people build into the design of the JJC – high levels of government investment in the centre
- Trying to deal with offenders at all stages of their criminal justice careers (diversion, conferencing and custody)
- Increase in the range of community disposals available for children in Northern Ireland via youth justice agency
- ASBOs – like them or not – have been handled differently in Northern Ireland – fewer of them and sensible approach to implementation
- VCS contribution very important



..more to do

- Moves from care to custody remains a problem
- On-going concerns about juveniles in Hydebank Wood
- Clarity of roles between PBNI and YJA need to be clarified

... will remain a focus because of vulnerability of young people and £ cost



Complex issues at work

- Changing the narrative of young people's lives
- Have we got the right linkages between the CJS and health and education
 - school exclusions
 - social care
 - parental responsibilities
- Effectiveness of CJ agencies in dealing with young people and public concerns about criminality
- What kind of justice system can we afford



Inspection Themes

- How do we treat victims and witnesses
- How are young people treated within the criminal justice system
- Have we got the balance right between public protection and rehabilitation
- How do we remove avoidable delays in the justice system
- Is the justice system efficient and effective in the delivery of services to the public



Inspection Types

- Practice Inspections
- Thematic Inspections across the CJS
- Review of Effectiveness & Efficiency within the CJS
- Thematic Inspections with devolved departments



Inspection Programme

- Inspection of juvenile justice centre (on-going)
- Youth intervention arrangements (links with DHSSPS and DE)
- Effectiveness of CJS disposals – what works doesn't work
- PBNI / YJA work with young offenders
- Youth diversion schemes



Our Partners

- HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
- HM CPS Inspectorate
- HM Inspectorate of Prisons
- HM Inspectorate of Probation
- HM Inspectorate of Court Administration
- Educational and Training Inspectorate
- Regulation Quality Improvement Authority
- Northern Ireland Audit Office



Contact Details

Dr Michael Maguire

Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice

Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland

14 Great Victoria Street

Belfast BT2 7BA

Telephone: (028) 9025 8000

www.cjini.org

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