

News story: The Home Office's consideration of children's 'best interests' – Call for evidence

The Chief Inspector requests evidence for his inspection on how the Home Office ensures it acts in the 'best interests' of unaccompanied asylum seeking children

The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) has begun work on an inspection into how the Home Office ensures it acts in the 'best interest' of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). This is the second in what is intended to be a series of inspections focused on the treatment of children within the context of borders, immigration and citizenship. The first report, published in July 2017, dealt with the [Home Office's application of the good character requirement in the case of young persons who apply for registration as British citizens](#).

This inspection will look at:

- the reception arrangements for the children, focusing on the support and information provided to the child, collation of information about the child, and referrals to other parties
- how the initial encounter and who that encounter is with affects the child
- the Home Office's role in carrying out age assessments (including initial age assessments), providing information and support to the child and how the Home Office works with local authorities in the case of age disputes
- the views of the Home Office and stakeholders about whether granting the UASC leave to remain is in the 'best interests' of the child, the impact of granting such leave, and the amount of information and support provided to children about it

The evidence gathering process has started and the inspectorate's established stakeholder groups will shortly be asked for their input. However, the ICIBI is keen to gather written evidence from anyone who has knowledge and experience of any of the above areas. Please write to chiefinspector@icinspector.gsi.gov.uk

Please note that this inspection will not examine:

- the Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) – The ICIBI is separately inspecting the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, which uses comparable processes to identify vulnerable children in the Middle East
- asylum processes and the quality of decision making, which were covered in an inspection report that is awaiting publication

- the 'Dublin III' and 'Dubs' schemes, except where the latter is relevant to the National Transfer Scheme