

Fit for us . . .

Making our System fit for children and young people

This report covers ...

Reception areas, waiting rooms, hearing rooms
and phone call inspections



Contents

2	Introduction
3	Inspection methods <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Inspection steps▪ How the inspections were marked
5	Inspection Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reception areas▪ Waiting rooms▪ Hearing rooms▪ Phone call inspections
17	Recommendations
19	List of offices inspected
20	Phone call checklist
22	Inspection checklist

Thank you to:

William Ryan and Jamie-Lee Sharkey who helped develop the methods and carried out some of the inspections, SCRA Information & Research Team (Gillian Henderson, Lucy Hanson and Indiya Whitehead), Participation Officer and Regional Administration Manager for supporting us in the inspections. And all the SCRA offices who we visited.

Introduction

In 2009/10 there were 43,416 Children's Hearings in Scotland. As it affects so many children and young people, it's important to know how to make their experiences of Hearings better. It's SCRA job to provide the facilities for Children's Hearings and to have waiting rooms and Hearings rooms. This also means that we need welcoming staff as children and young people will meet our staff first before they go into their Children's Hearing.

To date, SCRA has never looked at their facilities and services from a young person's point a view. Facilities and services are very important as this is the first thing children and young people see. These first impressions are most important because if it's a dark, cold place and no toys then the child/young person may feel uncomfortable and not want to talk. Members of staff have a big role to play because if staff are unfriendly or use a tone a voice that makes children/young people feel anxious this may cause the child/young person not to want to talk in their Hearing.

This is where the Participation Officer and the Modern Apprentices come in. SCRA's Individual Participation in Hearings Group is making new tools to help children and young people speak out in their Hearings but that doesn't help with the staff and the building itself. The four Modern Apprentices agreed, as they have all been through the Children's Hearings System, that staff and the building can be difficult to deal with and make you feel uncomfortable and anxious. The Modern Apprentices decided to inspect SCRA facilities from a child's/young person's point of view. We made a list of SCRA facilities and we made sure that we covered the whole of Scotland and then we decided to inspect 23 of the offices. After all the inspections we made recommendations for SCRA.

Inspection Methods

SCRA's Modern Apprentices and Research Team met and discussed the methods for the inspections to be carried out professionally and fairly. The information and methods selected were stored safely in survey monkey (information storing and analysis website).

Inspection steps

The Modern Apprentices and Research Team came up with two steps for the inspections to work effectively:

1. Office inspection
2. Phone call inspection

1. Office inspections also were important because we get to see SCRA facilities and staff. We went in pairs so that we had two views of each office. We discussed what we saw and agreed our overall view on each office. When going to the far away offices one of the research team came with us.

2. Phone calls inspections were important so we could see how members of staff treat children and young people while on the phone. This was also to let Authority Reporters know that we were coming and that we will be inspecting their office.

How the inspections were marked

The four Modern Apprentices sat down with the Research Team and looked at SCRA's Property Standards. We then thought about what was important for children and young people and came up with the office inspection form (page 21). We thought that reception, waiting room, Hearing room were most important and also how people are treated when coming to offices (e.g. asking for I.D. badges).

Then we looked at who was going to call the offices we were going to inspect. Then we agreed the Modern Apprentices should do the calls because we wanted to see

how Authority Reporters speak to children and young people and then we thought what was important to children and young people when on the phone to SCRA. We thought about tone of voice, were they helpful, was their name given, etc.. This was also to ask Authority Reporter not to tell any other members of staff so that they do not alter their behaviour.

Inspection Findings

Reception areas

Is the reception area colourful?							
Answer Options	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor	Rating Average	Response Count
colourful	0	5	11	6	1	3.13	23

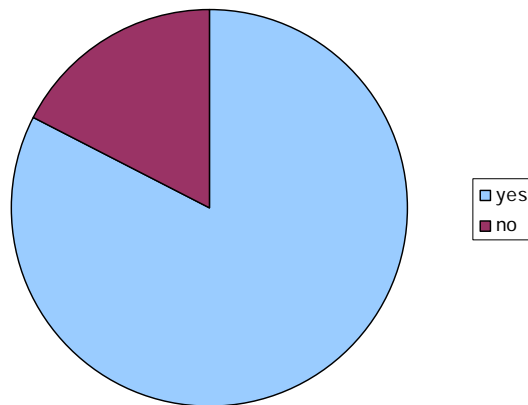
This table shows that there needs to be more colour in each office so that it feels more welcoming for children and young people. There are seven offices that had no colour or lack colour. Even with the lack of colour in the offices, 21.7% welcomed the Modern Apprentice very well and only 4.3% were poor.

Are the reception staff happy?							
Answer Options	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor	Rating Average	Response Count
happy staff	5	10	6	2	0	2.22	23

Although 10 members of staff were good there were still two members of staff that weren't and six that were okay. This is a high % who weren't good, as this is the first person children and young people meet when coming to their Children's Hearing. One office was very good as it was colourful and the receptionist was interested in children and young people.

Discrete entrance - 82.6% were discrete but there are still 17.4% that aren't. This will also make children and young people feel uncomfortable because people will know why they are going into a Children's Hearings centre.

Is there a separate entrance?



This brings me to separate entrances, 69.6% have a separate entrance and 30.4% don't. Separate entrances are key because if children/young people don't want to see their parents or are not allowed to see them - it is so important that we have one.

Is the office children and young person friendly ?							
Answer Options	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor	Rating Average	Response Count*
children and young person friendly	1	12	7	1	1	2.50	22

*One was not recorded

Although there are 12 offices that are good at being children friendly, nine are still needing improvement. This is about the over all experience with staff and the building. This may lead to children and young people not talking/expressing themselves in their Hearings as this may make them feel uncomfortable.

Reception covered by glass was 87.0% but when talking to some reception staff they said they ether didn't have it in their last building or they didn't want it. Without the glass this could let reception staff make children and young people more at ease.

Do staff have friendly chit chat with children and young people?							
Answer Options	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor	Rating Average	Response Count
friendly chit chat to the children and young people	1	4	1	5	2	3.23	13

Eight offices don't have friendly chit chat with children and young people and as these are the first people they see before going into their Hearing this is really worrying. Even just a hello to break the ice.

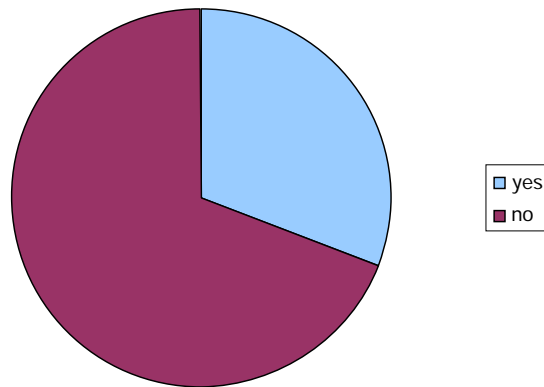
How do staff greet children and young people?							
Answer Options	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor	Rating Average	Response Count*
Greeting	1	7	7	3	0	2.67	18

*Five were not observed

Ten offices we saw that staff weren't very good at greeting children and young people. At one office we saw staff moaning and using a tone with children/young people with their family. This was worrying because this is the first person children and young people see when coming to their Hearing. The best office was very friendly and interested in children and young people. Whereas other offices can be quite stressful when you feel like staff don't want to talk to you.

Speak to the child or young people first?

MA's Inspections Visits Log

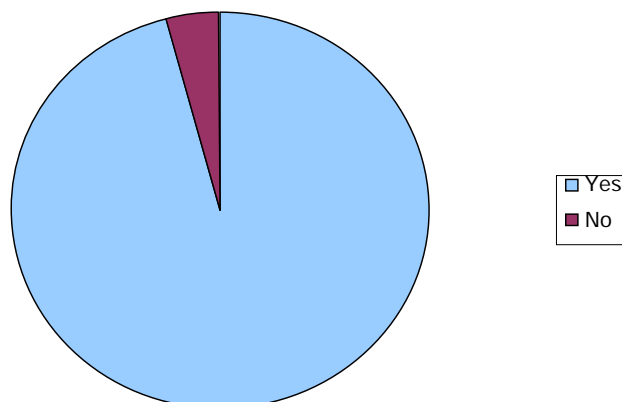


Only 30.8% spoke to children and young people first. Considering this is the child/young person's Hearing they are the most important person so staff should speak to children and young people first. 58.8% were not shown to the waiting room, again as this is the children/young person's Hearing they should be shown to the waiting room so they know where they are going.

Waiting Rooms

Toys in the waiting room?

MA's Inspections Visits Log



Even though 95.7% of offices have toys in their waiting rooms, only 47.8% were age appropriate and 60.9% were gender appropriate. For how many children and young

people coming to Hearings each year - we need to get toys that suit everyone. One of the offices we visited had old dirty toys and bits of games everywhere. The office we liked was when it had a great range of toys/art work done by children and young people and it also had a TV.

Are there rooms available for privacy?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	69.6%	16
No	30.4%	7

- 30.4% didn't have rooms available for privacy - all Hearings should be private.
- There were 65.2% of offices that had leaflets but every office should have leaflets so that children and young people get the information they need.
- Only 4.3% had up to date magazines.

Hearings Rooms

Was there a smaller coffee table in the hearing room?

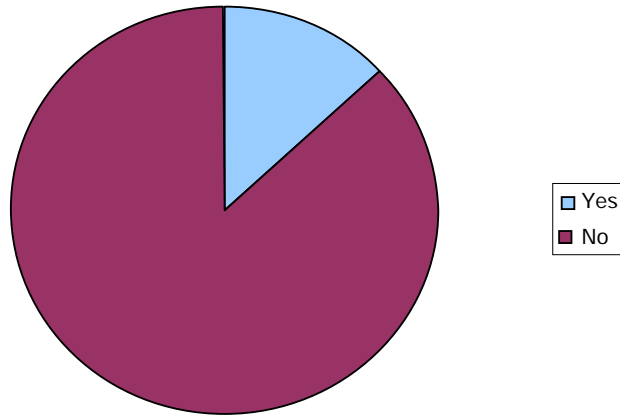
Smaller table/coffee table		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	0.0%	0
No	100.0%	23

We as Modern Apprentices came up with this question to witness if some offices are making an effort to try and make Hearings a bit less daunting, less formal and for the children and young people to feel more comfortable and empowered to speak out - by not having a large meeting table.

The table shows that out of the 23 offices we travelled to not one office had a smaller coffee table for the Hearings.

Were there Children’s Rights on the wall?

MA's Inspections Visits Log



During the inspections the Modern Apprentices expected to see posters of children’s rights on the Hearing rooms walls. According to the chart only 13% (3 offices) had children’s rights on the walls. This highlights very poor practice for an organisation like SCRA and we have to let the children and young people be more aware of their rights when attending a Hearing .

Were the seats in the Hearing room comfortable?

Comfortable seats		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	78.3%	18
No	21.7%	5

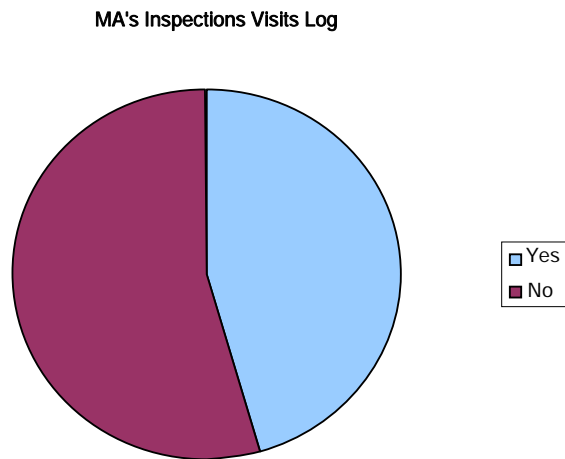
As we are trying to make the Hearings more comfortable and child and young person friendly it is important to meet the needs children and young people. One of the ways we are trying doing this is by having comfortable seats that won’t make children and young people uncomfortable as it can make the child or young person less focused during the Hearing.

Were the Panel Members split up during the hearing?

Panel members spilt up		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	0.0%	0
No	100.0%	23

The Modern Apprentices thought it would a good idea to enquire if any Panel Members split up in Hearings to make it easier for the children and young people. The table shows that no Panel Members split up.

Do children and young people get offered a drink of juice or water?

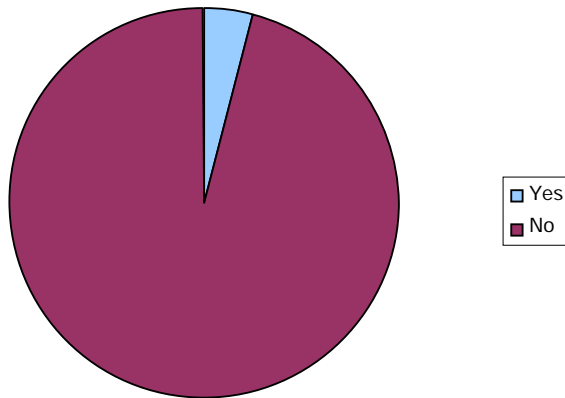


To help children and young people feel comfortable in Hearings the Modern Apprentices think that children and young people should be offered a refreshment to help them settle in and calm their nerves.

The chart shows that more than half of SCRA Hearings Centres do not offer children and young people a refreshment at their Hearing.

Were there pens and paper on the tables?

MA's Inspections Visits Log



The Hearing room is quite a scary place for children and young people and to make it easiest for them we decided it would be good to have a look to see what if Hearing Centres have materials for children and young people to do some things to help them during a Hearing.

As you can see the chart shows out of 23 Hearing centres, only one provided pen and paper for children and young people in the Hearing suite. Yet again this highlights the need to improve the way the system works by making it more children and young person friendly and it's essential we do so.

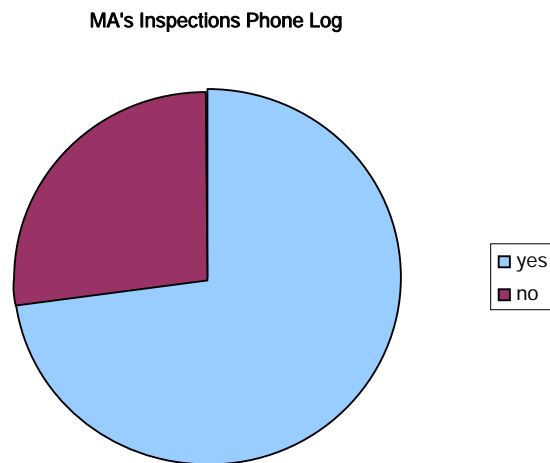
Was the Hearing Room quiet?

Quiet hearing rooms							
Answer Options	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor	Rating Average	Response Count
Quiet	3	10	4	2	3	2.64	22

When we were looking around Hearing centres we decided it was important to see how quiet the Hearing rooms are. The chart shows five centres have poor standards and only three got top marks. And even though most were good and ok, we must be at the top for all as every Hearing is confidential.

Phone call inspections

Was the person's name given when answering the phone?



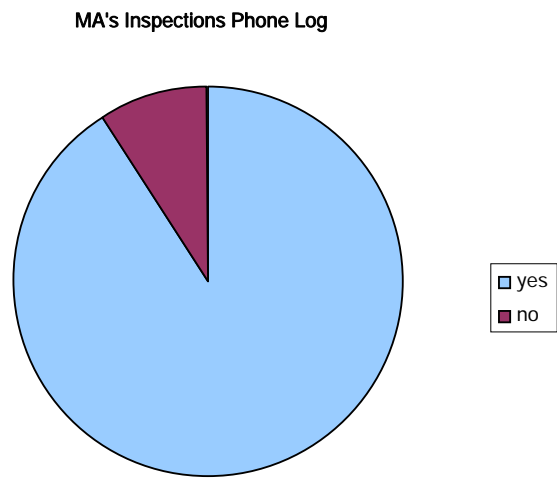
Although the chart shows that 72.7% of staff gave their name when the Modern Apprentices called to book the visit, it's still concerning that just over a third of staff are still not providing a name. It is highly important that we at SCRA always give callers our name so they know who they are talking to and who gave them the information they requested.

Was the office location given?

office location given?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	9.1%	2
No	90.9%	20

As you can see in this finding 90.9% of SCRA staff have not given the location of the office. We need to start naming our location of the office we work in, not just for our benefit but more importantly for children and young people and their families and the services they work with and we work with too, so they know what office they've called and whether or not they've got the right office and the correct information.

Was the call respectful?



90.9% of the staff are really respectful during the calls.

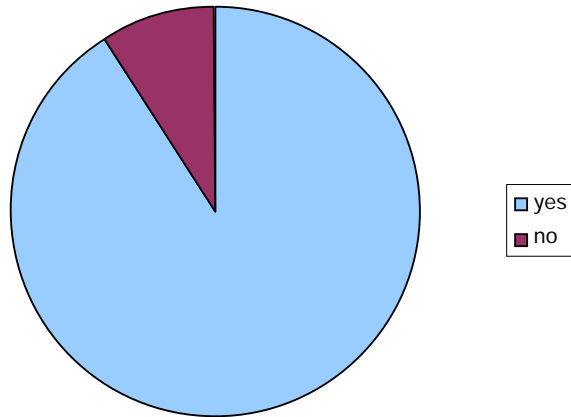
Flexible

flexible about organising visit		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	90.5%	19
No	9.5%	2

This table shows that the offices we visited are really flexible about coming out to the office and the time of the visit.

Helpful

MA's Inspections Phone Log



On the whole, SCRA staff were really helpful during the phone calls, the places for improvements that have been highlighted we are sure that we can achieve we work together.

Modern Apprentices - staff awareness

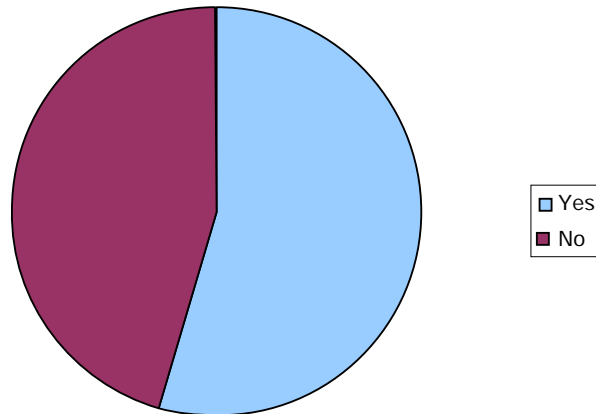
Asked for Identification

Asked for ID		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	4.5%	1
No	95.5%	21

The table shows that only one office asked us for I.D., again this highlights very poor practice and has security implications for an organisation like SCRA.

Offered access to a computer

MA's Inspections Visits Log



More than half of SCRA offered Modern Apprentices access to computers when visiting their offices. We have to work to get the other 45.5% of offices to offer us access to computers.

Knowing what we do

Knowing what the Modern Apprentices do		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	43.5%	10
No	56.5%	13

The table shows that less than half of SCRA's staff knew what we as Modern Apprentices do. This sends out a message to everyone in the SCRA team that we, as Modern Apprentices, want to be recognised by you.

Recommendations

Add more colour to every office.

Have a training/awareness day for all staff. And that the Modern Apprentices develop and lead the training with Learning & Development Manager and the Participation Officer on :

- *Being children and young person friendly*
- *Greeting children and young people*
- *Friendly chit chat with children and young people.*

Take the glass off reception desks to make reception more welcoming and to help put children and young people at ease.

Have a separate budget for toys and up to date magazines as the toys are dirty and the magazines are out of date.

ALL ROOMS should be more private and have sound proofing.

All Hearings Centres should have leaflets so that children and young people and their families get more information on their rights and the help available from services.

All waiting and Hearing rooms should have posters on children's rights on the walls.

All children and young people should be offered refreshments at their Hearings. And all offices should have a water cooler for those attending Hearings.

All Hearing rooms should have coloured pens and paper (for children and young people to draw or take notes if they want to)

All visitors to SCRA must be asked for I.D. (as everything is confidential within SCRA).

All offices must offer visiting staff access to computers.

The Modern Apprentices to follow up inspections in a year's time from this report to see how well our recommendations have been implemented.

Phone call recommendations:

All staff must give their names when answering calls.

Office location must be given when answering calls.

All staff to be respectful and helpful.

Mystery shopper calls (within the organisation) to all the SCRA offices.

List of offices inspected

Glasgow
Edinburgh
Stirling
Falkirk
Kilmarnock
Ayr
Greenock
Hamilton
Paisley
Dumbarton
Livingston
Perth
Dundee
Glenrothes
Dunfermline (outreach)
Aberdeen
Inverness
Elgin
Dalkeith (outreach)
Tranent
Arbroath
Lochgilphead
Dumfries

Phone call checklist

MA's Inspections Phone Log	
1. details	
details	
1. date of phone call	
<input type="text"/>	
2. who made the call	
<input type="text"/>	
3. office called	
<input type="text"/>	
2. inspections	
1. name given	
<input type="radio"/> yes	
<input type="radio"/> no	
2. office location given?	
<input type="radio"/> yes	
<input type="radio"/> no	
3. tone of voice friendly	
tone of voice very friendly friendly ok unfriendly very unfriendly	
<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
4. respectful	
<input type="radio"/> yes	
<input type="radio"/> no	
5. intrested in the modern apprentices	
<input type="radio"/> yes	
<input type="radio"/> no	

MA's Inspections Phone Log

6. know who modern apprentices are

yes

no

7. flexible about organising visit

yes

no

8. flexible about times we can visit

yes

no

9. helpful

yes

no

10. comment about phone calls?

Inspections checklist

MA's Inspections Visits Log					
1. details					
1. names					
<input type="text"/>					
2. office					
<input type="text"/>					
3. date					
<input type="text"/>					
2. receptions					
1. is it welcoming					
welcoming	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. colourful					
colourful	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. happy staff					
happy staff	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. discrete entrance					
<input type="radio"/> yes					
<input type="radio"/> no					
5. separate entrance if needed					
<input type="radio"/> yes					
<input type="radio"/> no					
6. children and young person friendly					
children and young person friendly	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MA's Inspections Visits Log

7. reception covered by glass

yes

no

8. comfortable chairs

yes

no

9. comments about receptions or entrance

3. staff

1. friendly chit chat to children and young people

	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor
friendly chit chat to the children and young people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. greeting

	very good	good	ok	poor	very poor
greeting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. speak to the child or young person first

yes

no

4. shown to the waiting room

yes

no

5. comments on the staff

4. Waiting rooms

1. Toys in the waiting room

Yes

No

MA's Inspections Visits Log

2. up to date magazines

Yes

No

3. Leaflets

Yes

No

4. Age appropriate toys

Yes

No

5. Gender appropriate toys

Yes

No

6. Rooms available for privacy

Yes

No

7. Comfortable seats

Yes

No

8. Comments about waiting rooms

5. Hearing rooms

1. Smaller table/coffee table

Yes

No

2. children's rights on the wall

Yes

No

MA's Inspections Visits Log

3. Comfortable seats

- Yes
 No

4. Panel members spilt up

- Yes
 No

5. Young people are offered a drink of water

- Yes
 No

6. Posters on the wall

- Yes
 No

7. Pens and paper on tables

- Yes
 No

8. Quiet hearing rooms

Quiet very good good ok poor very poor

9. Comments about hearings rooms

6. Modern apprentices

1. Asked for ID

- Yes
 No

2. Offered access to a computer

- Yes
 No

MA's Inspections Visits Log

3. Showed facilities (kitchen, toilets, etc)

Yes

No

4. Knowing what the MA's do

Yes

No

5. Comments about our reception

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