

# the registered managers' **handbook**

(January 2018 edition)



# Introduction

In 2016 **Emma McVinnie** stood up at an Ofsted conference and shared her experience over the previous two years of managing a service from inadequate to good. She highlighted the pressure and isolation on registered managers and asked for interest in a regular meeting of managers from across the South West.

Since that time the south west registered managers' forum has grown to well over 100 members and is supported by **dialogue**, a safeguarding company that works with children's homes providing training, leadership consultancy, support with planning from poor inspection judgements and regulation 44 visits.

We've begun compiling the experiences shared at the forum so there's a reminder or guide for managers going forward.

For more information visit <https://dialogueltd.co.uk/swforum/>. On this page you can also access the forum's shared training courses.

## **John Woodhouse**

managing director, dialogue

07921 015 176

## contents

### have a great ofsted!

How to prepare your home for an Ofsted inspection (June 2017)

3

### young people in inspection

Ofsted asked what we thought might make inspection more accessible to our young people (June 2017)

8

### reg 45 reports

How managers in the South West produce reflective, analytic reports that meet the standards

10

### lovin' the work

Ofsted talked about how to implement the first requirement of the first principle of the quality standards – love (November 2017)

16

# Having a great Ofsted!

June 2017

Managers at the **June 2017** forum spent time in groups thinking about how they get the best out of their Ofsted inspections, thinking particularly about preparation, leadership, evidence based planning, the quality standards and staff resilience.

## Children's records

---

### Risk assessment

An absolutely key area. These should stem from the referral documentation and local authority care plan with a clear impact risk assessment that informs whether you should admit the young person to the home. Share the document with the local authority and ask them to confirm you've properly captured the risks.

This should lead into your placement paperwork and placement plan. Where there are particular risks these need to be set out in detail with clear guidance for staff as to what to do. What does "one to one supervision" actually mean? Is that in every room? What about at night? It's all about specificity and then ensuring your team are working closely to the plan.

Risk assessments should be dynamic, which means they should change as

the situation changes. This might mean staff see a change in risk at the time and take a particular action, or reflect on an incident and recognise things change. The risk assessment should also be changed and staff should be trained and confident to do this.

Risks should be regularly reviewed – supervision or team meetings are good places to do this. Used correctly they're a really good track of progress or otherwise for the more challenging of our young people.

It's about risk minimisation, not elimination. Keep them streamlined – people won't read and digest 6 page risk assessments!

### Care plans

These should be practical and again linked back to the purpose the child is in placement. Ensure case recording cross-references back to these. Why have you taken the young person shopping? How does that link back to

the plan in developing their social or monetary skills?

Some inspectors might not have the specialist (e.g. medical) background visiting specialist settings. Try to write your plans in a way a young person or parent can understand – it avoids the risk your staff don't quite understand and should set things out clearly for the inspector.

It's crucial the young person understands the targets and plans where they have the age and understanding. As they keep reminding us, it is their life after all!

Electronic systems and paper records should link closely together

### **Young people's views**

These should form the backbone of the care plan and should be visible throughout the records.

### **Incidents and notifications**

Again have a clear system for tracking these and for tracking the management action to follow them up. There should be cross-references to other relevant documents and where necessary issues can also be picked up in supervision.

Think about how you look for patterns and record these, perhaps in the Reg45.

### **Return home interviews**

Ensure these happen within 72 hours of a young person going missing. It is the local authority's responsibility, but you'll be the one who is held accountable at inspection. Have systems set up beforehand so that you can make a call while they're missing and these can get booked in.

dialogue can provide these – speak to John on 07921 015 176.

### **Medication**

Have really clear systems for administering and storing medication with a clear audit based approach to ensure it's done safely.

### **Evidence outcomes and good practice**

Your files should showcase progress for the young person so that if they come back and read their file they can see the changes they made with your help.

Some learning disability provisions are using photographs as a record. Ensure your staff have paperwork/non-contact time to evidence outcomes and plan their work.

## Leave your footprints

Your name should be everywhere. If you've read a piece of recording that's satisfactory sign and date it. Where comments need to be made add these and cross-reference to another discussion or pick up in supervision and reference back to the date/time of the event. The inspectors want evidence that you have your finger on the pulse of the home and are guiding and leading an effective staff team.

Have you got a system for signing off records? Maybe you have a box or folder the records go through. Maybe you do audits on a particular day of the week. Can your administrator undertake audits and again create a record of these?

## infrastructure

---

### Supervision

These should happen regularly at a frequency determined in your policy. Have a tracker so you can see where supervision is not compliant and insert a record into the supervision file explaining any gaps (for example, staff member on parenting leave). Review the tracker monthly.

Supervision itself should be a balance of organisational management (new policies, holidays etc), reflective space (personal development), case management (focus on children's progress and outcomes) and mediation (resolving issues).

Where you have supervisors ensure you're auditing their supervision and again recording that you've done so.

### Procedures

Think about procedures as the accrued wisdom of other residential managers and ensure your staff follow them. Where you are dealing with specific incidents (e.g. missing from home) have clear flowcharts with timescales and actions and encourage staff to refer to these in their recording.

### Locality Risk Assessment

Use websites such as the Avon & Somerset Police website to get the figures, evidence you have followed up any worrying trends in your local area.

### Health & Safety

Clear records, proper training and wherever there are gaps you've picked up on these as the RM and ensured they're filled. Ensure your fire checks, training and drills have all been completed and are evident on file.

## Recruitment files

It's a key standard, links to safeguarding, but it's only mainly admin and you've just got to have these in order. In particular, ensure you have a detailed employment history for every staff member with clear and reasonable explanations for any gaps. References must be taken up in writing and the verbal references should be a detailed record of the conversation rather than tick-box – plan your questions ahead including repeating the question whether there were every any concerns about their practice. Don't forget the same standards apply to agency workers – have a clear agreement with the agency, wherever possible have a pool of pre-approved agency workers beforehand, and make the time to go and audit their records.

Don't forget the mandatory NVQ requirements. You need to hold people assiduously to these after the timescales have elapsed otherwise this will be challenged anyway alongside your failure to follow it up.

## Complaints

Not having any complaints might be a good sign, or more likely it is a sign the system isn't being used! Maybe people don't feel able to complain. Is your

home really that perfect that no one can find fault?

Have somewhere to record complaints made by local residents and be clear how you respond to these.

## Regulation 44

These should be done monthly and you want evidence the independent person has sent them to Ofsted on time. It's the RM's responsibility to ensure they are robust and developmental. If it's too cosy you'll get picked up on the things they've missed and that you haven't met this regulation, so encourage criticism... there should be a healthy tension between you. Inspectors have been known to go around homes carrying a copy of the latest regulation 44 report and cross-checking!

There should be a clear set of recommendations in the report and then clear evidence from you that you have addressed each one, even if that is to explain why you are not accepting the recommendation. Don't let them sit on the report from month to month without follow-up.

## Regulation 45

This is where you do your analysis and it doesn't have to be once every six

months. Turn it into an on-going process that you pull together into a 6-monthly report so you're not doing everything at once.

Use the regulations themselves as an audit tool to go through what you do and ensure you've not missed anything.

Have a recommendation and requirements folder. You can start with anything from your last inspection, but then add in anything you find as you're going along.

Recruitment and retention is important for the stability of the home. Record how you are addressing this.

## during

---

### **strong coffee**

Look after yourself, your team and the inspector. Inspections are always really stressful because so much is at stake. Remember that you are all on the same side – trying to get it right for the young people in your home.

### **staff**

Brief your staff regularly about the progress of the home and practice the kind of questions you know Ofsted ask. They should get the same answers

from staff as they get from you because you're all tuned into the issues. Honesty is always the best policy – if they exaggerate the positives with the best of intentions it looks worse when they get caught out as Ofsted look to triangulate what they're told. That said, they should all be able to say something they're proud the home has achieved.

When the inspector comes to the door they should be welcomed. Negative 'jokes' about Ofsted never get the inspection off on the right foot and also feed into a culture of fear of inspection for the staff team and most importantly the young people.

### **The inspector**

Plan where they will be – if possible avoid the office or they will be in your space throughout the inspection.

If an issue is raised be confident to say to the inspector you need time to go through the paperwork before reflecting on staff actions or understanding.

Above all, know your home. Be honest about the gaps they will find and the actions you have in place to address these, and have a clear set of things to share that you're proud about.

# young people in inspection

June 2017

Guy Mammot (RI) asked a group of 34 managers from across the southwest to think about actions inspectors could take to make inspection more young person-friendly. Each of the five groups of managers then considered what actions homes could take.

## suggestions for inspectors

---

- Two groups asked that inspectors provide a 'bio' and four suggested photos of the inspector for the young people so they know who you are when you are allocated a home. It was thought the home could include this information in the Children's Guide to the home. One group suggested a video introduction for the young people which could be provided in a format or language appropriate to the children in the home.
- Nothing beats relationships, and one group felt it would be better to have a more consistent inspector so they get to know the young people and how they communicate. If there has to be a change of inspector, then allow time to build a relationship with the home.
- Four groups suggested inspectors dress smartly, but in a way that signals you are there for young people and are approachable, rather than being there for staff. Less formal dress, don't wear a suit or tie, wear clothes that are comfortable to play in, maybe even bring your slippers! One group reflected that someone with obvious power dressed formally may remind young people of previous traumatic events, such as court or having to move on from a previous placement.
- Four groups wanted inspectors to have time to engage more with young people through activity, such as playing cards or games, or just saying hi and chatting over tea and coffee. A good time might be during the young people's evening activities. Another group felt there was much benefit in seeing the interaction and communication between staff and young people.
- Leave the briefcase in the car for the first hour – again, signal the interactions with young people are the most important

- Two groups emphasised the importance of the skills of the inspector and their understanding of the needs of the young people. For example, there should be inspectors who are competent in Makaton or BSL so they are more able to communicate with some of the young people.
- In other situations the kind of language used could be improved – for example “What are the staff helping you with?” rather than “What are your outcomes?”
- The focus on working together and inspection being a constructive rather than judgemental process would change the feel of the home at the time of an inspection.
- Two groups suggested using an app such as a MOMO express questionnaire for young people to provide feedback, rather than the questionnaires – keep them clear, short and simple
- One group mentioned improving communication through letters and child friendly inspection feedback.

## suggestions for homes

---

- Every group felt homes could work more on positively promoting inspection work and preparing young people for inspections, emphasising inspections are there for young people. This should be evident in the language used about inspection, for example explaining “inspectors come in to see that you are safe and happy, that you are doing things you enjoy and feel supported”
- One group suggested the organisation or registered manager work with the young people prior to inspection and submit three talking points and three words or topics to avoid to encourage engagement.
- Two groups thought workshops or training sessions for teams on what to expect of an inspection would be useful. This should include briefing staff to be honest if they don’t know the answer to something an inspector asks, rather than making something up or exaggerating to impress!

# Regulation 45 reports

November 2017

Adam Phillips (Beaufort Care Group) & John Woodhouse (**dialogue**) facilitated a session on improving the quality of your regulation 45 reports which was positively received:

Regulation 45 is a **review** of the quality of care provided from an established and maintained **system** for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—

- **quality of care** provided for children;
- **feedback** and opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff about the home, facilities & quality of care
- **actions** necessary to improve or maintain quality of care

It requires a biannual **report** by the RM to HMCI (within 28 days of review) & on request to placing authority.

The report should be based on an established and maintained **system** that monitors quality of care, feedback & actions following quality standards, e.g.

- LAC/Care Plan/LA Paperwork tracker
- supervision tracker
- agency tracker
- physical environment of home, vehicles etc
- training delivered
- audits

## what we track

"We continually monitor quality assurance through continuous building and reflection on the ethos of the home and maintaining investment in it from both adults who work in the home and the young people placed. We monitor through constant consideration of the happiness and progress of all young people and how at home they are in our house"

Managers were asked how they track the impact on children and young people through **quality assurance systems** in their homes.

By far the most common tool for monitoring performance were supervision matrices, actions, observations, audit & feedback. Most organisations felt they captured performance through supervision.

It is supervision more than any other single factor, that will enable us as individuals and the organisations in which we work to contain and sustain our emotional responsiveness, both to our clients and each other, without which there can be no helping encounter.

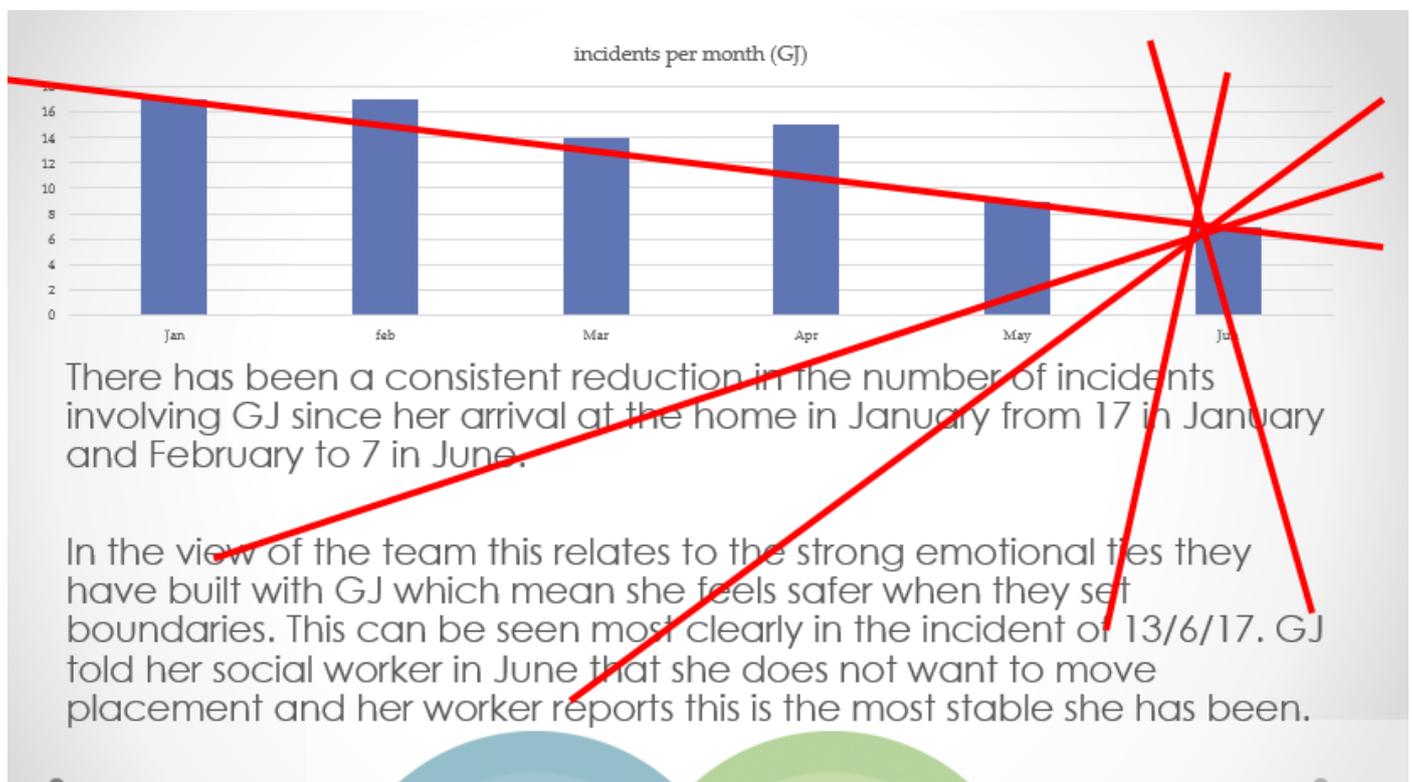
Morrison, 2005

Training compliance, with matrices and audit were the next most common area for quality assurance. This could be linked to a staff development plan. One organisation had an aim of quarterly training staff, with more if needed.

Managers used incident records, debriefs, reviews and team discussions as a monitoring tool, alongside accident forms, missing incidents and cause for concern forms and Reg40 notifications. They asked how it

happened and looked for patterns emerging. Managers also scrutinised logs and again some improved with the use of chronologies to identify and track key events and patterns for young people.

This linked to one of the slides which demonstrated how data, together with other sources of information can be triangulated to provide a sound analysis for the reduction in a young person's frequency of incidents:



Quality measures around young people's progress varied, with organisations undertaking quarterly, monthly or weekly assessments of progress, using information gathered in reviews, keyworking sessions, risk assessments, positive support/behaviour management plans and care plans and looking to capture 'outcomes' for young people.

The next most commonly mentioned areas were a series of checks, daily, monthly and quarterly around health and safety, fire safety, medication and other 'measurables' to ensure basic compliance. Two organisations undertook environmental audits to ensure the safety of the young people.

Feedback from young people, parents, social workers and staff was mentioned by several organisations.

"We are listening" evidences what we have listened to, what actions we have taken and outcomes"

Young people's meetings were an invaluable source of information, with an important aspect being feedback to the young people on how their ideas had changed or influenced practice in the home.

Monitoring of staff rotas, including sickness and use of agency staff, had an important role for some, especially in ensuring use remained below 50%. In addition to background checks via

the agency some organisations had found it valuable to audit agency records themselves and had found discrepancies.

Responsible individuals, senior managers and the Reg44 independent visitor all provided a useful alternative perspective on services. Some homes set out clear audit protocols, for example the sampling of 5 staff files per month by the senior manager with written feedback on file and action for improvement.

Several organisations mentioned the Annex A (information required at the start of an inspection) as information they regularly gathered.

Other sources of evidence included:

- Transition planner
- Outcomes
- Capability matrix
- Team meetings
- 360<sup>0</sup> feedback
- Atmosphere and feelings
- Complaints
- Development
- Ofsted feedback
- Health targets & clinical governance
- Education
- KPIs
- Staff observation

## feedback and opinion

We asked how organisations evidence opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff about the home, facilities & quality of care.

- how we capture the honest and considered views of young people
- how we evidence they're listened to
- reaching out to parents & other organisations
- formal/informal approaches

There were a range of responses. Many organisations use feedback forms. These are used with parents, statutory visits, professional visits. One organisation collates these and puts them in their 'Compliments, comments & concerns' book. Several organisations commented on the importance of showing how the feedback has made a difference, for example with a 'You said, we did' book.

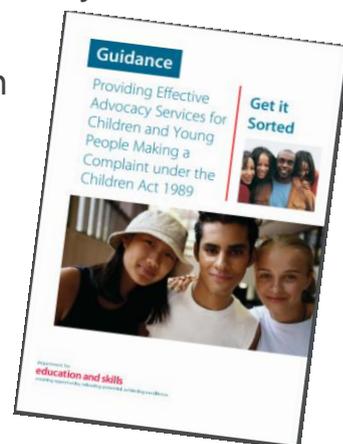
Honest feedback is based on genuine relationships where people are not only grateful for the service (there's an especial risk of this in services for children with disabilities), but feel empowered to say how it could be improved. Four organisations highlighted the need for regular face to face contact with parents. Some organisations also meet with the Independent Reviewing Officer, or the Police.

There are a range of resources to help young people contribute, including MOMO (Mind of My Own app) and proloquo (a Symbol-based communication app for children, teens and adults who cannot speak). Most organisations have some form of young people's meetings, again with actions agreed and feedback on these next time.

Some of the loveliest examples were photo books of holidays and two organisations which use the online software that produces hardcover year books that really make the young person feel valued and important.

Access to advocacy was only cited by a couple of organisations. It is worth remembering that where a young person makes, or is thinking about making, a complaint they are entitled to an advocacy service following an amendment to the law in 2002. See [this guidance](#) for details.

Feedback can also be generated internally, for example through direct staff observations, learning logs and reflective staff meetings, appraisals and regulation 44 reports, making the date meaningful through the Regulation 45 report.



“The goal is to turn **data** into **information**, and information into **insight**.”

Carly Fiorina,  
former president of Hewlett-Packard

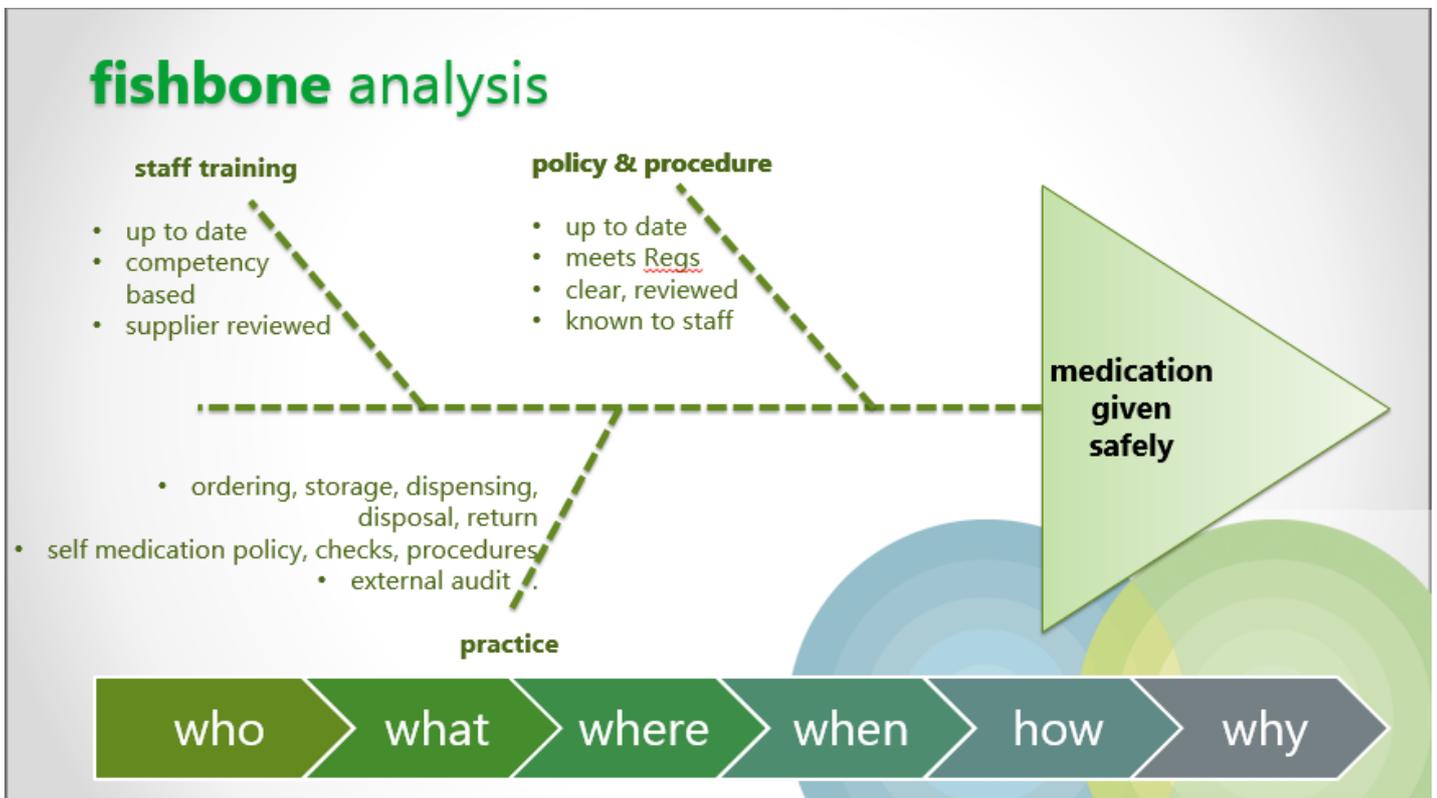
### so what...?

It’s crucial that we have many eyes and ears, but gathering the information is only the start of the process. Making it meaningful and acting on it to make a difference in the young people’s lives is crucial.

Sometimes organisations can be data rich, intelligence poor. That is, they collect lots of information but they don’t analyse it or use it to make changes.

Gathering information in itself can be a time-consuming, institutional and even abusive process if it unnecessarily intrudes into young people’s private lives. We should be clear why we collect data and what happens with it.

We discussed analysis approaches for testing information we gather, such as triangulation and demonstrated one approach to analysing incident reports as an example, using fishbone analysis:



Examples of analysis were shared in the groups including:

- the importance of honest reflection
- using journals and photos in the report
- using peer reviews for incidents and notifications
- taking stock of supervision – themes, trends, where is supervision 'static', where is it effective, using a 360<sup>0</sup> approach including supervisees views.
- Data collection and graphs from behaviour recording forms to demonstrate progress
- Deep dive analysis involving other agencies, such as CAMHS.

### and finally, **planning**

The final crucial element in a good regulation 45 report is planning. We covered ensuring plans are SMART, include RAG ratings of progress and written in a way to make them evident in the changes people should see in young people's lives and across the home in general. People added:

- Making your vision clear and building development around this, stating what has gone well
- Include children and young people's views about what should happen here too
- Having an ideas book or running team 'ideas storming' sessions
- Involving other agencies in working out what needs to happen



# Lovin' the work

Linda Bond, Ofsted (November 2017)



## Introduction

The '**Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards**' tells us:

Children in residential child care should be **loved**, happy, healthy, safe from harm and able to develop, thrive and fulfil their potential (page 6)

Through this presentation we will explore the following:

- Language used in children's homes that helps children feel loved
- Behaviours in children's homes that show our children they are loved
- How the aesthetics of the home help our children to feel loved

## The definition of Love

- Love is a variety of different emotional and mental states, typically strongly and positively experienced, that ranges from deepest interpersonal affection to simple pleasure
- It is the concept of a human being caring about another
- Love refers to an experience one person feels for another. Love often involves caring for, or identifying with, a person or thing

## Truths about love

- All human beings need love?
- Love is a profound sense of attachment?
- Love is always two way?
- Love needs not be glorious or romantic?
- Love takes time?
- Love cannot be commanded. It can only be given?

## What do we know about the children's experiences of 'love' living in our children's home?

We know our children will be living on a daily basis with any or all of the following:

- Abuse
- Loss
- Rejection
- Pain
- Trauma
- Separation

They may not have experienced love as defined



### Group work - session 1

#### **Language used in children's homes that helps children feel 'loved'**

What terms, phrases, acronyms are you currently using either when recording information or when talking with children or between staff?  
Give examples of what you do  
What are the barriers?

### Group work - session 2

#### **Behaviours in children's homes that show our children they are 'loved'**

What behaviours do our children witness or experience in the children home that makes them feel loved?  
Give examples of what you do  
What are the barriers?

### Group work - session 3

#### **How the aesthetics of the home help our children to feel loved**

What is it about the structure, design, fabric of your children's home that helps the child feel loved?  
Give examples of what you do  
What are the barriers?

