

Independent Monthly Visitor Meeting (Regulation 44)

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The purpose of the Independent Person's visits and reports

- By visiting create an additional safeguard for the children living at the home
- To make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care
- Make recommendations to improve practice



Role of Ofsted

We receive a copy

We check for timeliness of receipt

We read them and summarise and record the outcomes

Identify any key lines for inspection

May cross reference to notifications

Look at the recommendations and if those made at the last visit have been completed

Look for the opinion of the Independent person

We look to see that children have been engaged in the process, seen and listened to



Concerns

Clear cut and paste from previous reports or other homes visited by the IP

Falsifying dates and times of visits

Always announced

Always visiting when children are not there

Frequently no engagement with children

Repeated recommendations and no resolution

No opinion re safeguarding and welfare

Lack of analysis /over use of check lists

Reports don't meet the regulations



What do inspectors find helpful



Clear succinct analytical report



Demonstrates what the IP did/talked to



Their opinion



That the visits are over time having an impact

What does Ofsted expect?



What Children's Homes Regulations and 'The Guide' say to be followed



The regs does not specify how long a IP should be appointed for, but the relationship must work between the provider and IP



There is no specific time a visit should last- but should be long enough to carry out the visit effectively- larger settings will take longer



Inspectors should explore why reports are late, but the Regs say that the IP must supply the report to HMCI

What does Ofsted expect?



- The regulations were relaxed in 2020, allowing 'virtual visits'
- The current regulations do not allow for virtual visits. Any decision re a virtual visit is between you and the provider, but we would expect it to be justified
- The regulations state that the IP should interview in private, children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home, 'as the independent person requires'. So it is your decision, and judgement re frequency.

What does Ofsted expect?

- Ofsted do not approve IPs. We judge the skills and understanding of the IP through the quality of the report
- 'The Guide' says that the IP should have skills and understanding to
 - ❖ Relate to the children in a home's care
 - ❖ Assess all relevant information
 - ❖ Form an impartial judgement about the quality of the home's care
 - ❖ Able to reach a rigorous and impartial judgement
- The arrangement is between you and the provider



What does Ofsted expect?

- If the inspector's findings and the IPs reports are seriously at 'odds', then it will be a line of enquiry at an inspection
- Phasing of visits is between you and the provider
- Carrying out IP visits is regulated activity
- Regulation 32 2 (b) sets out what the provider must do re checks
- if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home, (that's you!) in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, (that's you!) allow that individual to work at the home,



Your turn



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