

Inspection Top Tips

Creating a positive culture in a children's home

February 2025

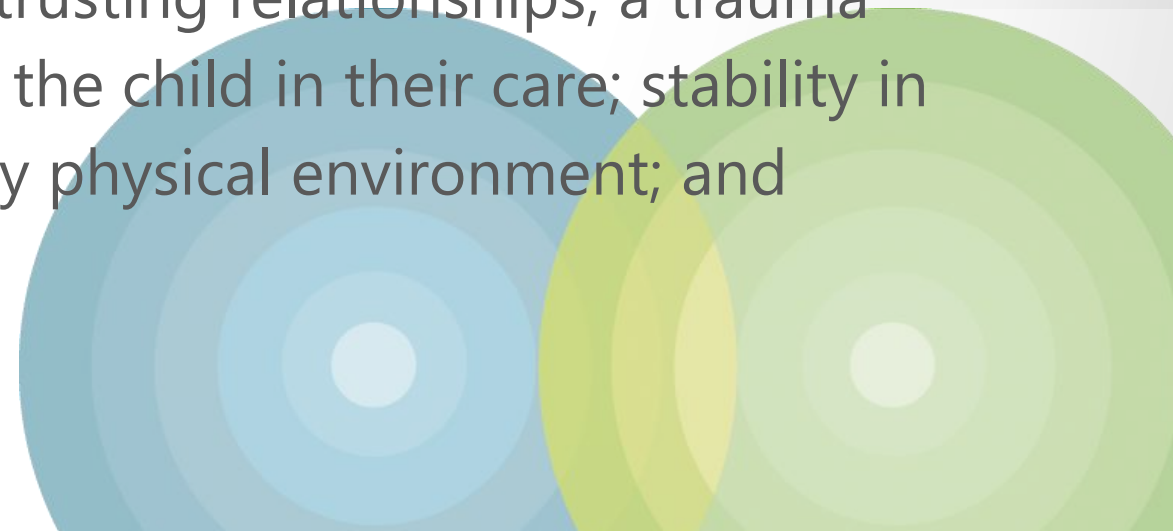


Children's Homes SCIFF

Inspectors should use Positive environments where children can flourish to evaluate how providers, managers and carers create a positive environment for children to live and learn in, and where staff interact positively with children.

This guidance applies to all social care inspections and to the inspection of schools.

There needs to be evidence of positive and trusting relationships; a trauma informed, restorative approach; the voice of the child in their care; stability in the home; child centred leadership; a homely physical environment; and evidence of progress for children.



Exemplar inspection finding

Outstanding Children's Home

Leaders and managers were described as **"inspirational"**, creating **"a culture of high aspiration and positivity"** and being **"extremely ambitious for children."**

This leadership was noted as **influential in changing the lives of those they care for.**

Top tips...

Promote a Sense of Belonging, Trust and Stability

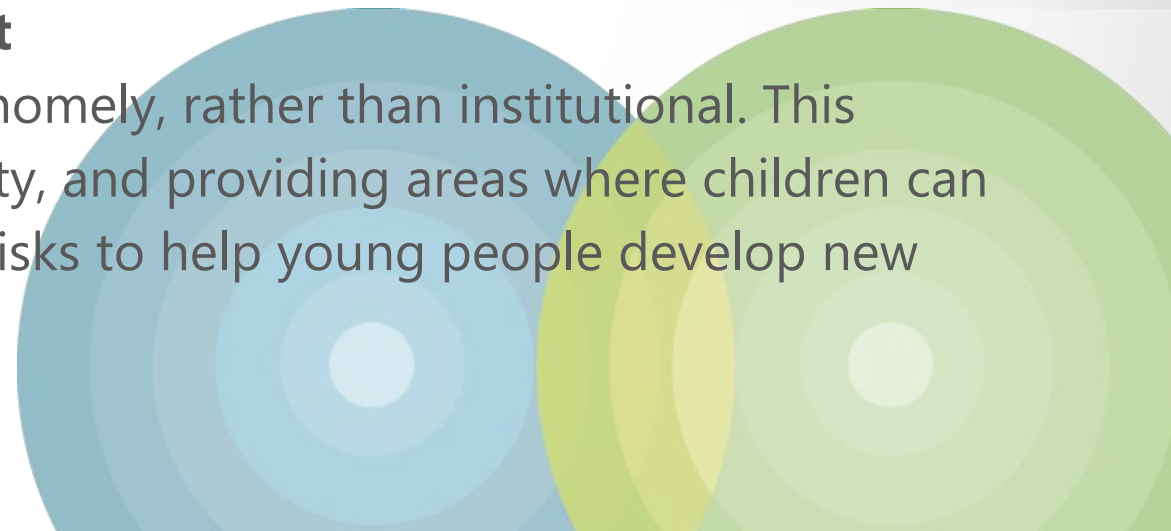
Creating a homely, inclusive, and predictable environment helps children feel secure. This includes involving them in decisions about their care, encouraging participation in daily routines, and ensuring their cultural and individual needs are respected.

See Behaviour as Communication

What does this tell you? What is the young person sharing? How is the young person communicating? When did they first try to tell us? How are we responding in ways that help everyone stay safe, but respect the young person and place them at the centre of what we do?

Create a Safe and Nurturing Physical Environment

The home should feel welcoming, comfortable, and homely, rather than institutional. This includes personalising spaces, ensuring physical safety, and providing areas where children can relax and feel secure. Staff understand and manage risks to help young people develop new skills



Top tips continued...

Challenge Ourselves to Avoid Restraint and Restrictions

Considering every other effective option to respond to the young person's needs. Managers comment and question in records, look for patterns and use supervision and team meetings to reflect on young people's experiences of our support.

A Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE)

The PIE approach aligns closely with the principles in [Positive environments where children can flourish](#). PIE is designed to support emotional well-being by considering the psychological and emotional needs of children, particularly those who have experienced trauma. A positive triangulation of theory into practice

