

Inspection Top Tips

Culture

April 2025



Children's Homes Regulations

Regulation 13.—

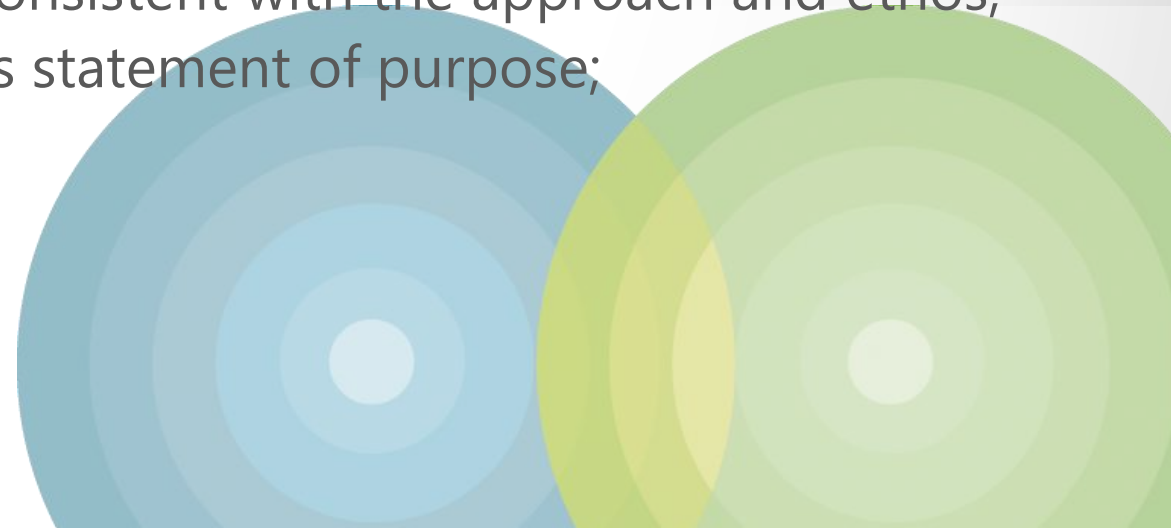
(1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—

(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and

(b) promotes their welfare.

(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

(a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;



Children's Homes Guide

The culture of the home is characterised by high expectations and aspirations for all children. Staff have confidence in managers when reporting and addressing safeguarding matters. The ethos and objectives of the home are demonstrated in practice.

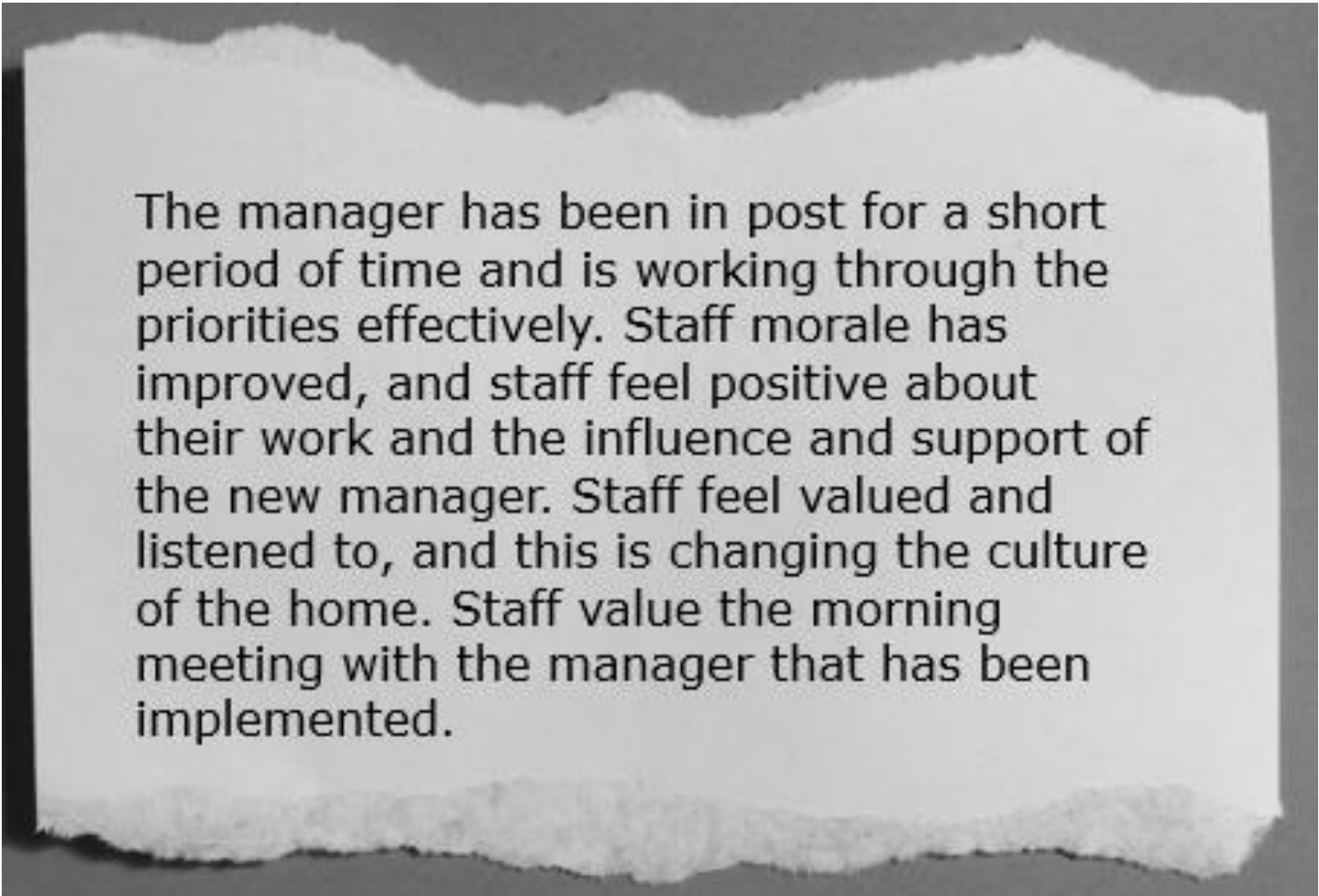


Children's Homes SCCIF

Key elements include:

- The registered manager's knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and plans for future development and how they effectively lead the team and promote a culture of continuous improvement
- It is important that providers and inspectors understand the risks in closed cultures. We expect inspectors to use their professional curiosity to explore with leaders and managers the actions they take where inherent risks exist. If an inspector has any doubts or concerns, they should discuss these with their manager during the inspection.
- Leaders and managers create a culture of high aspiration and positivity. They have high expectations of their staff to change and improve the lives of the children they are responsible for.
- The Care Quality Commission developed the concept of closed cultures. It's project [Closed Cultures](#) explains how some services have inherent risks that need to be mitigated if those living there are to be safe. This work is relevant to some places where children live away from home.

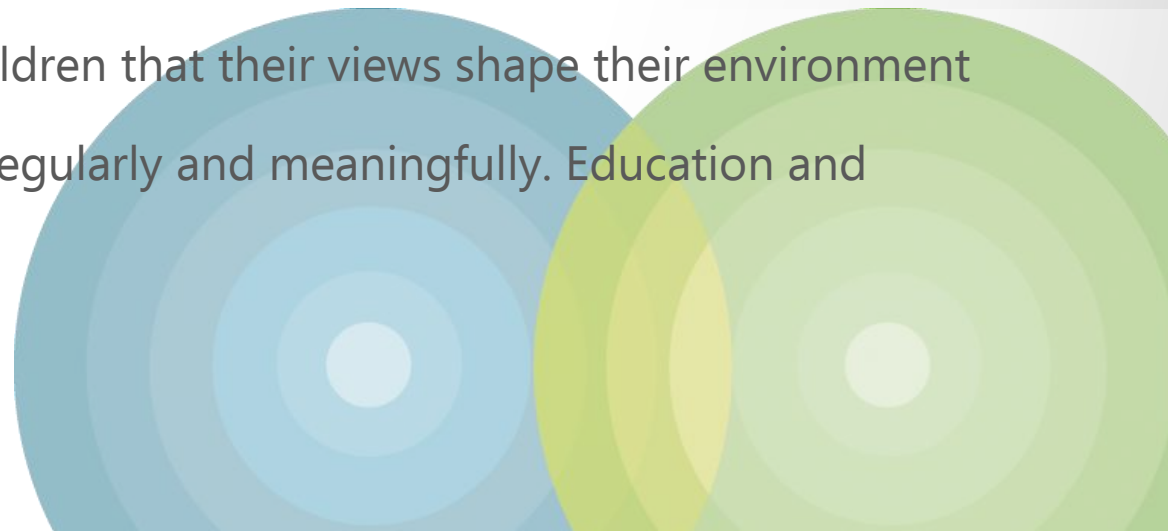


A rectangular piece of white paper with irregular, torn edges is centered on a dark gray background. The paper contains a single paragraph of text in a black, sans-serif font. The text describes a manager's impact on staff morale and organizational culture.

The manager has been in post for a short period of time and is working through the priorities effectively. Staff morale has improved, and staff feel positive about their work and the influence and support of the new manager. Staff feel valued and listened to, and this is changing the culture of the home. Staff value the morning meeting with the manager that has been implemented.

Top tips...

1. **Leaders and managers develop and communicate a clear vision and ethos** for the home that prioritises safety, aspiration, inclusion, and care and embed this vision into everyday practice and decision-making. Leadership and Management Standard (Reg 13), SCCIF
2. **Always promote empathy, curiosity, and unconditional positive regard.** Children thrive in environments where they feel valued, listened to, and emotionally safe. Positive Relationships Standard (Reg 11), SCCIF
3. **Create genuine opportunities for children to have a voice** in how the home runs—from menus to house rules, hold regular children's meetings and act on feedback. Care Planning Regulations and Standards (Regs 7, 8, 9, 12, 14)
4. **A culture of participation creates trust** and shows children that their views shape their environment
5. **Celebrate children's achievements** —big or small — regularly and meaningfully. Education and Enjoyment Standards (Regs 8 & 9)



Questions to consider...

- How do staff and young people describe their relationships with each other?
- How are young people involved in decisions about their care and the running of the home?
- How are mistakes, incidents, or conflicts handled?
- How do staff talk about the young people they care for — especially when things are challenging?

