

# Inspection Top Tips

## Plans

July 2025



# Children's Homes Regulation 14

“ The care planning standard... requires the registered person to ensure ... (c) that each child's relevant plans are followed



# Children's Homes Guide

## **Relevant plans are defined as:**

any placement plan; any care plan; any statement of SEND; any EHC plan; and where the child is a youth justice child any detention placement plan, or any other plan prepared by that child's placing authority in relation to the remand or sentencing of that child.



# Children's Homes Guide

**11.2** Effective care planning and strong working relationships between the staff of the home and the placing authority are essential to the success of placements.

**11.5** The registered person must challenge any placing authority who asks them to accept a child in the absence of a complete and current relevant plan, as the expectation that a placement of a child without the necessary information would go ahead (in circumstances other than an emergency) is inadequate in relation to their role.

# Children's Homes Guide

**11.5 (cont)** It is essential that homes understand what will be required of them before they accept responsibility for a child's placement, to avoid disruption and instability for the child in future and for other children in the home.

**11.10** Significant changes to a looked-after child's care, such as a change of placement, should only take place following a statutory review of their care plan chaired by their Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). The child should be actively involved in these important meetings and supported to express their views, wishes and feelings.

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# Children's Homes Guide

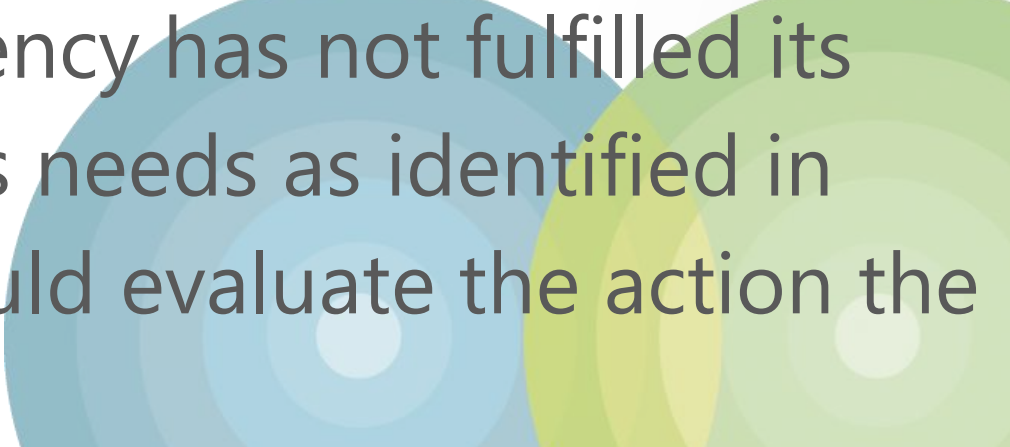
**11.11** For looked-after children, the registered person should seek to ensure that the local authority regularly consults the child and the home about the child's relevant plans. If the child raises concerns about the content of any of their plans, their implementation or the process of review, staff should advocate for the child and seek to ensure that their concerns are addressed.



# Children's Homes SCCIF Good Criteria

All moves into the home are well-planned, at a pace that is suitable for children. Leaders and managers ensure that plans for individual children comprehensively identify their needs and that plans take into account the local authority care plan for each child.

If a placing authority or other agency has not fulfilled its statutory duties or met the child's needs as identified in their care plan, the inspector should evaluate the action the manager has taken.



# Children's Homes SCCIF Good Criteria

Leaders and managers understand the plans for the children and drive the achievement of important milestones, goals and permanence for their futures.

Records reflect their achievements and clearly relate to the plans for their futures.



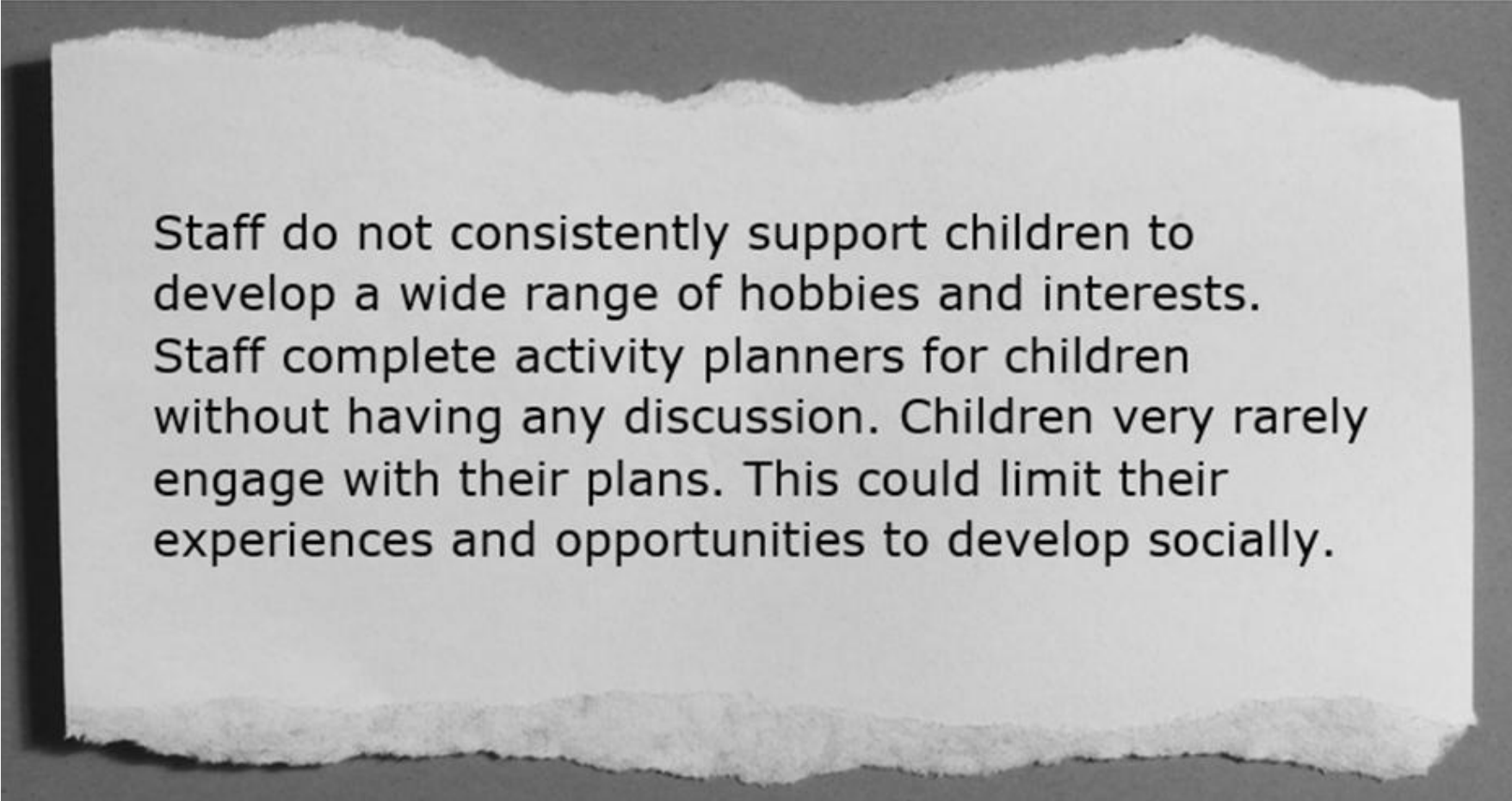


# Children's Homes SCCIF Outstanding Criteria

Highly effective planning manages and minimises risks inside and outside of the home. When children are new to the home, any risks are well understood and are significantly reducing.

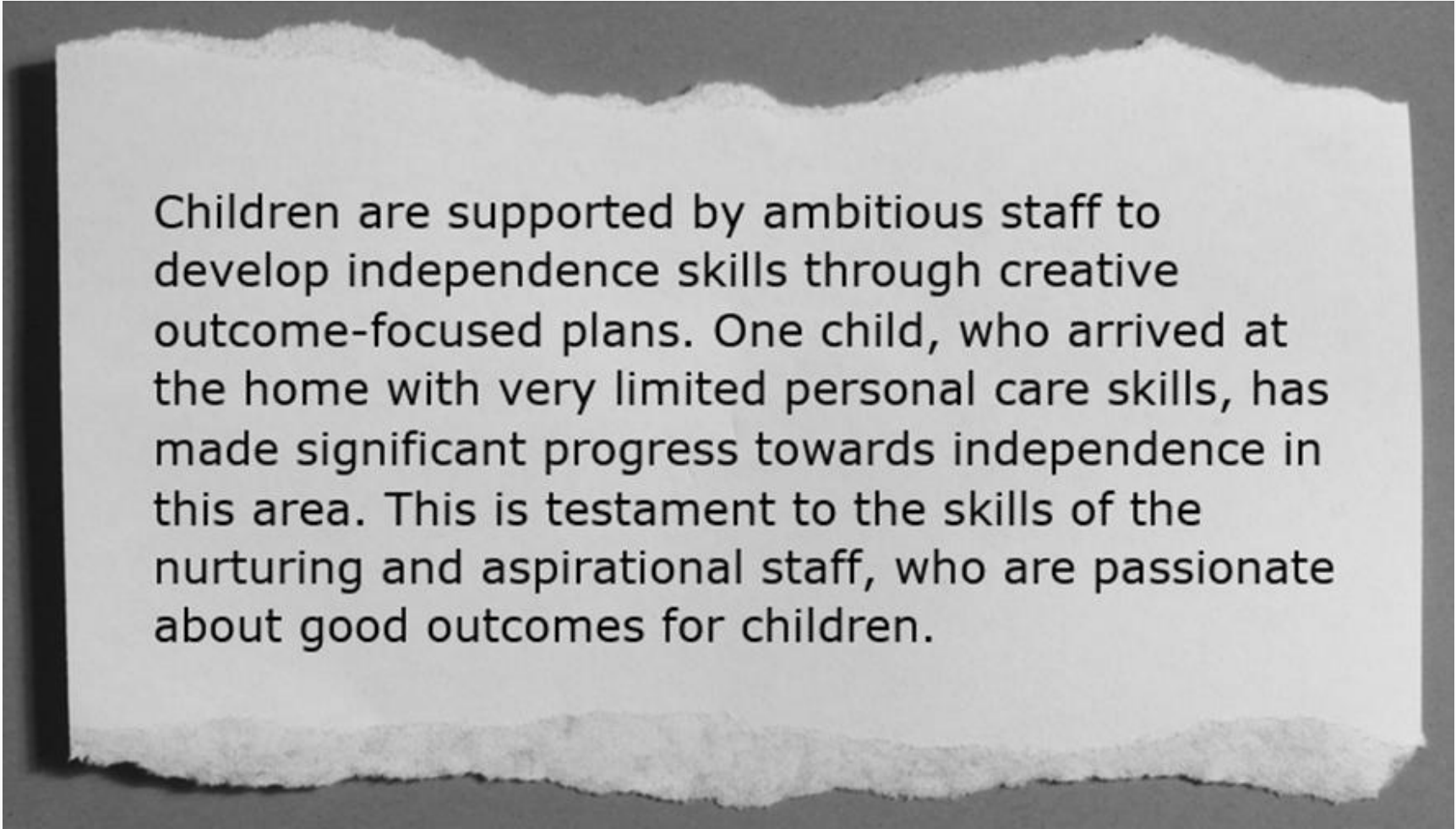


## Ofsted comment from inspection – requires improvement



Staff do not consistently support children to develop a wide range of hobbies and interests. Staff complete activity planners for children without having any discussion. Children very rarely engage with their plans. This could limit their experiences and opportunities to develop socially.

## Ofsted comment from inspection – good

A piece of white paper with a torn, deckled edge is centered on a dark grey background. The paper contains a black and white text block, which is an Ofsted inspection comment. The text is written in a clean, sans-serif font and is left-aligned. It describes how children are supported by staff to develop independence skills through creative outcome-focused plans, highlighting a specific child's progress in personal care skills as a testament to the staff's skills and passion.

Children are supported by ambitious staff to develop independence skills through creative outcome-focused plans. One child, who arrived at the home with very limited personal care skills, has made significant progress towards independence in this area. This is testament to the skills of the nurturing and aspirational staff, who are passionate about good outcomes for children.

# Top tips...

1. **Scrutinise plans when you consider a referral**, ensure they exist(!), relate to the young person, align to your Statement of Purpose and are achievable.
  2. **Set goals and measurable milestones that relate to the plan**, this allows you to identify progress at an earlier stage.
  3. **Track progress**, and where it's not visible, challenge your team, your local authorities, and yourself.
  4. **Escalate issues** where progress is not visible – consider an escalation policy.
  5. **Celebrate success** – capture achievements with young people, your team and in your records.
  6. **Keep plans under review**, set timescales and link into statutory processes.
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