

From: dialogue <news@dialogueltd.co.uk>
Sent: 03 October 2025 09:04
To: Jen Bean
Subject: dialogue - October 2025 - Residential Care Bulletin



Residential Care Bulletin October 2025

dialogue offers lots of support to the residential sector, we regularly review the latest research and publications, and offer a huge variety of training courses to support you and your teams.

In this edition:

- **Children's Commissioner** - Visiting children living in Secure Children's Homes
- **Ofsted update** - Registering children's homes in an emergency
- **Be part of the residential child care community for Children's Homes** - meetings every Wednesday 1-2pm
- **Ofsted update** - Joint targeted area inspections to focus on child sexual abuse in the family environment
- **Inspection Top Tips bulletin** – our weekly bulletin with analysis from live inspection data and suggestions for improvement, together with links to our weekly sessions

- **DfE Research** - Family Routes: children who returned to care
- **October training highlight – Safeguarding Lead**, next course starting on 19th November.
- **NSPCC Learning** - Young people's experiences of suicidal thoughts and feelings.
- **Excellent training** for your independent person, safeguarding lead, RI, NI, RSM, RM and staff.



Visiting children living in Secure Children's Homes

The children's commissioner has published a recent blog on understanding the experiences of children placed in secure homes.

The Commissioner's support service, Help at Hand, has been leading these visits, using the Commissioner's statutory power to enter any accommodation where children are living (other than a private dwelling), and making sure the children living there are given advice, representation and advocacy. In Secure Children's Homes that might involve speaking to their social care team or their solicitor about a specific issue they have since arriving in the home or about when they are leaving to return to the community.

Since March, the CCo team has visited three Secure Children's Homes and spoken to around 40 children between the ages of 13 and 16 to hear their experiences. These are some of the emerging themes they have shared:

- **Placement breakdown:** Before coming to the Secure Children's Home, children experienced many

'placements' that had broken down. They had been told they were 'too complex' or 'high risk'. These children told Help at Hand the most important thing for them was having a stable home to go to when they were released, and a long transition into that home to get them ready for the change.

- **Nowhere else to go:** Children told the team they were worried that they would be kept in secure accommodation not because they needed to be there, but because children's social care could not find an appropriate home for them to go to.
- **Unexpected changes:** Some of the children said that the way they were moved to the Secure Children's Home was sudden and unexplained. They were not told that they were going until the last minute and felt this was unfair.

[Read the Blog here](#)



Registering children's homes in an emergency: priority applications

As we have previously highlighted Ofsted are struggling with the volume of children's home applications, and they have now published their extended guidance on how they will prioritise applications.

Prospective children's homes may be eligible for a prioritised application where:

- There is a specified child awaiting placement
- There is a local "urgent sufficiency need"
- The DfE have provided capital funding
- The home is exclusively in response to the national transfer scheme for unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- The home is in an area with extremely high demand and insufficient placement options
- Step down from secure or hospital settings or similar specialist provision
- Previously incorrectly registered provision (e.g. supported accommodation transitioning to children's homes)

Ofsted have advised they cannot keep to their previously published timescales. They state here prioritised applications will take a minimum of 2 to 6 months, while other new applications are likely to take a minimum of 6 to 18 months.

The guidance sets out the process of applying through your local Ofsted region. If you are needing support with your application, a pre inspection visit, a regulation 44 service or help with decisions don't hesitate to get in touch at admin@dialogueltd.co.uk

[Read the updated Ofsted Guidance](#)



Our membership offer for Children's Homes runs weekly meetings every Wednesday 1-2pm.

The sessions are getting great feedback and there's lots to cover!

Coming up...

- **8th October -the Role of Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)** with Katie Brinkworth
- **15th October** - our fortnightly update session with inspection top tips, research, regs and we'll also have Tom Fradley joining us to review a new semi-independence tool.
- **22nd October -Electronic monitoring in Children's Homes**, with Jacqui McCann
- **29th October** - our fortnightly update session with inspection top tips, research, regs and responses to members queries.

You'll find more membership benefits on our site...

- **Individual members £99+vat.**
- **Whole home membership £395+vat.**
- **Whole organisation membership** get in touch for a quote.

Members' log in here

Find out more & join dialogue today



GOV.UK

Joint targeted area inspections to focus on child sexual abuse in the family environment

Starting in the autumn of 2025, inspections will consider local areas' multi-agency responses to child sexual abuse in the family environment.

Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC), HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP), have today published guidance for the second round of thematic inspections focusing on child sexual abuse in the family environment, as part of their programme of joint targeted area inspections (JTAs).

Inspectors will look at how the police, children's social care, probation services and relevant health services in a local area work together to:

- **respond to children** at risk of, or who are victims of, child sexual abuse in the family environment, at the point of identification
- **assess, plan and make decisions in response to notifications** and referrals of children at risk of, or who are victims of, child sexual abuse in the family environment
- **protect, support, and care for children** at risk of, or who are victims of, child sexual abuse in the family environment
- **prevent children from becoming victims** of child sexual abuse in the family environment

dialogue offer a great training course on [introduction to sexually harmful behaviours](#) with the hugely experienced Maxine Bryant. Our next date running on **1st December 2025**, click below to read more and book a space or [get in touch](#) to discuss whole team training.

[Read the Ofsted press release here](#)

[Read more on Harmful Sexual Behaviours Training](#)



Inspection Top Tips

Our team are combing inspection reports every week for key themes and issues. We've been talking to providers about what you find useful and we'll now be highlighting elements that Ofsted identify as great practice, and flagging some of the pitfalls, together with ideas to think about for your setting.

In the last 4 weeks we covered:

- Moving On
- Prevent
- Promoting Emotional Wellbeing
- Approach to Key working

All the resources and back catalogue are available in the [members' area](#)



Department
for Education

Family Routes: children who returned to care

The Department for Education published a report last week exploring the stability of permanence arrangements, factors that predict disruption and what happened after children returned to care.

Family Routes is a longitudinal study intended to track the needs, experiences and outcomes of children leaving care on an adoption order (AO) or special guardianship order (SGO) in England.

The data analysis strand examines Department for Education administrative data from 2002 to 2023 to examine long-term outcomes for children in permanence placements.

This report focuses on the stability of permanence placements and children who return to care after an adoption or special guardianship order was made.

[Read the report here](#)



Safeguarding Lead training

It's crucial your leaders and managers have a thorough understanding of safeguarding.

Whilst safeguarding training is a key requirement for all, this learning often does not provide the further skills around analysis and communication to feel confident in such important judgement calls when staff and young people depend on us. Our course is in depth, aligned to the guidance, and built on the experience of hundreds of

leaders who have previously completed the course.

This group 5 training course explores in depth process, culture, risk assessment, the organisation and a root cause analysis approach to reflection tied closely to the regulations and inspection framework but absolutely focused on the experience of children and young people in care and supported accommodation settings. The course links day to day practice with the strategic view required in safe organisations.

Great as an initial course or as a 2-year refresher as we adapt to the group and build on strengths.

Suitable for: This course is suitable for RMs, RSMs, RIs, NIs, deputies, assistant managers, regional leads and other key safeguarding and leadership staff.

The trainer:

Jacqui McCann is a Safeguarding Consultant, Accredited Trainer, and an experienced Independent Visitor. She holds a level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management with Children and Young People and is currently studying MA Professional Practice with Children and Young People. Throughout the various studies Jacqui has completed, she has developed training packages to improve practice at all levels of individuals working with children who are looked after. Jacqui has specialised in working with children who have been impacted by exploitation and is an advocate to ensure their voices are heard and considered in decisions made around their care.

This two-day course is delivered over 4x3-hour sessions via zoom and costs £264+vat, reduced to **£199+vat for members**.

Our next training dates being delivered virtually, are running on the following dates:

9:30am-12:30pm on 19th & 26th November and 3rd & 10th December 2025.

You can read full details and make a booking for this date by clicking on the button below or by contacting one of our team at admin@dialogueltd.co.uk

[Book Safeguarding Lead training](#)



Young people's experiences of suicidal thoughts and feelings

All young people will face challenges and stressors in life. For some, these difficulties are so hard to cope with that they may, at times, lead to suicidal thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

This recently published briefing from NSPCC Learning uses insight from Childline counselling sessions to highlight experiences where the young person was seeking support from Childline outside of a crisis and not acting on behaviours or plans to end their life.

This briefing shares young people's varied experiences of suicidal thoughts and feelings, including:

- how young people spoke about and described their suicidal thoughts and feelings
- help seeking for suicidal thoughts and feelings
- unhelpful responses from others after seeking support
- young people's use of coping mechanisms and techniques.

[Read the briefing here](#)

Upcoming Training Courses

Face to face training, virtual, at your setting or in our venue, we're ready to support you and your team.

Here's some of our upcoming courses, to see a full range of courses and memberships, please chose from the relevant options below:

training for Residential Care

training for Supported Accommodation Providers

Managing Allegations (starting on 6th November)

Safer Recruitment training (starting on 12th November)

Safeguarding Lead (starting on 19th November)

(NEW) Introduction to Harmful Sexual Behaviours (on 1st December)

Young People going missing (on 15th December)

Dynamic Risk training (starting on 13th January)

Regulation 44 and Standard 3 (starting on 15th January)

Safeguarding Supervision (starting on 15th January)

RI training (starting on 20th January)

(Children's Homes) Managing the Inspection Process (on 28th Jan)

Reg45 Quality Review (on 30th January)

Want training on something else?

For a full list of training topics to support the residential sector, please visit www.dialogueltd.co.uk/residential

We also design bespoke courses to meet the needs of you and your staff. Do get in touch to discuss.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Jen Bean
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Who are we?

dialogue provides training, coaching & mentoring, consultancy, safeguarding audits and independent visiting services for children's homes, residential schools and supported living providers. We prefer to work closely with you to identify areas of need and devise bespoke packages that demonstrably improve the lives of young people in your care. Training for managers, residential workers and other staff includes supervision, safeguarding, care planning & analysis, recording and much more.

[Click here](#) for more information.

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