

Inspection Top Tips

Planning and caring for children at ligature risk

November 2025



Children's Homes Regulations



(1) The health and well-being standard is that –

- (a) the health and well-being needs of children are met;
- (b) children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being;



Regulation 10

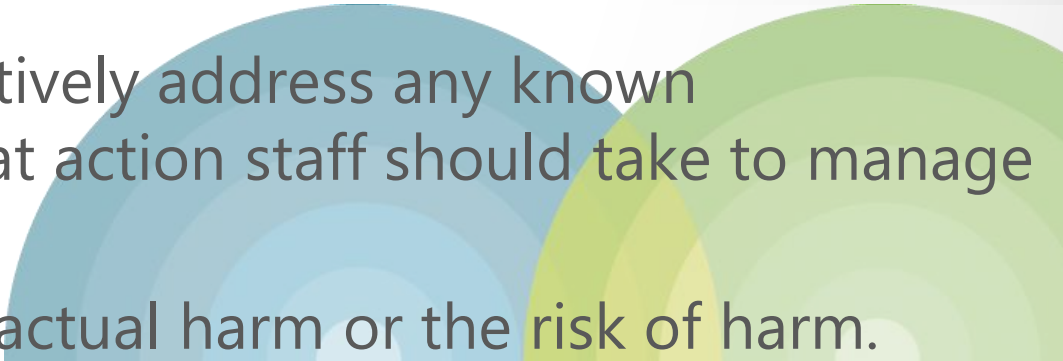


Children's Homes Guide

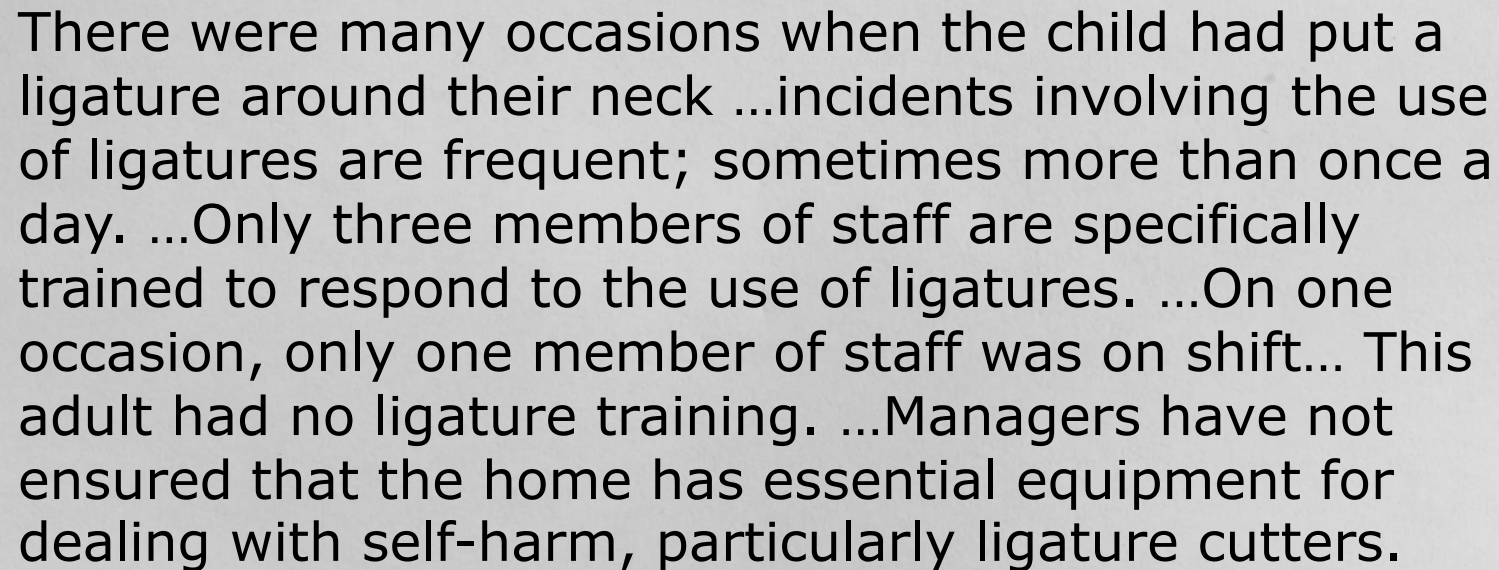
9.19. The policy on protection of children from abuse and neglect should include arrangements in relation to dealing with allegations involving staff in the home, e-safety and to counter risks of self-harm and suicide.



Children's Homes SCCIF Key Elements

- Children feel protected and are protected from harm, including from neglect, abuse, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, accidents, self-harm, bullying and radicalisation.
 - There is a strong and proactive response from all those working with children that reduces actual harm or the risk of harm to them, including from self-harm.
 - That response includes regular and effective contact and planning with the child's allocated social worker and their family, if this is appropriate and in accordance with plans for their future.
 - Individual up-to-date risk assessments effectively address any known vulnerabilities for each child and set out what action staff should take to manage the risks.
 - There are plans and help in place to reduce actual harm or the risk of harm.
- 

Ofsted comment from inspection – Requires Improvement

A piece of white paper with deckled edges is centered on a dark gray background. The paper contains a paragraph of text in a black, sans-serif font.

There were many occasions when the child had put a ligature around their neck ...incidents involving the use of ligatures are frequent; sometimes more than once a day. ...Only three members of staff are specifically trained to respond to the use of ligatures. ...On one occasion, only one member of staff was on shift... This adult had no ligature training. ...Managers have not ensured that the home has essential equipment for dealing with self-harm, particularly ligature cutters.

Top Tips...

1. **Regularly map out all potential ligature anchor points in the home:** fixtures, fittings, furniture, personal items.
2. **Use a ligature-point recording template** to document risks, existing controls, and action plans.
3. **Risk assess the building to reduce or remove high-risk ligature points** where possible, while balancing the child's privacy and dignity.
4. **Ensure emergency equipment is in place:** ligature cutters, first-aid equipment, clear access to resuscitation tools, and staff know where they are.



Questions to consider...

- Does every child at risk of self-harm/ligature have an up-to-date individual risk assessment and safety plan?
- Has the physical environment been audited for ligature points, and are mitigation actions recorded and reviewed?
- Are ligature cutters (or other appropriate equipment) readily accessible, and do all staff know where they are and how to use them?
- How often do staff receive refresher training on self-harm and ligature risk?
- After any ligature incident, is there a structured debrief, review, and amendment to risk plans?

