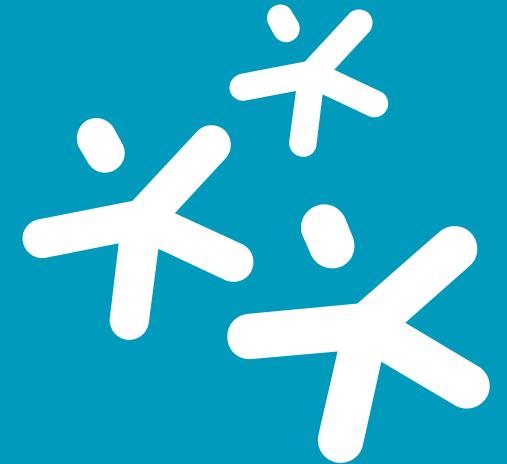


Regulation 44 Visitor's network

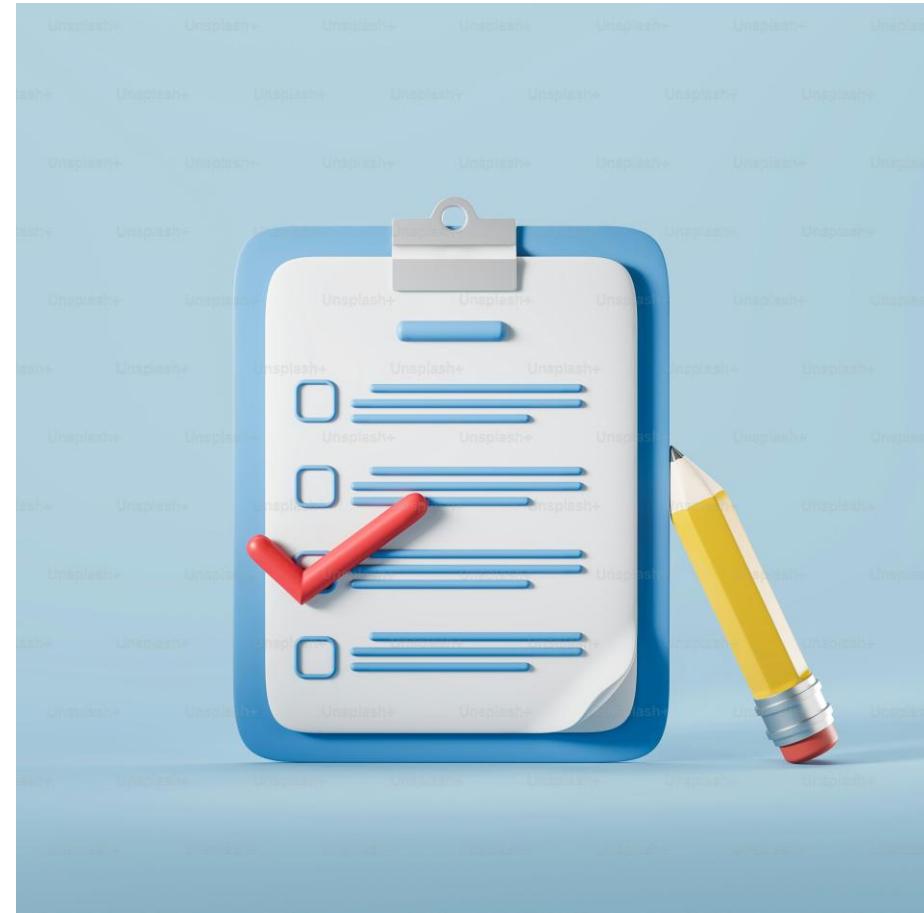
December 3 2024

Helen Humphreys HMI
Specialist Advisor for Residential Care



Agenda

- Feedback from the regions
- Answers to questions submitted in advance
- Update- post Big Listen and DfE reforms
- Questions from 'the floor'



Purpose of visits

- Part of the safeguarding network for children
- Provide an opportunity for an independent person to visit the home so that children and staff can raise any concerns
- The report should include the IPs opinion, on whether
 - ❖ Children are effectively safeguarded
 - ❖ The conduct of the home promotes children's well being



Positive feed back

Some very good robust reports that are concise, evaluative and clear in recording actions and progress of children.

Some visitors who visit in the evening and weekend to ensure that they can speak and spend time with children

Some reports indicate IPs spending time with children month in month out, with a real sense of rapport and relationship. In these instances, it was more likely that children would share their views about the care they receive.

Some IPs visited at mealtimes, before the school run, or when they knew the RM would not be present, to observe how adults support the children throughout key times of the day, or when different staff were in charge.

IPs who were clear about the purpose of the visit and why they had visited at these specific moments in the child's day.



Areas for development

- Visits routinely carried out when the children are not there
- Visits which routinely include most of the visit, 'off site' accessing electronic recording systems remotely
- Reports which indicate that the IP only spoke with the manager
- Reports that state, 'records not available' – but not why?



Areas for development

- Some visits appear to becoming 'mini SCCIF inspections, case tracking one child, splitting out the quality standards and so not looking at safeguarding each month, this style of visit does not always meet the regulation'
- Small number of reports where the IP has said that children are not safeguarded, not said why, and no evidence that Ofsted/LA were contacted
- Reports received late, although providers should see the report before submitted, it is the IPs responsibility to make sure that are sent to Ofsted on time



Questions



Regulation 44 (7) (b) says the independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to—



upon request, the local authority for the area in which the home is located;



Who should be requesting this? The LA or the home. A home is asking me to send it routinely but in my view it should not be sent willy nilly as it does contain identifiable information. I feel it should only be sent if the LA request it for a particular reason.



It is for the LA to request the report

Questions



I feel a bit cross that Ofsted visited a home that I Reg 44 for and after two days rated the home good and the only recommendation they made was that the Regulation 44 visit should be more robust. How is it that they were robust and found no areas for improvement but expect my 3-4 hour visit to find areas for improvement? How is that fair?



If you could provide me with the details of the home, I will look into this

Questions

- Should homes that suspend their registration temporarily still have Reg 44 visits?
- The SCCIF says
- These reports provide crucial information about the safety, welfare and progress of children. We therefore require that the independent person or provider sends the report for HMCI to us before the end of the month that follows the month in which the visit took place. **This requirement still applies when there are no children living in the home.**

Questions



Would it be appropriate for a visitor to contact Ofsted to seek their views as part of the Regulation 44 visit?



The SCCIF says-



If the independent person has serious concerns about the safety and welfare of children arising from their visit, they should contact Ofsted immediately by either contacting the assigned inspector or via EYRegulatoryandSocialCare@ofsted.gov.uk



The independent person should notify us if they consider that the provider has attempted to make amendments to the report that are not consistent with their findings or original report.

Questions



I visit a newly registered home that in my view was outstanding. At their inspection they were told they could not be outstanding at their first inspection because they had not been open long enough. How long do homes need to be open before they could be considered to be outstanding?



Homes can be and are judged outstanding at the first inspection. If you provide me with the details, I will look into this.

Questions



When we visit homes and there are children on DOL's and doors need to be locked and there are other children not on a DOL's , is that ok as long as they will be allowed to leave if they want to.



The manager should have arrangements in place so that children who are 'free to leave' can do so, as well as making sensible arrangements for the security of the property.

Questions

- We are being asked to undertake more and more 'Reg 44' visits to unregulated homes. It feels uncomfortable not being able to share the reports with Ofsted/ the inspector leading on registration. Can you say a little bit about Ofsted's view on this.
- A provider who is operating an unregistered CH is committing an offence. People who are linked to an unregistered setting could be considered as 'aiding and abetting' that offence
- We have no legal basis to receive those reports as they relate to an illegal home. We would expect any professional that found homes operating illegally to tell us.
- If you have information that means you believe children are at risk, you should contact the placing LA
- If the provider has applied to register and you have information that you consider Ofsted should be aware of, you can contact us by using the EYRegulatoryandSocialCare@ofsted.gov.uk mail box

Questions



“My question is whether Ofsted feels it is appropriate for a probationer with no previous knowledge of working with children in residential care, to be the Person in Charge with the only other staff member present being an agency worker in the absence of the RI, the deputies or any other experienced staff. This will be the second time I will be raising this concern with the RM but she just disagrees in her response and the RI generally agrees with her response”



It is the provider's responsibility to ensure that the home is suitably staffed to meet the needs of the children placed.



If your concerns are not acknowledged, you should contact the placing authority or Ofsted as we would want to know about this concern

The Ofsted Big Listen



Building a better Ofsted

—..



Reset



Refine



Rebuild

our priorities

our practices

relationships



Social care



Who we heard from about social care

- Of the 16,033 people who responded to our main consultation, 15% answered questions about children's social care.
- More than 500 children who said they had a social worker shared their views through our children's consultation.
- We held focus group panels with care-experienced children and young people.
- We heard, through commissioned research, from over 1,700 people who work in the social care sector.

What we heard from children about social care

— • •

“I think everyone needs an Ofsted inspection to make sure provision standards are maintained in the face of challenges.”
(care leaver)



Children told us that the top priorities for Ofsted inspections should be:

- safety
- happiness
- support with education
- how involved children are in decisions about them.

What else we heard

- Individuals and organisations representing children told us:
 - children's happiness and safety should be a core aim for Ofsted
 - the focus should be more on children and young people's experiences and progress, not on providers' compliance with regulations.
- The majority of professionals who work directly with children were positive about our inspections but shared frustrations about the over-simplicity of the single-word judgement for overall effectiveness.
- Representative organisations shared the same view on single-word judgements and felt that they were subject to too many inspections from a range of inspectorates.



What we will do

- We want to make sure that the changes we make are right for children and the sectors we inspect and regulate.
- We will be removing the overall judgments in all remits, but this will take time and be on different timelines.
- In SCCIF it is more complex as we don't have an aggregate judgement.
- We also want to align with government reforms where we can, to minimise change.
- We will be making some interim changes to the SCCIF to reflect homes that look after children with multiple needs in April 25,
- We will work closely with the sector as we progress.



DfE Reform Programme

- Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive
- Breaking down barriers to opportunity
- November 2024
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-helping-families-thrive>

Any questions



Ofsted on the web and on social media

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