



dialogue

Talking about - fit person interviews

Chris Freestone .
Dialogue

working together...

confidentiality

respect

diversity of opinion can be enriching

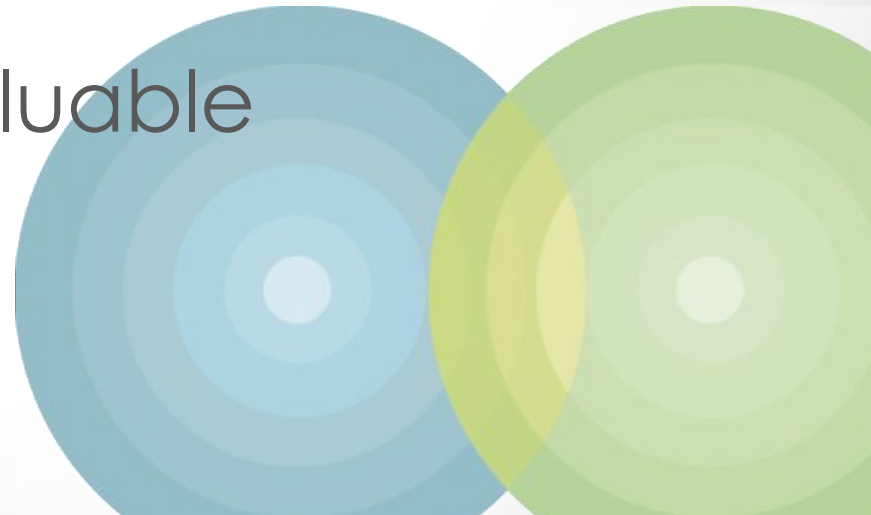
look for the benefits of an alternative opinion

positive challenge

naïve questions are valuable

enjoy ourselves

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focus

Themes for the session to be drawing on skills , knowledge and suitability.

- regs , standards and SCCIF threaded through.
- being able to give examples.
- being able to speak to “what would you do if.....” with confidence

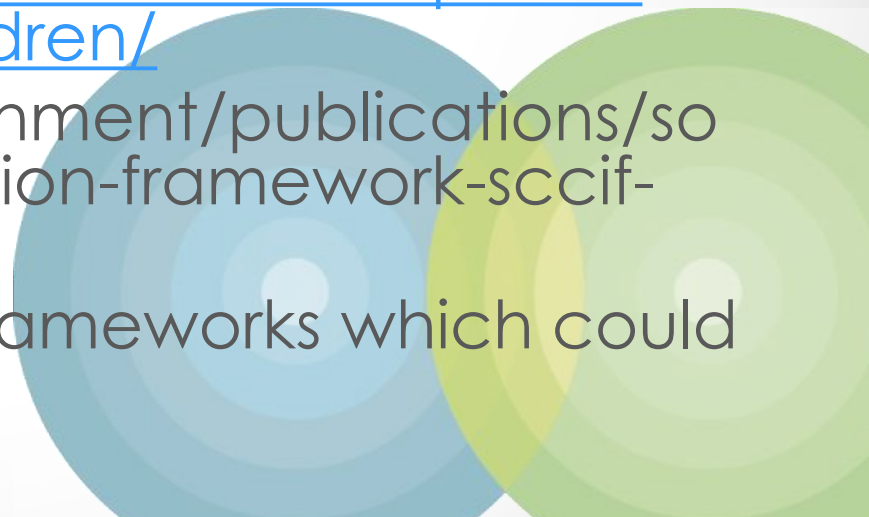
Areas we will consider

- part 1-leadership and management, culture , supporting staff, developing practice including training, supervision and appraisal
- part 2- child's voice, child centred practice, working with other professionals
- part 3 – safeguarding and risk management
- part 4- continuous improvement
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Frameworks and regulation

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/Guide_to_Childrens_Home_Standards_inc_quality_standards_Version_1.17_FINAL.pdf
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-accessible>
- <https://socialcareinspection.blog.gov.uk/2025/03/18/changes-to-our-sccif-guidance-to-improve-stability-for-vulnerable-children/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-care-common-inspection-framework-sccif-childrens-homes>
- See appendix 1 for other frameworks which could apply
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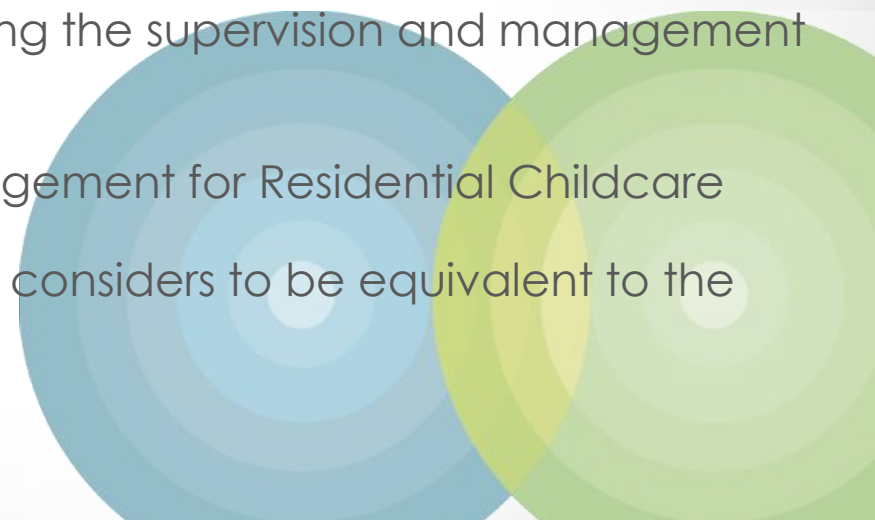
Reg 26

(1) A person may only manage a children's home if—

- (a) the person is of integrity and good character;
- (b) having regard to the size of the home, its statement of purpose, and the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children—
 - (i) the person has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children; and
 - (ii) the person is physically and mentally fit to manage the home; and
- (c) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the person in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b)(i), a person has the appropriate experience and qualification if the person has—

- (a) within the last 5 years, worked for at least 2 years in a position relevant to the residential care of children;
- (b) worked for at least one year in a role requiring the supervision and management of staff working in a care role; and
- (c) by the relevant date, attained—
 - (i) the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 5 Diploma”); or
 - (ii) a qualification which the registered provider considers to be equivalent to the Level 5 Diploma.



Reg 26 and reg 29

(3) The relevant date is—

- (a) in the case of a person who starts managing a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 3 years after the date on which that person started managing a home; or
- (b) in the case of a person who was managing a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2017.

(4) The registered provider may defer the relevant date if the person—

- (a) does not manage, or has not managed, a home for a prolonged period; or
- (b) manages, or has managed, a home on a part-time basis.

Continuing professional development: registered person and responsible individual

29.—(1) If the registered provider is an individual, the individual must undertake such continuing professional development as is necessary to ensure that the individual has the skills needed for carrying on the children's home.

(2) If the registered provider is an organisation, the organisation must ensure that the responsible individual undertakes such continuing professional development as is necessary to ensure that the responsible individual has the skills needed for supervising the management of the home.

(3) If the registered provider is a partnership, the partnership must ensure that one of the partners undertakes such continuing professional development as is necessary to ensure that the partner has the skills needed for carrying on the home.

(4) The registered manager must undertake such continuing professional development as is necessary to ensure that the registered manager has the skills needed for managing the home.



Possible opening questions / ideas

- Do you understand the legalities and responsibilities of being registered, and can you talk about this?
- How do your knowledge , skills and experience prepare you to become a registered manager?
- Reflect upon the last inspection judgement for the home (if appropriate) and your initial view in relation to taking the home forward
- What is your leadership style?



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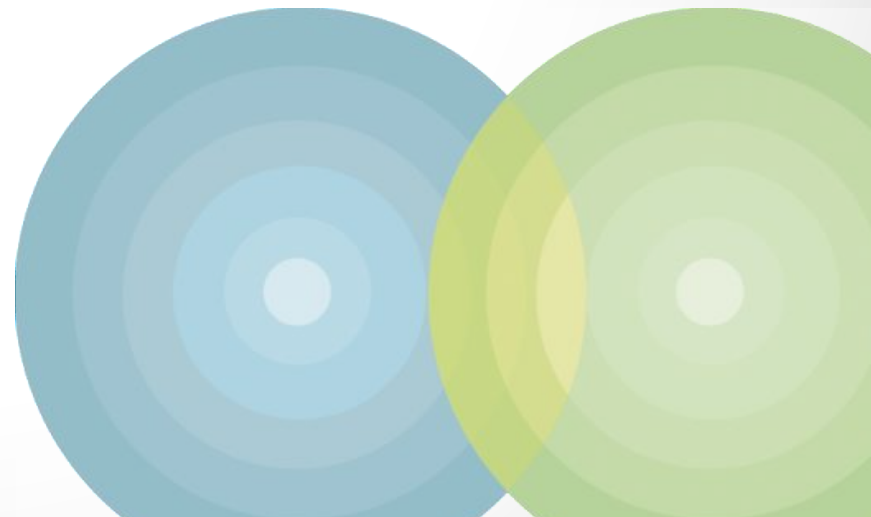


Fit Person reflection part 1

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Thinking about-

Leadership and management, culture , supporting staff, developing practice including training, supervision and appraisal.



Regulation 13 – leadership and management

(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;
- (b) ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;
- (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;
- (d) ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;
- (e) ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;
- (f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;
- (g) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—
- (i) research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and
- (ii) feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and
- (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.



Ideas for questions

1. How do you ensure that the team share the same values as you and ensure they are working in accordance with your homes' Statement of Purpose?
2. How do your skills and experience prepare you for managing the home ?
3. How will you set the culture of your home ?
4. How would you know if your culture was changing and a closed culture was emerging?
5. Give examples of the way in which you have dealt with staff challenge?
6. How do you monitor supervision and for what reason? What may it tell you ?

These questions all start with you....

- your expectations , vision , values and the culture of the home.
- Your Statement of Purpose and its' application
- Your workforce development plan and its' impact on the practice you observe
- The child's lived experience of your home



- the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterises an institution or organization
- the set of values, conventions, or social practices associated with a particular field, activity, or societal characteristic
- creating a culture of safety means embedding safeguarding into everything an organisation does.
- embedding a culture of safety starts at the very top of the organisation with the senior managers pledging absolute commitment and support, including ensuring the resources are available to make it happen.
- **DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS? Is this your organisation? Can you explain and evidence this ? Can you define YOUR culture?**

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What does your culture look and feel like?

Open discussion

- Open/grounded in safeguarding
- Transparent
- Aspirational
- Accountable
- Grounded in training and CPD
- Effective supervision and appraisal
- Child centred/child's voice
- Monitoring
- QA
- Continuous development
- Code of conduct
- Policies and procedures
- Accurate and effective record keeping
- ANYTHING ELSE



How would you know it was changing ?

OPEN DISCUSSION

Poor experience of children who should be safeguarded and their well being supported and promoted

Weak leadership and management

Limited or no external input or review

Children are at risk of deliberate or unintentional harm

Children / staff are unable or afraid to speak up for themselves and are not listened to if they do

High levels of dependence in relationships

High staff turnover

Cliques form

Issues not addressed

“This is the way we do it....”

Staff concerns not addressed

High use of agency

Training poor



Managing challenge

- One of the most difficult areas of professional practice.
- Remember “fight or flight “ is occurring for you and probably for others too !

OPEN DISCUSSION



Some things to think about....

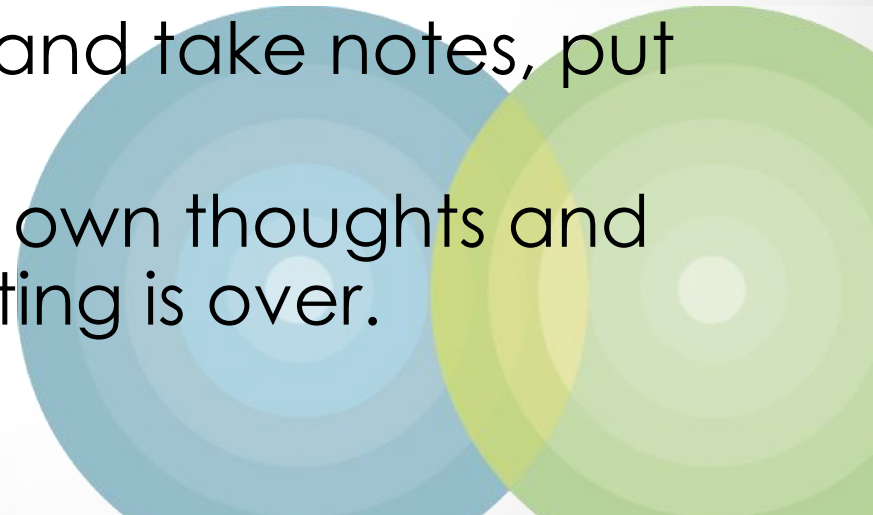
- Plan for the most appropriate environment if possible
- Communicate clearly- gather your thoughts , don't rush or be rushed.
- Be organised- have your information in one place, have everything to hand .
- Be precise.
- Be honest.
- Have your evidence clearly set out and TRIANGULATED



Some things to think about..

- Stick to any given timescale for the meeting.
- Always aim to resolve/ mitigate potential conflict by the end of the meeting .
- Remember- it can be disorienting to learn that people don't always see us or the services we lead the way we see ourselves. This can challenge us
- Reflect back where there is confusion .
- Listen for understanding and take notes, put plans in place
- Take time to gather your own thoughts and reactions when the meeting is over.

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Fit Person reflection- part 2

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Thinking about-

child's voice, child centred practice, working with other professionals.

Core to the culture of your home and the regs/
standards.

Regulation 5 - engaging with the wider system to
ensure children's needs are met

Regulation 7 - The children's views, wishes and feelings
standard

Both regulations are core to all aspects of the
provision.

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Ideas for questions

- How do you know that the young people in your care feel loved?
- How will you ensure that you hear the voices of children and young people in the home whatever their individual communication needs?
- How will you make sure that you and the team understand how the young persons experiences impact their behaviour and voice?
- Can you give me an example of when you have felt that another stake holder (e.g. the LA) are not holding the child's views and wishes at heart ? What did you do about this ?
- How will you work with the LA in order to support education for a child in your care ?
- How will you capture children's low-level concerns and act upon them ?
- How will you work effectively with other professionals and stakeholders?



Child's voice

- Can you show that children are heard in your home formally and informally?
- Can you show that they have influence in the home?
- That they are directly involved in decision making about their care and education?

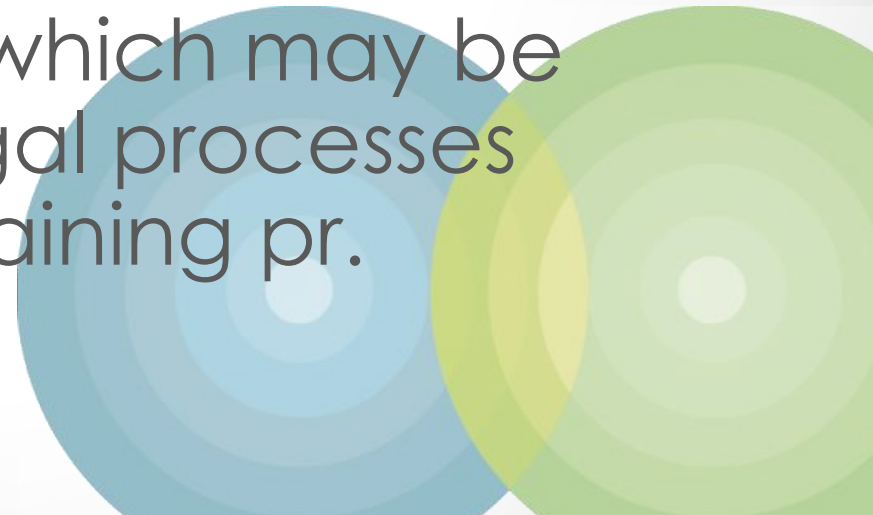


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Child's voice

- Does your Statement of Purpose and workforce development plan reflect your support for children , their wishes , views and feelings ?
- How do you work with the families and carers of the children and young people whom you support ?
- Think about the law which may be involved e.g. S31, legal processes ongoing, parents retaining pr.

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Child's voice

- Supporting children and young people who have a communication delay or difference and may need specific equipment to support their communication
- Supporting children and young people from different cultures and for whom English may NOT be their first language



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Fit Person reflection –part 3

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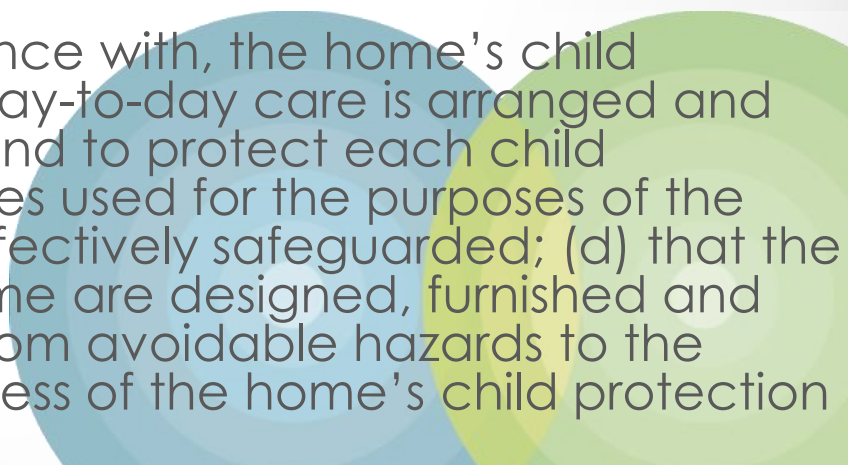
Thinking about...

- **safeguarding and risk management- Regulation 12**
 - Core principles underpinning practice and embedded in the running of the home
 - Aligns with the SoP, workforce development plan and observed practice
 - Aligns with supervision and performance management
 - Aligns with the child's voice
 - Aligns with decision making and planning / support care as a part of a multi agency approach



12. (1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff

- (i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;
 - (ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe;
 - (iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;
 - (iv) manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;
 - (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;
 - (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and
 - (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;
- (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; (c) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded; (d) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health; and (e) that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.
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Ideas for questions.

- How do you safeguard a young person and manage risk around them being missing from the home ?
- Have you got any examples of the ways in which you have managed safeguarding concerns?
- For what reasons would you submit a Regulation 40 notification to Ofsted?
- How would you deal with pressure from a senior member of the organisation to place a child ?
- What role will supervision play in managing safeguarding in the home ?
- Describe your understanding of contextual safeguarding
- Describe your understanding of the role of the location review for the home
- Describe the process of safer recruitment. Why is this so important?
- Describe how you will maintain the stability of the placement?



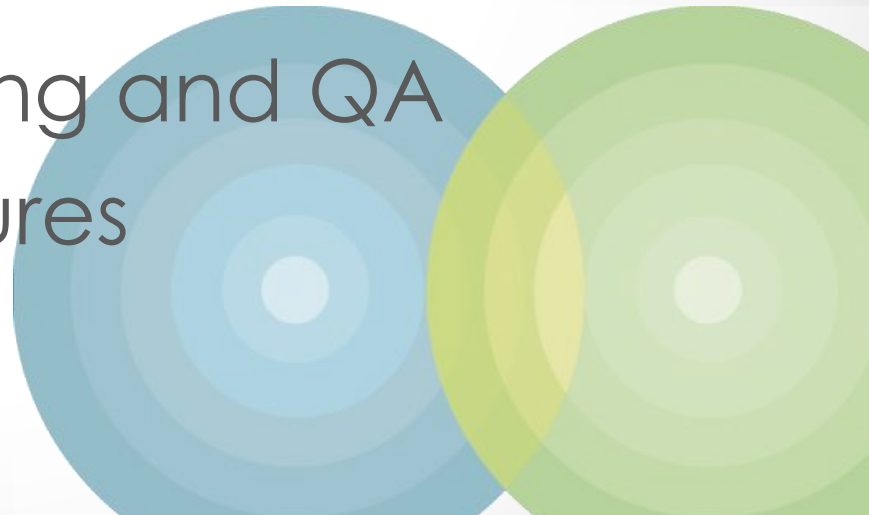
Think about....

- How you develop and maintain / embed your safeguarding culture
- Role of safer recruitment/using bank and agency staff
- Role of supervision
- Role of appraisal
- Role of effective debrief
- Role of training and development
- Role of the Reg 44 Visitor



Think about.....

- Role of the Reg 45 report and plan
- Role of the RI
- Role of the commissioning Authority , SW and other professionals
- Role of the family / carers
- Reg 40s and their use
- Role of your monitoring and QA
- Policies and procedures



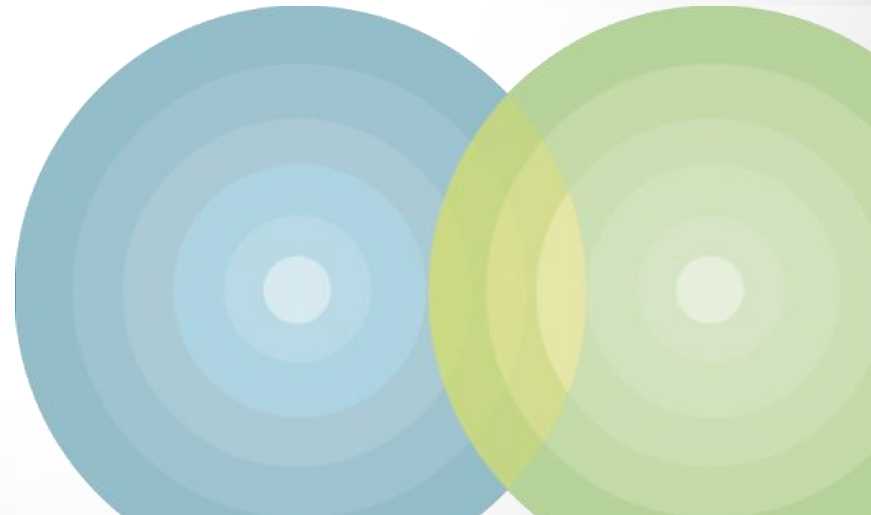
Think about...

- **At the centre – the role of the child and their voice, views and involvement.**



Think about.....

- Plans
- protocols and processes e.g individual missing from home plans
- Managing risk / assessments
- ANYTHING ELSE?



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Fit Person reflection- part 4

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Thinking about.....

- **continuous improvement.**
- The SCCIF is always useful to cross reference across all of the standards and particularly so as you develop and move towards an outstanding grade
- The SCCIF language moves from process/management into much more qualitative expressing your leadership skills e.g. aspirational , highest quality, best possible , never giving up .



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Ideas for questions

- How will you continuously improve and develop the home ? How will you know if you are being successful?
- How will you measure the impact of your love , care and support for and with children ?
- What role will your Reg 44 Visitor have in your development of the home ?
- How will you develop an effective reflective / lessons learned culture in the home ?
- What support is available to you? What role will supervision play in your development ?
- How will you continue your own professional development?
- How will you work effectively with the RI?
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Developing the home

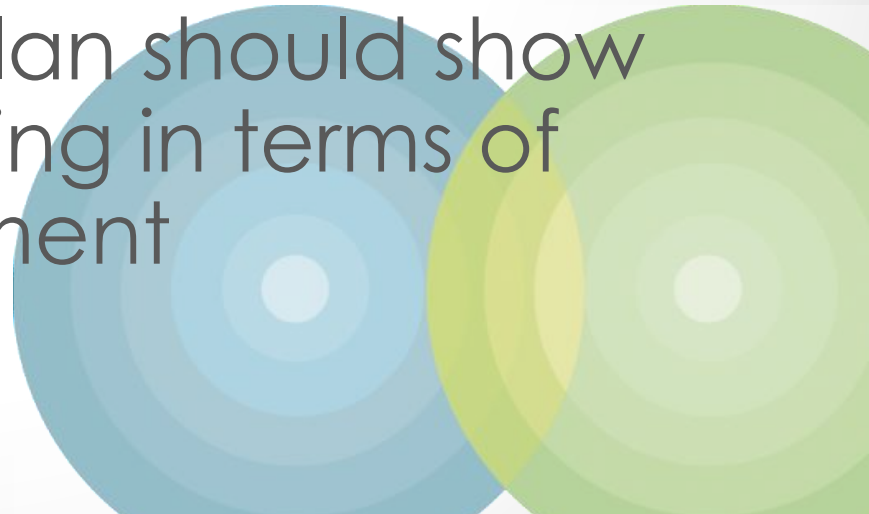
- So much of this comes back to your vision , values and culture
- Keeping up to date- do you ? How ?
- OPEN Discussion



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Taking a whole view

- Although I have tried to pull the areas into groups for ease of discussion , none of them sit alone.
- All standards and regulations cross reference and your monitoring should evidence the holistic and integrated practice in your home.
- Your development plan should show the path you are taking in terms of continuous improvement



Taking a whole view

- Your interview is the opportunity to show that you hold the vision for your home as a leader and manager.



Checking it out- your observation is key

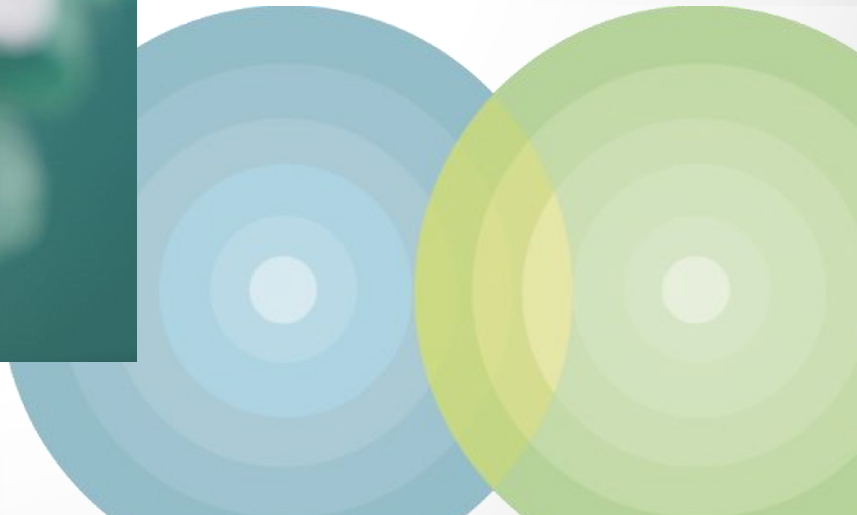
- What are you seeing? Observation is key- homely , relationships , communication , interaction , respect , dignity , value , positive relationships , trust.....
- What are your senses telling you? What are you hearing? Simple things like the smell in the house, warmth , laughter, noise , welcoming.....
- Can you see the links – education , health , other professionals . Can you see their impact in the child's support and progress?
- What do the records tell you?
- What does supervision , appraisal and line management tell you?
- Most importantly – what do children tell you? What do families say?
- WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR FINDINGS?
- What next- have you got the culture right? Check the SCIFF, standards and regulations.
- TIME FOR A PLAN?





Thank you- any
queries or
questions?

Chris Freestone



Legislation : appendix 1

- Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the Quality Standards 2015
- KCSIE 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Care planning , placement and case review regulations 2010
- Children Act 1989 and onwards
- Statutory guidance on promoting health and well being of looked after children.
- NHS Commissioning /CCG Regs 2012 and onwards
- SEND regulatory revisions 2014 (and amends)
- RIPA 2000
- Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill (2023)
- Mental Health legislation
- Health and safety legislation various
- Equal Opportunities legislation 2010 onwards
- GDPR 2018 and updates

Legislation-appendix 1

- Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children (2015) and onwards
- Tackling CSE action plan (2015)
- Children & Families Act (2014)
- Care of Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children (2023)
- Statutory Guidance on Children Who Run Away or Go Missing from Home or Care (2014) and onwards
- Statutory Guidance on Short Breaks (2011) and onwards
- Children (Leaving Care) Act (2000)
- Human Rights Act 1998 and amends
- Regulatory framework re. H&C provision 2008
- Public Disclosure Act 1998
- Supported accommodation regs 2023.
- **An exercise like this shows us just how complex the professional fields are**
- **In the wings- Crime and policing bill , Children , well being and schools' bill**

SCCIF words / phrases of note re. leadership and development Appendix-2

- “Best possible
- Inspirational
- Confident
- Positivity
- Aspirational
- Excellence
- High expectation
- Innovation”
- “Sustained improvement
- Excellent quality of care
- Enhancing life chances
- Research informed practice
- Creative
- Proactive
- Child involvement”



Appendix 3 – useful update links

- Ofsted
- DfE
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- www.gov.uk
- NICE (national institute for clinical excellence)
- SCIE (social care “ “)
- Children and young people now
- Office of the children’s Commissioner
- Coram Voice
- Any more ?



Appendix 3- useful links-Hesley

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/635914568fa8f557d066c1ad/safeguarding_children_with_disabilities_in_residential_care_homes_phase_1_report.pdf
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/643e82136dda69000c11df6a/Safeguarding_children_with_disabilities_in_residential_care_homes_phase_2_report.pdf

