

Jen Bean

From: dialogue <news@dialogueltd.co.uk>
Sent: 27 August 2026 10:46
To: Jen Bean
Subject: dialogue - September 2026 - Residential Care Bulletin



Residential Care Bulletin September 2026

As we approach the Autumn months, we have an action packed bumper edition for you to kick start after summer leave for some of you....

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:

Free Webinars

Registered Managers Vacancy Study, Why are Children's Homes Getting Smaller? and support for the upcoming Social Media Ban

Upcoming Conferences

Book your ticket and meet us there!

Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
Adolescent Suicide

Service brochure
Download your copy today

Children's Commissioner
Children referred to the Prevent programme

Inspection Top Tips bulletin
Members-only benefit

dialogue membership
What's on this month?

Ofsted fine unregulated home
Article by Anna Fee, RWK Goodman

September Training Highlight
Fit Person Interview Preparation being delivered on 24th
September 2026

Centre for Care research
Children's pathways into and out of care

Research
Order your copy of the Perfect Little Children's Home

Excellent training
for your independent person, safeguarding lead, RI, NI,
RSM, RM and staff.

NEW - Three new courses coming up this year, have a
peek at the training section to get booked on.



Free Webinars this Autumn: Rethinking Residential Childcare

Join us this September for two free webinars exploring critical shifts in residential childcare, based on our sector research which inspired our [newly launched book](#).

Our recent Registered Manager Vacancy Study revealed a massive surge in children's homes across the sector, alongside a drastic shift toward much smaller provisions. In fact, there are now 3½ times as many two-bed homes as there were in 2016. This rapid downsizing completely changes the game for staffing, management, and daily practice—yet it has happened with almost no policy guidance. Secure your places for one or both webinars, download the free RM Vacancy research paper, or buy the book by visiting our Research and Bookings Page below.

We're also running a **FREE Social Media Ban Webinar** being delivered by SWGfL on Zoom at **1pm - 2pm on Wednesday 14th October 2026**.

We will be exploring the impacts and practicalities of the social media ban to support children, young people and the professionals around them, to help ensure implementation is as safe and effective as possible. For more information and to book your slot on our **FREE Social Media Ban Webinar**, please visit the page below.

[Sign up to children's homes research webinars](#)

[Book your space for the social media ban webinar](#)

Upcoming Conferences 2026

We are excited to be attending a range of key sector events this year! Check out the details below to book your tickets and come say hello to our team.

Improving the Commissioning of Therapeutic Support for Children in Care

- **Date:** Tuesday, 15th September 2026
- **Location:** Central Birmingham
- **How to Book:** Reserve your spot and read more online [here](#)

The National Supported Accommodation Conference

- **Date:** Thursday, 24th September 2026
- **Location:** The Vox Centre, Birmingham
- **How to Book:** Reserve your spot and read more online [here](#)

TCTC 2026 Annual Conference - The Cost and the Value: Therapeutic Communities and Sustainable Organisations

- **Dates:** 28th September – 30th September 2026
- **Location:** Arden Hotel & Leisure Club, Solihull, West Midlands (B92 0EH)
- **How to Book:** Read more and book [here](#)

Abacus Therapeutic Practice Conference 2026

- **Date:** Friday, 2nd October 2026
- **Who it's for:** Open to commissioners, residential managers, and lead social workers.
- **Cost:** FREE
- **Read More:** [Click here](#)
- **How to Book:** Email enquiries@abacustherapeutics.net to reserve your delegate place.

Children's Homes Association 2026 Conference & Awards

- **Dates:** 20th & 21st October 2026
- **Location:** The Hilton Birmingham Metropole
- **How to Book:** Visit the [Children's Homes Association website](#) to secure your tickets and celebrate excellence in the sector.

THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEW PANEL

Adolescent Suicide

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death among children in England and the second most common cause of death in serious child safeguarding incidents in recent years. The Independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel has published an important new learning hub focused on adolescent suicide, bringing together evidence from serious child safeguarding incidents, research and practical resources to help professionals recognise escalating vulnerability and intervene earlier.

Whilst suicide remains one of the most devastating outcomes safeguarding professionals may encounter, the Panel's message is clear:

Suicide is rarely the result of one single event. It is often the culmination of multiple adversities, missed opportunities and cumulative harm that builds over time.

For those working across education, health, children's social care, policing, charities and community services, these new resources provide valuable learning that should influence safeguarding practice, supervision and organisational culture.

Our Residential Children's Homes Service Brochure

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 the image below to download your copy



Children referred to the Prevent programme

The tragic attack in Southport brought national focus to system failures in identifying high-risk individuals. Following Phase 1's focus on the individual case, Phase 2 of the independent inquiry is examining how broader public systems must change to prevent similar atrocities.

To inform Phase 2, the Children's Commissioner released a report analysing how children interact with the Prevent programme. Combining Home Office data with firsthand accounts from professionals and young people, the study reveals that while child referrals are rising, Prevent is frequently used as a "safety net" for complex neurodivergent or vulnerable children who exhibit violent fixations without a clear political or religious ideology—leaving both the children and the public at risk.

[Download the full report](#)



Inspection Top Tips

Our team are combing inspection reports every week for key themes and issues, and these are emailed out to **dialogue members** each week. 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:

- **Child Centred Practice**
- **Location Review**
- **CSE Risk**
- **Location Risk Assessments**

All the resources and back catalogue are available in

the [members' area](#)

Not a member yet...[join here](#)



dialogue membership for Residential Care

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...

- **2nd September 2026** – *'the dialogue'*
our fortnightly update session with inspection top tips, research, regs and responses to member queries.
- **9th September 2026** – *'bitesize session'* **Elissa Emery, Hannah Dellow & Claire Tilley (1848 Limited)** - meta analysis data on dynamic risk
- **16th September 2026** – *'the dialogue'*
our fortnightly update session with inspection top tips, research, regs and responses to member queries. **RM Vacancy Webinar with John Woodhouse**
- **23rd September 2026** – *'bitesize session'* **Linda Briheim (Coram Voice)** - From Surviving to

Thriving: The seven drivers of well-being for children in care and care leavers

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

You'll find the sessions and support invaluable, but if you're not sure, add the code **TRYFORFREE** to the invoicing details and we will defer your first invoice a month. Simply let us know you do not wish to continue, and we'll cancel the invoice altogether.

[Members log in here](#)

[Find out more & join dialogue today](#)



Ofsted prosecutes unregistered children's home provider imposing a significant fine

In this first prosecution of an unregistered children's home provider and its directors, Ofsted secured cumulative fines and costs exceeding £110,000 and disqualified the directors from working in children's care. Key takeaways include:

- **Zero tolerance:** Operating an unregistered setting—even while awaiting registration approval or on local

authority referral—remains an offence under the Care Standards Act 2000.

- **Increased enforcement:** Ofsted is actively expanding its Unregistered Social Care Team to target illegal operations.

[Click here to read the complete RWK Goodman article](#)



Fit Person Interview Preparation

Developed from research with 378 sector leaders and input from Ofsted, this short course addresses the key worries managers carry into the Fit Person Interview. Suitable for Children's Homes and Supported Accommodation managers, it builds confidence, breaks down interview expectations, and helps you effectively showcase your skills.

The Course:

Working in small groups (up to 16), we break down the interview process, explore core safeguarding and regulatory topics, and look at sample questions inspectors use to assess suitability. You'll reflect on your specific strengths and learn practical strategies to manage interview pressure.

What the course covers:

- Defining the fit person interview
- Core business – what is always covered
- Preparation & reflection – considering how inspectors tailor the FPI to your application

- Sample questions & practice
- Holding your own and building confidence in your approach

The trainer:

Chris Freestone has held senior leadership roles in education, health and social care, including roles as an inspector in both education and social care. She works alongside leaders in supporting the development of their operational and strategic practice - always with the child at the very centre.

Her style and approach is grounded in taking organisations forward on their journeys to improved outcomes for children and young people, whether in an education, social care or health setting, working within the guidance and frameworks of the sectors. Chris also helps leaders and their teams to develop reflective practice and to ensure that a culture of continuous development is in place.

Costs:

Priced at £132+VAT, reduced to **£99+vat for dialogue members**.

Our next training is being delivered virtually over a half-day session running on the following date:

12-4pm on 24th September 2026

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**

Read more or book your spot!

Changing pathways into and through the care system

New research from the Centre for Care examines Department for Education data on children entering and leaving care in England between 2021 and 2025.

One of the most significant developments is the changing age profile of children entering care.

More than half are now **aged 10 or older**, while the proportion of entrants aged 16 and over increased from **20% in 2021 to 28% in 2025**.

The types of placements children experience are changing too. Between 2021 and 2025, the number of children living in residential, supported or semi-independent provision increased from **11,360 to 17,000, around a 50% rise**.

There are also striking geographical differences. In 2025, local authority rates of children in care ranged from **27 to 184 per 10,000 children**, representing approximately a seven-fold variation.

These figures raise important questions about adolescent safeguarding, contextual risk, placement sufficiency and the support provided to older teenagers entering care.

Older adolescents entering care may already have experienced significant trauma, exploitation, family breakdown or instability. Their safeguarding needs cannot be understood simply through placement arrangements context, relationships and transition into adulthood all matter.

[Read the full research briefing](#)



The Perfect Little Children's Home?

As you may know, we launched our new book at the end of June, at the National Commissioners' Conference.

The Perfect Little Children's Home? draws together perspectives from sector leaders, commissioners, and individuals with lived experience of children's homes to explore why children's homes are getting smaller. It finds this issue is affecting the surge in children's homes registration, with anxiety and ideology driving practice. It will need the Government, providers, commissioners and policy-makers to work together to bring about significant changes towards child-centred and cost-effective practice.

Order your copy today **£29+P&P*** or just **£24.50+P&P*** for **members**

If you would like to order multiple copies, please [contact us](#)

(Hardback) Order 'The Perfect Little Children's Home'

(Digital) Order 'The Perfect Little Children's Home'

Upcoming Training Courses

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

Don't just take our word for it, here's a snippet of recent feedback below...

Fit Person Interview training...

“ The course has made a difference due to the embedded knowledge that I was able to achieve through completing the training, this will support me to go into my interview with confidence and be able to pass the registration process, so that our home can open and start to make a difference to young peoples lives. ”

Feedback from recent training participants (January 2026)

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

New - Safeguarding Lead short breaks & disabilities (on 7th Sep)

New - Formulation & Resilience in Therapeutic Care (on 17th Sep)

New - Child Criminal Exploitation (starting on 23rd Sep)

Regulation 44 and Standard 3 (on 4th September)

Aspiring Managers Programme (starting on 9th September)

Safeguarding Lead (starting on 10th September)

Safeguarding Supervision (starting on 21st September)

Fit person interview preparation (on 24th September)

Reg45 Quality Review (on 29th September)

CH - Managing Inspections (on 30th September)

Safer Recruitment training (starting on 5th October)

Leaving Care (on 16th October)

MCA, DoLS and LPS (on 22nd October)

RI training (starting on 2nd November)

Reg40 serious incidents - FREE webinar (on 4th November)

Online Safety (Level 1) (on 17th November)

Managing Allegations (on 1st December)

Leading Supported Accommodation (starting on 7th January 2027)

Preparing for the updated SCCIF (on 18th January 2027)

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.

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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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