

Jen Bean

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Residential Care Bulletin October 2026

Welcome to the October edition of our sector bulletin. As we step into autumn, this month brings significant legal updates, regulatory shifts, and an important opportunity to champion equality and identity across our service during Black History Month.....

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.

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Book your ticket and meet us there!

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Download your copy today

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Upcoming Training Highlight

**Safeguarding Supervision Refresher being delivered on
9th November 2026**

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.**

**Black History Month in Residential
Care**

October is **Black History Month (UK)**. For residential providers, this is an opportunity to reflect on culturally competent care and ensuring every young person's identity, heritage, and sense of belonging are actively supported.

Core Focus Areas for Home Teams

Identity & Heritage: Ensure children from Black and dual-heritage backgrounds see their history and achievements authentically celebrated—not just as a one-off event, but embedded into everyday practice.

Examples of Cultural Competency in Daily Care

- **Hair & Skincare:** Review care plans to ensure appropriate hair and skincare products are supplied, and that staff are confident supporting these routines.
- **Food & Meals:** Introduce culturally diverse recipes co-planned with young people.
- **Media & Environment:** Refresh books, art, and media resources within the home to highlight diverse role models and authors.

Addressing Systemic Disparities

Acknowledge sector data on the overrepresentation of Black and mixed-heritage children in care, focusing on anti-discriminatory practice and placement stability.

Further Reading & Sector Guidance

Access resources on improving culture and identity that could be used within care practices for children below.

[More information](#)



Free Webinar this October:

Social Media Ban

We are 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.

Book your space for the social media ban webinar

Upcoming Conferences 2026

We've been excited to attend a range of key sector events this year! Take a look at the details of the next conference we'll be attending below, book your tickets, and come and say hello to our team.

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.



Removal of the DBS "Supervision Exemption"

The legal definition of *regulated activity with children* has been updated. The previous exemption allowing supervised staff or volunteers to bypass a Children's Barred List check no longer applies.

Anyone caring for, instructing, or supervising children—regardless of senior oversight—now requires an Enhanced DBS check with a Children's Barred List check if they meet the frequency threshold. HR teams should audit onboarding files immediately.

[Read the full legal guidance here](#)

Our Residential Children's Homes and Supported Accommodation Service Brochures

We prefer to work closely with you to identify areas of need and develop bespoke packages that improve the lives of young people in your care. The training we offer is for managers, residential workers and other staff, and includes supervision, safeguarding, care planning & analysis, recording and much more.

Supported Accommodation
Brochure - download below



Residential Children's Homes
Brochure - download below



Maternity Cover: Best Practice Principles for Stability and Compliance

Planning for maternity cover is about balancing support for our colleagues with seamless care for our young people. Here are the key takeaways from recent Ofsted insights and practice:

- **Plan early with backup options:** Map out delegated duties well in advance and build a contingency plan to ensure management stays completely stable.
- **Plug knowledge gaps upfront:** If the manager usually handles specific tasks (such as new admissions or low-level concerns), upskill the deputy before the cover starts.
- **Boost senior oversight:** Step up and evidence senior leadership involvement during the transition—inspectors view this very favourably.
- **Maintain day-to-day rhythms:** Keep up regular supervisions, team meetings, and Reg 45 reviews. Use joint checklists with Registered Manager (RM) sign-off to retain oversight.
- **Hit Ofsted & Reg 28 deadlines:** Ensure arrangements meet Reg 28 standards (considering

joint registration if suitable). Submit an SC3 form 30 days in advance for absences over 28 days, and an SC2 application if cover exceeds 90 days.

- **Support young people through the shift:** A manager's changing availability can trigger anxiety for children with complex backgrounds. Build practice plans so the team can anticipate these feelings and offer extra reassurance.



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.

The Top Tip topics that were covered in the last 4 weeks:

- **Update your Statement of Purpose**
- **Policies for the Protection of Children**
- **Registered Manager**
- **Helping Children Thrive**

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 sessions for Children's Homes runs weekly every Wednesday 1-2pm.

We get great feedback and there's lots to cover!

Coming up...

- **7th October 2026** – *'bitesize session'*

Kevin Gallagher - (Ch3) How a home's therapeutic approach affects home size planning - The Perfect Little Children's Home book

- **14th October 2026** – *'the dialogue'*

Traci Gregory (SWGfL) - Online safety - "The implications of the social media ban on children's homes (and other risks)"

- **21st October 2026** – *'bitesize session'*

Matthew Brazier (Ofsted) - SCCIF Presentation

- **28th October 2026** – *'the dialogue'*

John Woodhouse and Brian Smith will be delivering our fortnightly update session with inspection top tips, research, regs and responses to member 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

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 if you do not wish to continue, and we'll cancel the invoice altogether.

[Members log in here](#)

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



National Policy Roadmap

Following the passage of the landmark **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026**, the sector is moving into a major delivery phase under the Department for Education's implementation plan. These reforms introduce structural shifts across commissioning, multi-agency safeguarding, placement sufficiency, and care-leaver support—directly impacting how residential homes operate, manage risk, and collaborate with local partners.

- **Regional Care Cooperatives (RCCs):** Commissioning is shifting to regional hubs to manage placement sufficiency and control rising costs, supported by new financial oversight powers over large provider chains.
- **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Teams (MASTs):** Formalised joint-working units (police, social care, health, education) will change how risk, missing episodes, and exploitation concerns are handled across placements.
- **Specialist Residential Focus:** Local authorities are mandated to expand kinship and foster care, ensuring residential care is strictly positioned for young people needing specialist, therapeutic support.
- **Care Leaver & Sibling Rights:** Statutory requirements now enforce sibling contact arrangements and expand the 'Staying Close' framework for young people transitioning out of residential care up to age 25.

[Read the full DfE implementation plan here](#)



Safeguarding Supervision Refresher

Supervision is a skill, and your team should benefit from your approach. It's important to keep updated and to reflect on how your approach is being perceived. We've also heard Ofsted are asking leaders about when they last updated their training.

dialogue's **new Supervision Refresher course** offers both

feedback and an update. With an anonymous link for each of your team we gather feedback on key questions about how your supervision is being perceived, sharing this with you and the trainer ahead of the course, tailoring our approach to make the difference people need.

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 are 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 £199+VAT, reduced to **£149+vat for dialogue members.**

Our next training is being delivered virtually on

10am-4pm on 9th November 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 place



The Perfect Little Children's Home?

As you may know, we launched our new book at the National Commissioners' Conference this summer.

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...



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

Safer Recruitment training (starting on 5th October)

RI training (starting on 2nd November)

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

Safeguarding Supervision Refresher (on 9th November)

Safeguarding Lead (starting on 10th November)

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

Leaving Care (on 20th November)

Managing Allegations (on 1st December)

Leading Supported Accommodation (starting on 7th January 2027)

Aspiring Managers Programme (starting on 13th January 2027)

Fit person interview preparation (on 14th January 2027)

Safeguarding Supervision (starting on 18th January 2027)

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

CH - Managing Inspections (on 20th January 2027)

Reg45 Quality Review (on 8th February 2027)

Regulation 44 and Standard 3 (starting on 26th February 2027)

Child Criminal Exploitation (starting on 15th March 2027)

MCA, DoLS and LPS (Register your Interest)

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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