

Regulation 44 Independent Person's Visit

**Corporate Parenting Panel
26th April 2019**

Altogether better



Children's home regulations 2015

All children's residential homes have to abide by legislation and **regulations**. ... One of the **regulations** is '**regulation 44**' and this is within Part 6 the monitoring and reviewing children's homes section of the **regulations**.

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What does the regulation say?

- It states that "an independent person must visit the home on a monthly basis to carry out an inspection of the home".
- Following the inspection, which includes discussions with the young people, families and other professionals, a report is produced and issued to Ofsted once the comments of the Registered Manager are included.

Altogether better



What is the purpose of the visit?

- to ensure our children and young people are safeguarded
- all aspects of their well-being promoted.

Altogether better



Background

Regulation 44 visits to Durham Children's Residential homes

Between 2015 and 2018 external providers were commissioned to undertake this service.

From April 2018 as agreed by Children's Services Management team, the service transferred to be the responsibility of the Commissioning Services team.

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Historical issues with Commissioned providers

Experienced ongoing issues with commissioned contracts including:

- Lack of proactive approach in relation to involving elected members in visits
- Quality of Regulation 44 reports – inconsistent across visitors
- Lack of consistent management/staff in organisations
- Failure to conduct visits in line with OfSTED requirements and Corporate Parenting Panel schedule
- Lack of communication

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What have we achieved

- Visitors have invited Elected members along to visits – 4 visits per year.
- Where elected members have not attended visits, this has been escalated and addressed
- Standard template used across all homes by visitors – consistent approach and recording
- Consistent management/staff visiting homes – cover arrangements from other visitors
- Meeting requirements of OFSTED and CPP schedule
- Improved communication between Reg 44 visitors and Children's Services managers and Elected Members.

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What have we achieved (continued)

- Continue to prepare homes for OfSTED visitors
- Consistent approach to Regulation 44 reports
- Active involvement of elected members in visits
- Improved links between Reg 44 visitors and Homes managers
- Improved links between Reg 44 visitors and Children's service managers
- Regular reporting to Corporate Parenting Panel
- More comprehensive reporting to Corporate Parenting Panel including OFSTED judgements of DCC homes

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In addition.....

- Recommended implementing boxes in homes for children to post communication with their Reg 44 visitor
- Additional information provided to CPP in relation to Reg 44 of Independent homes
- CPP also updated on the current rating of each home as of their last full inspection (DCC and Independent)
- Summary of number of placements with each independent provider
- Encourage Elected members to contribute to report with comments following their visit
- Further amend report to include Managers comments on Visitors recommendations
- Sampling of reports by Strategic Manager with experience of Regulation 44 activity

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Independent Children's Residential homes

- Regulation 44 visitors employed directly by Independent homes
- Completed reports are to be forwarded to
 - OFSTED,
 - Host Local authorities,
 - Local authorities with a child/young person placement.
- Monitored by the Regulation 44 visitors (DCC Homes)
- Areas of concern addressed with Homes Manager and escalated within Childrens Service for homes where we have a child placed.
- Regional LAs consideration for consistency

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Independent Children's Residential Homes (Scotland)

- Children's homes in Scotland are regulated and inspected by Care Inspectorate
- Gradings; Unsatisfactory, Weak, Adequate, Good, Very Good, Excellent
- National Care Standards Care Homes for Children and Young people
- Social worker visits
- Accreditation process
- Ongoing monitoring of services by Commissioning team

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Areas for Discussion

- Pairing list – Elected Members
- Allocated Reg 44 visitors to homes
- General feedback on how members feel the visits are going
- Information supplied to them in relation to the Regulation 44
- Allocation of visits – COs and elected members – this years schedule of dates to be shared.

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Further comments to be directed to

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