

Regulation 44 Visitor – Annual Overview



REPORT AUTHORS:	Keith Munro Foster Carer Reviewing/Regulation 44 Officer Jackie Amos Foster Carer Reviewing/Regulation 44 Officer
----------------------------	--

Table of Contents:

1. Purpose	3
2. Purpose of the Regulation 44 Overview of Visits	3
3. Performance Overview	4
4. Administration	4
5. Columbo Road	5
6. Voice of the Young people at Columbo Road	7
7. Voice of the Parents of the young people at Columbo Road	8
8. Columbo Road Summary	8
9. Grasswell House	9
10. Voice of the Young people at Grasswell House	11
11. Voice of the Parents of the young people at Grasswell House	12
12. Grasswell House Summary	12
13. Revelstoke Road	13
14. Voice of the Young people at Revelstoke Road	16
15. Voice of the Parents of the young people at Revelstoke Road	17
16. Revelstoke Road Summary	17
17. Nook Lodge	18
18. Voice of the Young people at Nook Lodge	21
19. Voice of the Parents of the young people at Nook Lodge	22
20. Nook Lodge Summary	22
21. Monument View	24
22. Voice of the Young people at Monument View	27
23. Voice of the Parents of the young people at Monument View	27
24. Monument View Summary	27
25. Analysis	29
26. Service Review and Development	29

Purpose

To provide elected members of the Corporate Parenting Board with an update on the findings in relation to the Regulation 44 visits undertaken April 21 to March 22.

Regulation 44 Visit and Structure within Together for Children

The current Children's Homes Regulations and Quality Standards were released in their final form in April 2015.

Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 clearly states that the registered provider shall appoint, at the registered provider's expense, an independent person to visit and report on the children's home in accordance with this regulation. This is to ensure objective critical analysis with a view to improve safeguarding and service delivery for children.

The Regulation 44 visitor must be able to evidence demonstrable independence and have the skills necessary to relate to children and young people, assess all relevant information and form a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. This is achieved by scrutinising all relevant documentation, talking to at least one of the children and young people accommodated in the home, their parents or relatives, staff from the home and relevant professionals.

The service comprises 1.5 FTE Regulation 44 visitors, situated in the Children's Independent Review Team within the Corporate & Commercial Services Directorate.

There are five registered children's homes ran by Together for Children and the visits are shared between the two post holders. The homes are visited, by the same visitor, for a minimum of six months, then rotated unless there is a need for a longer period of consistency, this is determined on an individual basis.

Performance Overview

The following table provides the date of the most recent Ofsted inspection. During the reporting period every home received a monthly Regulation 44 visit meaning that we were compliant with the governing regulations.

Name of Home	Date of most recent Ofsted Inspection
Colombo Road	15/12/21
Monument View	4/5/2021-5/5/21
Grasswell House	8/6/21 - 9/6/21
Revelstoke Road	11/1/22 - 12/1/22
Nook Lodge	14/9/21 - 15/9/21

During April 2021 to March 2022 Regulation 44 visits were undertaken using a range of methods, depending upon the individual risk assessment for each home due to Covid19. Physical visits were determined by Government guidance which informed the homes and CIRT's own risk assessment. This has resulted in Regulation 44 visits being completed in a range of different ways:

- Via telephone calls and remote access to the home's files
- TEAMS and remote access to the home's files
- In person visit to the children's homes.

In addition to the above models of engagement, the homes have also shared photographs with the Regulation 44 visitor to evidence maintenance in accordance with regulations. During this time the voice of the children and young people, their carers and parents has remained a central part of the visit and has informed the reports that have been produced monthly.

The current position is that all Regulation 44 visits should be completed in person unless there is a known case of Covid19 in the home. In this eventuality the visit would be completed using two of the above alternative options.

Administration

It takes approximately two working days to complete a Regulation 44 visit and produce a report for each of the children's homes. The Regulation 44 visit involves the visitor undertaking key tasks such as:

- A visit to the home
- Speaking with the young people who live there to gather their views regarding their standard of care
- Speaking with the young people's carers, parents, social workers, and Independent Reviewing Officer to collect their views on the standard of care being provided
- Reviewing and evaluating records such as young people's files, critical incident logs, medical records, and any notifications to Ofsted

Upon the independent visitor evaluating all the above a report is produced and sent to the manager of the home and the responsible person for Together for Children for comment, who have 5-days to respond. The report is then sent to Ofsted at the end of each month.

The visitors also complete a short letter for the young people at the home about their visit and findings. During this reporting period we have also ensured that whereby any young person living in one of our homes whose first language is not English has the letter translated for them.

Colombo Road

Colombo Road Children's Home remains approved for up to six young people, aged from eleven up to the age of eighteen. It is situated on a large housing estate in the Hylton Castle area of Sunderland. Ofsted inspectors have given the home an overall judgement of "Outstanding" for the last four years. The home's workforce is stable, they are currently in the process of recruiting two residential childcare workers. The benefit of the home's workforce being stable means that the young people in their care are in a better position to form trust and meaningful relationships with their childcare workers.

Since the last report to Corporate Parenting in March 21, Ofsted visited Colombo Road in December 2021 with the table below outlining the excellent judgement:

Ofsted Rating	14.12.21 - 15.12.2021 Judgement Outstanding
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Outstanding
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

One requirement was made by Ofsted:

Regulation 12 – The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.

Three recommendations were made by Ofsted:

The registered provider should ensure that the staff undertake refresher training in safeguarding and physical intervention.

The registered provider should ensure that there is a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people, including Ofsted.

The registered provider should ensure that a copy of the quality-of-care review report is sent to Ofsted and the placing local authority, of all children in the home who are Cared for children, within 28 days of the review being completed.

The manager has complied with the requirement and recommendations made by the Ofsted Inspector, and this is an area that has been considered during the subsequent Regulation 44 visits.

In this reporting period Colombo Road has provided care for the following numbers of young people:

April 21	May 21	June 21	July 21	Aug 21	Sep 21
6	5	5	6	6	6
Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
6	6	6	6	6	6

2 boys and 4 girls are currently residing at Columbo Road, aged between 13 and 17 years. They all have differing needs and interests which are supported by the team.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	Number of recommendations in the reporting period
5	5	28	0	9

The number of young people residing at Colombo during this reporting period varied between five and six. Five young people moved out of the home in line with their care / pathway plans and these places were quickly taken up by young people moving in. The matching of young people who move into the home is carefully considered, taking into account all the individual needs of the young people. This process considers the potential impact of any young person moving into the home and how they may affect the dynamics of the other young people already living there. Overall, this has been done successfully and as the independent visitor has not seen indicators that would suggest that any new young person has led to an increase in critical incidents or care staff needing to restrain young people.

The young people living at Colombo Road attend a range of mainstream and alternative education and training. The young people each have friendship groups within their own communities or through their education provision. The young people have the chance to discuss their wishes and feelings independently from the home with their Social Workers, IRO's and the Regulation 44 Officers. In addition to this all-young people have access to share their views via the Mind of My Own application. During Regulation 44 visits the visitor always speaks to at least one young person to explore how they feel they are being cared for and if they wanted anything to change for them at the home.

Unannounced Regulation 44 visits have been undertaken to allow the visitor to experience the day to day running of the home. Visits took place at different times which assisted the visitor in having contact with the young people to collect their views.

Twenty-eight missing episodes were reported during this twelve-month period. This is a reduction when compared to 30 episodes reported in April 2021. It was positive to note no young people were reported missing for over 24 hours during the last year. The staff team undertake one-to-one sessions to reduce the risks of young people becoming missing. These open conversations ensure that the young people have the right information to help make safe and informed decisions.

The Regulation 44 visitor made 7 recommendations during 21/22, the same number as the last reporting years recommendations. Examples of recommendations included: adding additional information to risk assessments and for staff to liaise with a young person's Social Worker to see if the young person meet the criteria for an application for DLA to be made for them.

There was one restraint recorded in this reporting period, an increase on last year. The main factor which has influenced the rare use of restraints is the learning the staff have undertaken in relation to trauma informed practice. Staff do not wish to risk retraumatising young people in their care and therefore believe restraint should only be used if a young person is a serious threat to themselves or others.

Type of notification	Reported Incidents 2020-21	Reported Incidents 2021-22	Variance
Critical incident	18	24	+6
Ofsted notification	17	25	+8

You can have more Ofsted notifications than Critical incident. In this case, a disclosure of historic abuse was made to staff, this required a notification to Ofsted but was not recorded as a Critical Incident as it happened historically whilst the young person was not cared for in the home.

Having considered this increase there is an appropriate reasoning for this significant increase which related to the specific needs of two of the young people. One of the young people, was identified after their admission as requiring an alternative home more able to meet their identified needs. This highlighted staff's ability to recognise when the home is not best placed to meet a young person's specific needs, act appropriately and advocate on their behalf to seek the right home.

Throughout the reporting period Covid19 restrictions have varied however the home manager has ensured throughout this year that there has been a risk assessment in place which is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the many changes so that the home is safe.

Voices of the Young people

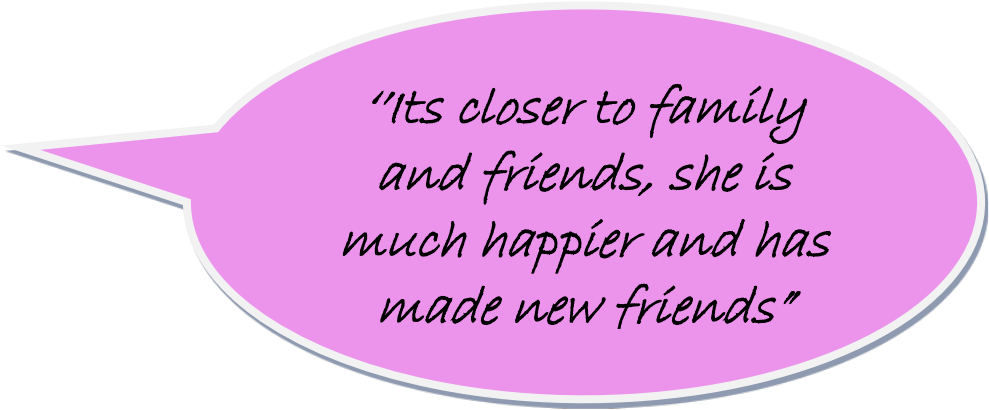


The young people engaged well with the visitors during the reporting period and during every visit in this reporting period a young person has talked to the Regulation 44 visitor. The young people who talked to us told us consistently that they felt well cared for by staff at the home and had good relationships with them. We know that when young people who are in a caring environment develop to have a sense of belonging and identity and learn how to manage their feelings better, this leads to good outcomes for them.

An example was:

A young person explained that they had spent a considerable amount of time in a residential provision that had on site education provision. Young person explained as they got older, they did benefit from this arrangement as they felt isolated by living and attending school on the same site. The young person said since they moved to Colombo Road they now feel "more normal" as they now have access to the outside world. The Young person now accesses community facilities independently. They tell us that they feel respected by every member of staff. The Young person stated, there is not one member of staff they do not like.

Voice of a Parent/s



*"Its closer to family
and friends, she is
much happier and has
made new friends"*

A parent of a young person explained they are of the view the young person is more settled at Colombo Road than their previous cared for arrangement. It is much better because the young person now lives closer to family and friends. The Young person has told their parents that they like Colombo Road, likes their bedroom, the other young people and the team members. The Young person has made friends and is much happier living in Sunderland.

Summary

The manager accepted and implemented the recommendations from the Regulation 44 visitors and implemented them within the timescales provided. The management and members of the team remain committed to supporting young people to the best of their abilities, helped by Dr Christie, Psychologist to implement trauma informed residential childcare practice. Staff celebrate the young people's differences and celebrate their many achievements.

Grasswell House

Grasswell House has continued to provide residential care for up to six young people aged 12-17. The home is located within Sunderland West. The manager and the leadership team have continued to work constructively to manage and support staff on their journey of improvement ensuring the home meets the needs of the children and young people accommodated there. This was recognised by the Ofsted inspector who improved the judgement on the effectiveness to outstanding at the last inspection. The home is fully staffed.

Since the last report to Corporate Parenting in March 21, Ofsted visited Grasswell House in June 2021 with the table below outlining the judgement:

Ofsted Rating	Judgement Good 08/09 Jun 21
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

One requirement was made by Ofsted:

Regulation 12 – The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.

Three recommendations were made by Ofsted:

The registered person should ensure that children are aware of the complaints procedure and are able to access the forms and make a complaint without the need to ask staff, in order to protect their privacy.

The registered person should ensure that there are systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them not only to reflect on their practice and development, but also to focus on the needs of the children assigned to their care.

The registered manager should ensure that the home is a homely, domestic environment that meets the needs of their children. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene and so on); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression.

Within the reporting period the home has cared for the following number of children and young people:

Apr 21	May 21	June 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21
6	6	6	5	6	5
Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
5	5	6	5	6	6

Six young people have been cared for by the team at Grasswell House for eight out of the twelve months. Four young people have moved out of the home in line with their care or pathway plans and five young people have moved in. The matching of young people who move into the home is carefully considered in respect of the individual needs of each young person and the potential impact the young person moving in may have on the dynamics of the other young people living at the home. This has been done successfully as evidenced by data such as low levels of missing episodes.

4 boys and 2 girls are currently residing at Grasswell House, aged between 12 and 17 years. They all have differing needs and interests which are supported by the team.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	Number of recommendations in the reporting period
5	4	42	0	7

Eleven recommendations were made during this reporting period an increase when compared to the seven recorded in the previous report. One recommendation stated one-to-one sessions should be completed with a young person to ensure that open conversations about the worries around the missing episodes are discussed and the young person has all the information to support them making safe decisions. This was recommended based on the comments made in a mind of my own statement. This then also identified a need for the home to add the additional information to the young person's risk assessments to strengthen the safety should future episodes happen; this supports the staff in understanding the actions necessary but also for the young person to have knowledge of the actions needing to be taken also.

The matching of young people who move into the home is carefully considered in respect of the individual needs of each young person and the potential impact of the young person moving in may have on the dynamics of the other young people living at the home.

There has been 1 restraint recorded during this reporting period. This compares to 0 restraints in the previous reporting period. There are two main factors which influence the rare use of restraints. These are the implementation of trauma informed residential childcare practice and because staff do not wish to risk re-traumatising young people to the experiences, they may have had within their birth families prior to being cared for. Therefore, the team believe restraint should only be used if a young person is serious threat to themselves or others.

The child and young people living at Grasswell House attend a range of mainstream and alternative education and training. The young people have friendship groups through their education provision or within their own communities. The young people can discuss their wishes and feelings independently from the residential care workers with their social workers, IRO's the regulation 44 officers and via the Mind of my Own application. During regulation 44 visits the visitor spoke to at least one young person to discuss how they feel they are being cared for and if they wanted anything to change for them about how they are cared for at the home.

Unannounced Regulation 44 visits were undertaken, every month, during the period of April 21 to March 22. Unannounced visits are carried out to assist the visitor in having the experience of the day to day running of the home and the times chosen are to support the visitor in meeting the children in their home and seeking their views.

Twenty-eight missing episodes were reported during this twelve-month period. This compares to 30 episodes reported in April 2021. It was positive to note no young people were reported missing for over 24 hours during the last year. The staff team undertake one-to-one sessions to reduce the risks of young people becoming missing.

Type of notification	Reported Incidents 2020-21	Reported Incidents 2021-22	Variance
Critical incident	15	28	+13
Ofsted notification	10	25	+15

During this reporting period 28 critical incidents were recorded, and 25 notifications were made to Ofsted. This compares 15 critical incidents and 10 notifications during the previous reporting period.

Throughout the reporting period Covid19 restrictions have varied however the home manager has ensured throughout this year that there has been a risk assessment in place which is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the many changes. The home continues to have a risk assessment in place to ensure the safety of the young people, team members and professionals who need access to Grasswell House.


Voice of the Child/Young Person

The young people engaged well with the visitors during the reporting period. Young people consistently informed the visitor they felt well cared for by staff at the home and had good relationships with them.



A young person shared that they would want to be living with their mam but if they can't Grasswell House is his home, and they would want to stay there until they were 18. The young person shared they liked the staff and felt really supported. This was also seen during a visit where this young person hadn't been attending school before the summer but had completed a full week and on this day had created a clock. This achievement was celebrated by all, and it was clear to see from the young person's presentation and smile how proud the young person was of this achievement and how the staff's encouragement and celebration were well received by the young person, it certainly appeared to make the young person feel even more proud.

Voice of a Parent



*"Is settled after a tricky start.
Well cared for and gets on
well with the staff. The staff
keep me informed too."*

A young person's parent report they had settled well at the home after "a tricky start". The parent's view is her child is well cared for and is pleased they are attending school. The parents shared that the young person has a good relationship with her link worker, the staff keep her informed and the other members of the staff team also work well with her and her child.

Summary

The manager accepted and implemented the recommendations from the Regulation 44 visitors and implemented them within the timescales given. The management and members of the team remain committed to improving the standards of care they provide for young people, assisted by Dr L Christie Psychologist to implement further trauma informed residential childcare practice. Staff celebrate the young people's differences and praise all their achievements.

Revelstoke Road

Revelstoke Road children's home provides residential care for up to six young people of either gender. It is situated on a housing estate within Sunderland North. In terms of management structure there have been no changes in relation to the senior team, this reporting period. The management team have continued to positively support and encourage team members to successfully achieve the best outcomes for the young people in a safe and nurturing environment, despite the difficult circumstances they have experienced due to the impact of Covid-19.

Since the last report to Corporate Parenting in March 21, Ofsted visited Revelstoke Road in January 2022 with the table below outlining the judgement:

Ofsted Rating	Judgement 2.7.19 – 3.7.19	Judgement 11.1.22 – 12.1.22
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	Outstanding
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good	Good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	Good

Two requirements were made:

The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home, that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.

The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification, and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.

One recommendation was made:

The registered person should ensure that the staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. This should include training specific to the individual needs of the children, specifically foetal alcohol spectrum disorder and learning disabilities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11).

The one recommendation and two requirements were acted upon and completed in timescales.

Within the reporting period the home has cared for the following number of children and young people:

Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21
4	4	6	5	6	6
Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
6	6	6	6	6	6

As highlighted in the grid above, except April, May, and July 21, six young people have been cared for by the team at Revelstoke Road, for most of this reporting period. The team and young people experienced a very difficult start to 2021, regarding the support one young person required, in relation to her understanding and presentation, hence it was agreed that the young people needed a settled period of care. Four young people were cared for during April and May 21, which enabled the team to provide additional support and care to the young people, for a period of eight weeks. This evidences that the needs and care of the young people are valued by senior personnel.

Five boys and one girl are currently residing at Revelstoke Road, aged between 15 and 17 years. They all have differing needs and interests which are supported by the team.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	No of rec's in the reporting period
2	2	24	1	4

As highlighted in the grid above, the number of children and young people residing at Revelstoke Road, during this reporting period, varied between 4 and 6, with young people moving in and out on three separate occasions.

The young people at Revelstoke Road are currently presenting as settled, although are said to lead separate lives, attend separate educational provisions and go about their day-to-day business independently. One young person has recently moved in, she is exploring boundaries, rules, and expectations of her. Young people's meetings are held regularly to ascertain the young people's views. All young people are visited every four weeks by their social worker to discuss their feelings and wishes, and they are invited to share their views with the Regulation 44 Visitor, monthly.

Unannounced Regulation 44 visits were undertaken, every month, during the period of April 21 to March 22. The visits took place at tea-time/early evening, daytime during school holidays. Unannounced visits are carried out to assist the visitor in having the experience of the day to day running of the home and the times chosen are to support the visitor in meeting the children in their home and seeking their views.

Twenty-four missing incidents were reported during this twelve-month period, a significant reduction when compared to 51 missing incidents recorded during the six months reported in April 21. One missing incident, over 24 hours, were recorded this reporting period. Again, a reduction when compared to two missing incidents recorded in the previous report. The team continue to work hard to disrupt missing episodes.

Four recommendations were made during this reporting period, a reduction when compared to eight recorded in the previous report. One recommendation stated one-to-one sessions should be completed with a young person. One recommendation was in relation to the managers signature which was required on a medication sheet when the prescribed medication ended. One recommendation was in relation to a risk assessment that the visitor thought should be reviewed in

terms of a word used to describe a young person. The fourth recommendation was in relation to some direct work that the visitor felt should be considered with a young person, if deemed in his best interests, about accessing information regarding his family to support his understanding of his belonging and identity.

Three recommendations made were in relation to the specific needs of the young people, to ensure that they are cared for and supported by the team, in a meaningful way, that may be beneficial to them. One recommendation was made in relation to a team members signature, to complete a required process.

There have been no restraints recorded this reporting period, a decrease when compared to the previous reporting period when five restraints were used. The reduction could be due to the therapeutic training the team have access to, and their understanding of the impact restraints have on young people. The team at Revelstoke Road are of the view that restraints should only be used if young people are a threat to themselves or others.

Type of notification	Reported Incidents 2020-21	Reported Incidents 2021-22	Variance
Critical incident	18	18	+/-
Ofsted notification	16	16	+/-

During this reporting period 18 critical incidents were recorded, and 16 notifications were made to Ofsted, the same when compared to the previous reporting period.

The team, at Revelstoke Road, is welcoming, the home is comfortable and warm, and the young people present as settled, relaxed, at home and happy during Regulation 44 visits. However, it has been increasingly difficult to engage some of the young people to share their views about what is working well and what concerns, they have. The Regulation 44 Officer has asked the team to share the young people's monthly letter provided by the visitor, following every visit. The letter provided following February 22's visit asked the young people to consider engaging more with the visitor, either via telephone or brief note, if they do not feel a face-to-face discussion is possible.

The visitor asked the team for feedback and advice about how best to approach the issue of the young people not wanting to engage meaningfully with the visitor. One suggestion was to attend a young people's meeting, if the young people are willing for this to take place. This will enable the visitor to hear the young people's views, respond, and act upon their wishes, if deemed appropriate.

The Registered Manager at Revelstoke Road explained that 'the young people's lack of engagement in "process"' such as attending young people's meetings, group activities and quality assurance visits does not help meet the expectations of the service, however it is actually very ordinary and not trauma driven'. This is reassuring and provides an understanding about the general presentation of the current group of young people residing at Revelstoke Road.

Revelstoke Road is maintained externally and internally to a good standard and is decorated and furnished in a modern style. The whole house has been updated and decorated to include the kitchen, bathrooms, and the team's sleep-in rooms. The young people are proud of their home and respect how well it is maintained. The young people have chosen their colour scheme, in their bedrooms, and are supported to clean and tidy their room, if they want practical support.

The outdoor areas of Revelstoke Road are also maintained to a very good standard and whilst the rear garden is equipped with modern outdoor furniture, it also has a large wooden outdoor summerhouse, for the young people to enjoy with their friends. The team and the young people have more summer plans for their garden to include some outdoor swinging seats.

A risk assessment remains in place to ensure the safety of the young people, team members and professionals who need access to Revelstoke Road. The assessment is reviewed regularly and updated by the manager reflecting Covid-19 restrictions which have varied during the reporting period. Some of the young people have suffered from Covid-19 although with minimal symptoms and no lasting issues.

Voice of a Child/Young Person:



As stated earlier it has been difficult, at times, to ascertain the views of some of the young people at Revelstoke Road, there has been a level of resistance trying to engage them in discussion. The same young person tends to share his views during several visits. However, on the occasions that both visitors have spoken to the young people, the feedback has been positive. The young people enjoy their surroundings, get on well with team members and are generally respectful of each other, in a distant manner.

During this reporting period the following comments have been made by the young people. One young person stated: 'I feel respected by the team, they help me, everything is alright'.

Whilst the young people have not always been willing to share their views with the visitor, the visitor also accesses the views of professionals known to the young people. There have been no significant concerns raised by any professional regarding the care the young people receive, quite the contrary, as several positive comments have been recorded throughout this reporting period. For example, an Independent Reviewing Officer shared 'I completed a young person's mid-way review the other day and he appears very settled at Revelstoke Road'. A young person's social worker stated, 'I feel the staff at Revelstoke Road are able to offer young people a consistent level of care, they really listen to their views and how they are cared for whilst growing as teen's'.

The visitor, on one occasion, emailed all social workers requesting their views about the care afforded to the young people, due to concerns around their lack of engagement with the visitor. Flexible approaches are used in terms of accessing information about the young people to ensure that the care and support they receive are reflected in the Regulation 44 Report.

Voice of a Parent:



As stated, family members/carers are contacted during every visit to ascertain their views about the care provided to their son/daughter. Consistent positive feedback has been provided by family members. For example, a young person's father was spoken to, he stated 'staff are doing a brilliant job'.

Another young person's father was spoken to, he stated, 'the staff at Revelstoke Road are doing a really good job'. Another young person's mother stated, 'they're doing well at Revelstoke Road, they are no longer getting into trouble' referring to the young person and stated that she had seen pictures of the home which she said looks very nice.

Summary:

The number of missing episodes and missing episodes of over 24 hours, sanctions, use of restraint and recommendations reduced, this reporting period. This is a positive achievement by the team at Revelstoke Road. Critical incidents and Ofsted notifications remained the same as the previous reporting period.

The team at Revelstoke Road support the young people to access education, attend health appointments and learn new skills to develop their independence for moving on. The team listen to and respond to the needs of the young people to evidence that they genuinely care about them. Additional advice and support have been explored with a Clinical Psychologist; the team is now able to work more therapeutically with the young people to address the trauma they have experienced throughout their lives; this is proving very successful.

The recommendations from the Regulation 44 visits, documented above, were accepted by the manager, and implemented within timescales. The management team and all team members remain committed to the young people, they acknowledge and celebrate the young people's achievements and accept that they are individuals with differing skills/needs.

The young people living at the home are very different and lead separate lives however, all are developing positive relationships with team members. Now that Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted, a wide variety of activities are offered every day however, the young people tend to enjoy community activities with their friends and family.

As stated, the home is of a good standard internally and externally and is well maintained. The home is decorated and furnished to good standard in a modern style, with a homely family feel.

A Covid-19 risk assessment remains in place, despite restrictions being lifted, to continue to ensure the safe care of the young people living in the home, team members working there and professionals who need access to Revelstoke Road.

Nook Lodge

Nook Lodge children's home provides residential care for up to three young people of either gender, 10 to 17 years old. It is situated on the outskirts of housing estate within Sunderland. Nook Lodge was registered by Ofsted on 23rd October 20. The young people moved into Nook Lodge between October 20 and March 21. The same three young people remain living at Nook Lodge.

In terms of the management structure there are two senior members: one team manager and one assistant team manager. Both commenced their positions in October 2020 and remain in their current posts. The two managers have developed a positive, professional working relationship with each other and have established a strong and committed team who are supported to achieve the best outcomes for the young people.

Nook Lodge's first inspection was a remote monitoring visit undertaken on 29/03/21. One requirement was made about the leadership and management standard relating to medication training for all staff. This was acted upon immediately and all team members are now trained in relation to the administration of medication.

Nook Lodge's last full Ofsted inspection was undertaken on 14-15th September 21, the outcome of which was good.

Five requirements were made:

Regulation 12 - Protection of Children: To ensure that window restrictors are fitted following two incidents where a young person left via his window.

Regulation 13 - Leadership and Management: To ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child.

Regulation 16 - Statement of Purpose: To ensure the statement of Purpose is kept up to date and Ofsted are notified of changes within 28 days.

Regulation 35 - Behaviour Management Policy: To ensure that documents record that staff have been spoken to within 48 hours and children spoken to within 5 days of any measure of control or discipline. This was specifically around the Sanction Log.

Regulation 43 – Independent Visitors: To ensure that an independent person is appointed to complete Regulation 44 visits.

Two recommendations were made:

Risk assessments should include all known risks and detail steps to manage these risks. (Specifically, Nook Lodge had not mentioned first aid attention in relation to self-harm).

Quality of Care Report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months.

All five requirements and two recommendations have been acted upon in a timely manner and as requested by Ofsted.

In the table below no comparable has been made as the monitoring visit held in March 2021 was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by Nook Lodge since registration, therefore no judgment was made.

Ofsted Rating	Judgement 14-15/09/21
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement to be good

Within the reporting period the home has cared for the following number of children and young people:

Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21
3	3	3	3	3	3
Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
3	3	3	3	3	3

As highlighted in the grid above, three young people, two boys and one girl, aged between 12 and 17 years, have continued to reside at Nook Lodge, during this reporting period, the same three who have remained at Nook Lodge since opening.

All three young people are of differing ages and have different interests, however, are respectful of each other and continue to develop a positive relationship with each other and team members.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	No of rec's in the reporting period
0	0	0	0	6

The above table highlight that Nook Lodge team members have been providing a stable level of care to the same three young people since October 20, some 18 months. The young people are settled and making positive progress.

Unannounced Regulation 44 visits were undertaken, every month, during the period of April 21 to March 22.

As stated, the same three young people have remained living at Nook Lodge, therefore there have been no young people who have either moved in or out during the past 17 months. The young people at Nook Lodge have enjoyed a very settled period throughout their stay at Nook Lodge with no disruptions in terms of young people having to get to know new people.

Type of notification	Reported Incidents 2020-21	Reported Incidents 2021-22	Variance
Critical incident	n/a	15	+/-
Ofsted notification	n/a	16	+/-

There have been no missing episodes or restraints recorded since the home opened in October 20 and no sanctions recorded since February 21. During this reporting period there were 15 critical incidents and 16 notifications to Ofsted, an increase when compared to the first Corporate Parenting Board report provided in respect of Nook Lodge. However, this reporting period is for a much longer period due to the registration being granted mid-way through the reporting year. The critical incidents were generally in relation to one young person who was experiencing mental health worries resulting in them presenting behaviours requiring additional support. Some of the notifications are due to the young people being diagnosed with Covid-19.

The Regulation 44 visitors made six recommendations during this reporting period, an increase of two recommendations when compared to the previous reporting period. The recommendations were accepted by the manager and shared with the team to enable them to reflect upon their practice and improve standards. The recommendations were progressed appropriately, within timescales. An example of a recommendation made during this reporting period was in relation to a request made, of the team, to follow up a young person's Pathway Plan, as there was no evidence that the plan had commenced, and no record was held on file. This was progressed prior to the next visit. This recommendation will support the young person to plan for their future.

Due to the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions the young people returned to school on 8th March 21 when schools were re-opened to all young people. The team supported the young people to return to school however, two young people struggled to return to the pattern of attendance they were previously used to. One young person has now completed formal education and is attending a barbering course at college whilst working at McDonald's. One young person has repeatedly refused to attend education stating that the class sizes are impacting upon his mental health. This continues to be addressed with Sunderland Virtual School who are seeking to offer home tutoring until an appropriate service is identified for them.

The team and young people at Nook Lodge are welcoming, the home is comfortable and warm, and the young people present as settled and happy during Regulation 44 visits. However, one young person is rarely seen as he is often in the community with friends, at college or work. Reports, discussion with team members and from contact with his mother highlight that he is settled at Nook Lodge and making progress.

Nook Lodge is maintained externally and internally to a good standard and is decorated and furnished in a modern style. The whole house has been updated and decorated except for the kitchen. However, the team have plans for the kitchen and the rear garden which is a work in progress. The young people are proud of their home and have decorated their bedrooms according to their style/fashion. In addition, they are looking forward to the back garden progressing and have been instrumental in terms of undertaking garden tasks. The rear garden is huge therefore remains a work in progress. The three young people enjoy caring for their hens and cockerel, and one young person has recently fostered his friend's rabbit.

A risk assessment remains in place to ensure the safety of the young people, team members and professionals who need access to Nook Lodge. The assessment is reviewed regularly and updated by the manager reflecting Covid-19 restrictions which have varied during the reporting period. All three young people have suffered from Covid-19 although with minimal symptoms and no lasting issues.

Voice of a Child/Young Person




All three young people have been spoken to, this reporting period, by a Regulation 44 visitor. The young people do not always wish to engage with the visitor but all three have been polite and welcoming when they have chosen to partake in discussion. On the occasions the young people have been keen to share their experiences of living at Nook Lodge, they have spoken positively about each other and team members. The young people have raised no significant concerns about the care afforded to them.

During February 22's visit, one young person shared that she enjoyed Christmas and was looking forward to family time and being allowed to have a sleep over at her mother's home. They shared they were looking forward to going bowling that evening with the link worker and was dressed for the occasion.

One young person continues to enjoy living at Nook Lodge, they shared that they enjoy spending time with team members and enjoys doing cooking sessions with them. The young person is very caring towards animals and was very involved when the home was rearing the chicks. During the most recent visit in March 22, the same young person was keen to support Ukrainian families by making wax melts and selling them. They discussed their concerns about the war and was very knowledgeable about the current situation. The same young person has discussed their concerns with team members as they have been preoccupied with the war, the staff are supportive around this.

One young person is very independent and although initially reluctant to remain at Nook Lodge they now want to stay and is enjoying the support they receive from the team, particularly in relation to their emotional needs and how this impact upon them. The same young person is hoping to complete their barbering training and work in a local salon. They are enjoying having extra money from their part time job at McDonald's.

Voice of a Parent



*"they're well cared for, they keep
in touch with me to keep me
updated and it was great being
invited to have Christmas
Lunch with them"*

The feedback from the parents of the young people, during this reporting period, remains positive. One mother stated that she feels her child is well cared for, the team maintain regular contact with her, to provide updates about her child. She was delighted to be invited to Nook Lodge for Christmas lunch.

Last year one young person's mother expressed several concerns regarding her son not settling at Nook Lodge and the impact this was having on the family. However, she has expressed no recent concerns and now feels more included in the day-to-day plans of her son.

The feedback from another parent was positive in that she is happy with the support her son is accessing, from the team, about his sexuality and identity. She feels he is supported to make informed decisions about his needs, and feels he is supported to access information about LGBTQ+. This evidences the team's ability to address equality and diversity issues with the young people in a sensitive manner.

Summary:

There have been no missing episodes to include missing episodes over 24 hours, no sanctions and no restraints used, this reporting period. The number of critical incidents and notifications to Ofsted have increased this reporting period however, that is due to the extended period of reporting over twelve months and not six months, like previously.

The team and young people at Nook Lodge are making positive progress. They have been together for eighteen months now and are developing and progressing as a family. The young people have benefited from moving in, at a similar time, and being cared for by the same team members, generally. The home very much represents normal family life in that there is a very caring and nurturing approach to the young people, by the team.

The three young people, although of differing ages, interests and views are respectful and caring towards each other, like three siblings would be.

Positive feedback has been received from the young people, their family and professionals involved with them, regarding the care they receive. No significant concerns have been raised.

The team at Nook Lodge support the young people to access education, attend health appointments and learn new skills to develop their independence for moving on. The team listen to and respond to the needs of the young people to evidence that they genuinely care about them.

The team approach issues, with the young people, sensitively and therapeutically, with support from external agencies.

The recommendations from the Regulation 44 visits, documented above, were accepted by the manager, and implemented within timescales. The management team and all team members remain committed to the young people, they acknowledge and celebrate the young people's achievements and accept that they are individuals with differing skills/needs.

The fabric of the home at Nook Lodge is of a very good standard internally and externally and is well maintained. The home is decorated and furnished to good standard in a modern style, with a homely family feel. However, the team and young people are planning a more modern kitchen and continue to work hard in their huge rear garden.

A Covid-19 risk assessment remains in place, despite restrictions being lifted, to continue to ensure the safe care of the young people living in the home, team members working there and professionals who need access to Nook Lodge.

Monument View

Monument View Children's Home remains approved for up to six young people of either gender, aged from eleven up to the age of eighteen. It is situated on a large plot of land within the Shiney Row area of Sunderland. The home has one vacancy for a residential childcare worker. The registered long-standing manager retired after the last Full Ofsted inspection in May 2021 which judged the home as requiring improvement. The former Deputy Manager is now the manager after being successful at interview against external candidates and passing the fit and proper person interview with Ofsted. The new Deputy Manager is a person with a professional background primarily in health as a CAMHS Nurse, who also has residential childcare experience. This expertise has broadened the experience of the staff group. In total eight other members of staff have moved on with their careers and the home now has an equal balance of male to female workers as opposed to a predominately male staff team which was in place for many years. The staff team now has a wider range of experiences in different areas of work with young people for example youth work and health and has a better gender balance.

Since the last report to Corporate Parenting in March 21, Ofsted visited Monument View in January 2022 and conducted a Interim Inspection, the last full inspection was May 21 with the table below outlining the judgements from both visits:

Ofsted Rating	Judgement 4.5.21 - 5.5.21	Judgement 6.1.2022
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good

Three requirements were made from the Interim inspection in January 22 a reduction of 2 from May 21 Full Inspection:

The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— protect and promote each child's welfare; treat each child with dignity and respect; help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; and provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)) This specifically relates to the cleanliness of children's bedrooms

The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (4)(a)).

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— that staff— 6 February 2022 Inspection report for children's home: 1254843 6 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)).

Two requirements were made from the Interim inspection in January 22 a reduction of 3 from May 21 Full Inspection:

The registered person should ensure that there is a workforce plan which details the processes and the agreed timescales for the staff to achieve induction, probation and any core training (such as safeguarding, health and safety and mandatory qualifications). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by the staff while they are working at the home and should be used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of the staff, including the home's manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

The registered person should ensure that case records are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

As identified above the Ofsted report did note some improvements at Monument View. However, these were not enough to amend the previous judgement.

Within the reporting period Monument View has provided care for the following numbers of children and young people:

Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21
6	6	6	5	5	6
Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
6	6	6	6	5	6

Six young people have been cared for by the team at Monument View for most of this reporting period. Six young people have moved out of the home in line with their care or pathway plans and four young people have moved in. The matching of young people who move into the home is carefully considered in respect of the individual needs of each young person and the potential impact the young person moving in may have on the dynamics of the other young people living at the home. This has been done well as evidenced by data such as the lowest number of missing episodes for any of the five homes during the last year.

6 boys and 0 girls are currently residing at Monument View, aged between 12 and 17 years. They all have differing needs and interests which are supported by the team.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	Number of recommendations
--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------------------	---------------------------

				in the reporting period
4	3	10	1	17

Fourteen recommendations were made during this reporting period. This compares to 8 recorded in the previous period. Examples of the recommendations include amending the use of language to describe young people's behaviour from over-arching labelling term such as "violent" to describing the behaviour of the young person. For example, the young person pushed a foster carer once with the palm of one hand prior to their admission to the home. The language was encouraged to be more behaviour specific.

The matching of young people who move into the home is carefully considered in respect of the individual needs of each young person and the potential impact of the young person moving in may have on the dynamics of the other young people living at the home. In July 2021 there was a rolling recommendation in place from the visitor for the home not to admit young people who use drugs. This was until the number of young people who use cannabis, and the frequency of use was reduced significantly. This was put in place to support the manager and staff team to break the cycle and culture of the use of cannabis by young people at the home. This was achieved and the recommendation was removed in April 2022.

Examples of the recommendation made were updating risk assessments and individual crisis support plans to contain information about recent critical incidents.

There were 2 restraints recorded during this reporting period. This compares to 0 restraints in the previous reporting period. The home is implementing a trauma informed approach and staff do not wish to risk re-traumatising young people to the experiences, they may have had within their birth families prior to being cared for. The staff believe restraint should only be used if a young person is serious threat to themselves or others.

The young people living at Monument View attend a range of mainstream and alternative education and training. The young people have been older young people throughout the last year. The young people all have friendship groups in their own communities. The young people can discuss their wishes and feelings independently from the residential care workers, their social workers, IRO's the regulation 44 officers and via the Mind of my Own application. During regulation 44 visits the visitor spoke to at least one young person to discuss how they feel they are being cared for and if they wanted anything to change for them about how they are cared for at the home.

Unannounced Regulation 44 visits were undertaken, every month, during the period of April 21 to March 22. The visits took place at tea-time/early evening, daytime during school holidays. Unannounced visits are carried out to assist the visitor in having the experience of the day to day running of the home and the times chosen are to support the visitor in meeting the children in their home and seeking their views.

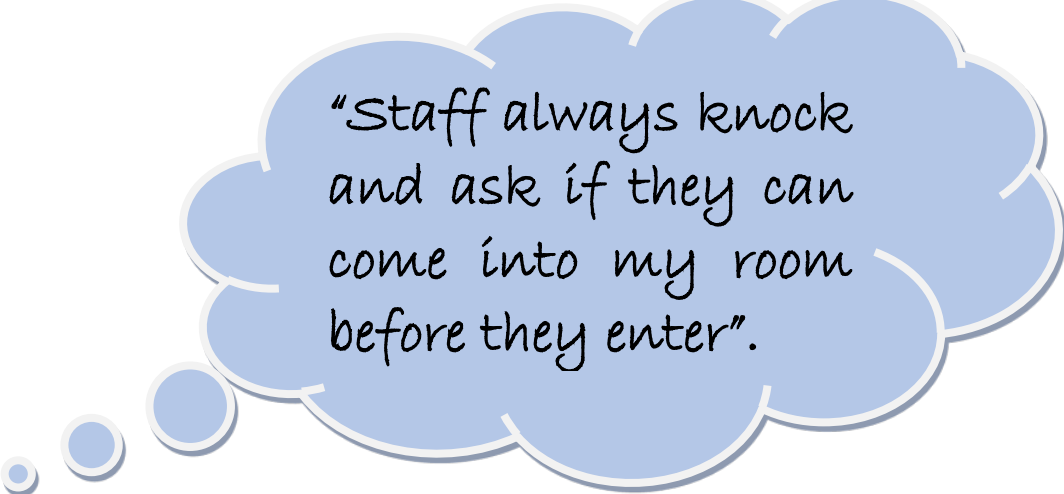
Eleven missing episodes were reported during this twelve-month period. This compares to 28 episodes reported in the last reporting period. It was positive to note only one young person was reported missing for over 24 hours during the last year with the period being just over 24 hours. The members of staff undertake one-to-one sessions to with young people reduce the risks of young people becoming missing.

Type of notification	Reported Incidents 2020-21	Reported Incidents 2021-22	Variance
Critical incident	15	16	+1
Ofsted notification	10	14	+4

During this reporting period 16 critical incidents were recorded, and 14 notifications were made to Ofsted. This compares 15 critical incidents and 10 notifications during the previous reporting period.

A risk assessment remains in place to ensure the safety of the young people, team members and professionals who need access to Monument View. The assessment is reviewed regularly and updated by the manager reflecting Covid-19 restrictions which have varied during the reporting period. Some of the young people have suffered from Covid-19 although with minimal symptoms and no lasting issues.

Voices of Children and Young people




"Staff always knock and ask if they can come into my room before they enter".

A young person said staff have supported them to develop their independent living skills such as cooking their favourite food. The staff had prepared his favourite meal chicken curry and was cooking it when they left the home.

A young person had been successful in passing his moped license and had recently bought a 125cc motorbike, staff are supporting him to get it MOT'D and insured. The visitor could see how excited he was about this achievement which will help him increase his independence even more as he can travel to work on it. The young person has been employed as an apprentice Joiner since July 2021 and shared they like their job and the financial benefit they gain from this. The young person has an en-suite bathroom which they like, and staff always knock and ask if they can enter his bedroom.

Voice of a Parent



"Staff are really supportive and I feel they really listen to me and my child".

A young person's father told the visitor he finds staff at the home very supportive and feels they listen to him and his child. The young person's father commented he has seen the warm relationships that exist between his child and staff. This places his mind at ease that his child is being well cared for. The Young Person's father also said staff communicate with him well and make him feel part of the decision-making process when it comes to his child.

Summary

There has been a change of manager, deputy manager and eight residential childcare workers over the last year which has enhanced the staff team and brought about a better balance between male and female staff. The Regulation 44 visitor has seen improvements and a committed staff workforce to achieve ongoing working towards a better Ofsted judgement. The staff remain committed to provided excellent day to day care of the young people and the voice of the young people continues to tell us they feel happy and safe. It is noted that Monument View had the least number of notifications to Ofsted and the lowest number of missing episodes. This continues to be work in progress and the visitor will continue to assist the home's manager in driving improvements to recognise excellent care and achieve a good judgement. It is hoped these figures and what underpins them is recognised in the homes next inspection by Ofsted. Staff at the home continue to work with Dr L Christie Psychologist to improve further the implementation of trauma informed practice

Analysis

During the last year Revelstoke Road's rating by Ofsted moved from Good to Outstanding, Nook Lodge's rating moved from Requires Improvement to Good, Grasswell House remained Good and achieved an Outstanding judgement for Leadership and management. Monument view's judgement remained as Requires improvement, however, from the information above it is clear the staff team are on their journey to achieve recognition of the standard of care provided.

Overall, the visitors are seeing a positive change in the children's home where staff are considerate to the young people's past experiences, and this is evident from the trauma informed approach each of the homes are taking. This approach is ensuring that the quality of care provided to the young people is outstanding and the young people feel valued and well cared for. We are hearing young people feel listened too, included, have a choice, and empowered to seek assurances from their carer's. We know from research that this type of environment supports the creation of safe spaces for the young people to call home and encourages young people to achieve their full potential.

Good and Outstanding homes understand the need for the young people to have meaningful relationships with their family members and the report identifies a real strength in staff valuing the young people's birth family. The views of the parents are positive, and they use words such as "change" and "safe" however it is noted that one parent speaks as if they haven't visited the home where their child lives. In building such relationships the homes should continue to value such relationships and seek to involve parents in the care at every opportunity, when safe to do so.

Service Review & Development

The annual programme of themed audits continues to be in place, this is to support and encourage the homes to continuously consider the children's homes regulations (2015, updated 2018).

A representative from the Regulation 44 visitors has continued to attend quarterly residential management meetings to share learning and to hear feedback with regards to the Regulation 44 visits.

It is planned during the next year for the comments young people provide to the visitors about the care they receive to be added to their childcare records on the organisations liquid logic system. This will strengthen even further the voice of the child and give young people a record of what they felt about their experiences of being cared for in the organisations children's homes.

We are working with the Mind of my Own team to create a link to the visitor in order for young people to tell us what their home is like and share what's working well, what's not so good and what we can do to help make their home better.

The visitors are proud that both the homes managers and the visitors achieved 100% in returning reports which ensures that Ofsted receive the report timely and will continue to strive such achievements.

To further develop the service, we will be looking at developing an area in Liquid Logic to record the reports which will allow access of both regulation 44 and regulation 45 reports which removes the reliance of distribution.

Keith Munro

Reviewing/Regulation 44 Officer



Jackie Amos

Reviewing/Regulation 44 Officer

Quality Assured by:

Lauren Nesbitt

Independent Reviewing Officer Manager

Gavin Taylor

Children Independent Reviewing Officer Manager

Date: 10/05/22