

Message from Yvette Stanley, Ofsted National Director Regulation and Social Care, 23 April 2021

Our weekly update for children's social care providers and local authorities:

As COVID-19 restrictions begin to lift further and we all hope the roadmap to normality can be maintained, our focus remains on recovery. We are all in this for the long haul and recovery will require the best system leadership possible. I was very pleased to yesterday to attend, albeit virtually, ADCS' reception to welcome Charlotte Ramsden as the new President. Charlotte takes over from Jenny Coles who has been a tremendous system leader for many years but especially over the year of her presidency. I thank her for her calm, intelligent and thoughtful leadership.

Charlotte spoke about the crucial opportunity to amplify the sector's influence in order to maximize the impact of the Children's Social Care Review if it is to be the 'once in a generation' opportunity to improve outcomes for children. She also spoke about the need for better residential care that really meets children's needs and regulation that works. Nothing for us to argue with there. I look forward to continuing to work with ADCS and the wider sector in our joint ambition to help those children and families in greatest need.

Return to routine Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) inspections

We returned to routine inspections for social care providers inspected under the [SCCIF](#) on 12 April 2021.

We will schedule inspections by taking into account any concerns we have about a provider, the most recent inspection judgement, and the length of time since our most recent visit.

Inspectors will take account of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and any changes to providers' ways of working. For example:

- we will prioritise on-site inspections for all settings, but we will always check with providers if any additional precautions are necessary when we give notice of an inspection
- if fostering or adoption agency staff are not all working from an office, there may be more off-site inspection activity than usual. We will, however, arrange face-to-face meetings if that is necessary to gather the best evidence.

Notifying Ofsted of serious incidents – online form for registered providers

We previously told you about the online form for informing Ofsted about serious events or incidents. We ask that registered providers use this form to send us this information.

The form and relevant guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tell-ofsted-about-an-incident-childrens-social-care-notification>. The form is only available at this 'gov.uk' web address.

When accessing the form through Ofsted online please make sure that you click on the social care serious notification and not on early years serious notification. Your first page should list social care settings. To check you have made a successful submission, you should have received a confirmation email from Ofsted forms (ofsted.forms@notifications.service.gov.uk), with the heading 'Ofsted received your serious incident report'. If you have not received this email then your form has not been successfully submitted to us.

Sending independent visitor reports and quality of care reviews to Ofsted

Social care registered providers are required by regulations to send certain reports to Ofsted when they have been produced. We also ask some providers to share with us reports they have prepared under certain national minimum standards (NMS). These include:

- children's homes and secure children's homes – reports under regulations 44 and 45
- independent fostering agencies – reports under regulation 35 and NMS 25
- residential family centres – reports under regulations 23 and 25
- voluntary adoption agencies and adoption support agencies - reports under NMS 25
- residential holiday schemes for disabled children - reports made under regulations 29 and 30

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), there are likely to be delays in reviewing incoming post. Therefore, we ask that you send in these reports via email instead of post as this is the most effective way of sending us information at the moment.

Please email them to enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk and include Ofsted's unique reference number (URN) for your service and the date on which any visit occurred.

If you are a children's home, please pass this message to your independent visitor on our behalf.

I hope this update is helpful to you. If you have any further queries or feedback, please send them to EYRegulatoryandSocialCare@ofsted.gov.uk.

Best wishes,

Yvette.