

## **Message from Yvette Stanley, Ofsted National Director Regulation and Social Care, 5 June 2020**

To children's social care providers and local authorities:

As we have reached a new phase in our response to COVID-19 (coronavirus) with schools and early years settings opening for more children, I have been thinking a lot about transitions and good endings. For children and families, with their histories of trauma and loss, we know that change can hit hard.

Some looked after children who are settled with foster or kinship carers, or who are in residential placements, have thrived with more time in their homes with their carers. I've heard lovely stories of time spent together playing and creating works of art or even just cooking together. Building connections, having more attuned moments and therapy through play are blessings that have come out of these very challenging times.

We know that more regular virtual contact with siblings has been another positive for some children who are not placed together. Others have talked about virtual contact being less stressful than face-to-face. Some care leavers have valued more regular, but shorter, checking in with support staff, as have some families with children on a plan.

For others, we know the disruption has hit hard and we have seen young people with autism and vulnerable teenagers struggle. And we are all worried about the families not seen, and therefore not supported.

As the lockdown restrictions ease, the transition will bring different pressures and there may be more disruptions for us to all accommodate. It's vital that we build on our learning from the last few months.

To that end, I will be contributing to a What Works Centre Webinar on 18 June. If you have any thoughts and reflections that you want to share in advance, please do. I always value your insights and we are keen to play a role in capturing our collective learning in the best interests of children and families.

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### **Sending independent visitor reports and quality of care reviews to Ofsted**

Registered social care providers are required by regulations to send certain reports to Ofsted when they have been produced. These include independent visitor reports for children's homes under Regulation 44 and quality of care reports for independent fostering agencies under Regulation 35.

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](mailto: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 and your independent visitor sends the reports to Ofsted, please pass this message to them on our behalf.

## Honours

A letter from Jonathan Slater, Permanent Secretary at the Department for Education (DfE), has requested nominations for those who have done something exceptional to support the response to COVID-19. The criteria for nomination is:

- Work on the frontline supporting the most vulnerable members of society and those who have caught COVID-19
- Provide critical care to COVID-19 patients
- Develop innovations to support the vulnerable and those with COVID-19
- Go to extraordinary lengths to keep critical services going
- Volunteer in the community or for service organisations in support of those affected by COVID-19.

If you know anyone who meets the requirements above, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-honours-nomination-form> to access the nomination form. Once completed please forward your nomination to [covid-19nominations@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:covid-19nominations@cabinetoffice.gov.uk).

The nomination will then be processed and assessed. If your nominee is successful they will be presented with an honour of the British Empire ranging from BEM to KBE for the Queen's Birthday Honours list in the Autumn and the Queen's New Years' honours published at the end of the year.

For further information please feel free to contact the Department for Education Honours Secretariat at [Honours.TEAM@education.gov.uk](mailto:Honours.TEAM@education.gov.uk).

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I hope this update is helpful and please do continue to send us your queries to [socialcare@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:socialcare@ofsted.gov.uk).

Best wishes,  
Yvette