

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – 18<sup>th</sup> MARCH 21013

<b>Title of paper:</b>	<b>Regulation 33 Visits – Internal Residential</b>	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Helen Blackman Acting Director Safeguarding	<b>Wards affected:</b> All
<b>Contact Officer(s) and contact details:</b>	Paulette Thompson-Omenka – Head of Service, Children in Care <a href="mailto:paulette.thompson-omenka@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">paulette.thompson-omenka@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> 0115 8765023	
<b>Other colleagues who have provided input:</b>	Kay Sutt, Service Manager, Residential and Targeted Support <a href="mailto:kay.sutt@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">kay.sutt@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> 01158765667	
<b>Relevant Council Plan theme(s):</b>		
World Class Nottingham		✓
Work in Nottingham		
Safer Nottingham		✓
Neighbourhood Nottingham		✓
Family Nottingham		✓
Healthy Nottingham		✓
Serving Nottingham Better		
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):</b>		
<p>Internal Residential Homes are required to be inspected on a monthly basis by suitable persons independent to Residential Services as part of legislative requirements under National Minimum Standards (2000). Members of the Corporate Parenting Board and other relevant professionals are included on the Rota managed by the Service Manager. Reports are sent monthly as statutorily required to Ofsted. The person carrying out the visit shall –</p> <p>(a) interview, with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as appears necessary in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home;</p> <p>(b) inspect the premises of the children's home, its daily log of events and records of any complaints; and</p> <p>(c) prepare a written report on the conduct of the home.</p>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>1</b>	Continued involvement of relevant professionals undertaking Regulation 33 visits.	
<b>2</b>	Outcomes of Reports analysed and monitored by Service Manager to identify trends and patterns to improve performance as well as to share good practice.	
<b>3</b>	Corporate Parenting Board updated regularly in respect of outcomes of visits.	

### **1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Residential services since April 2011 have been re-configured into a Small Group Homes Model which is an umbrella term. The specifics are set out below:
- 1.2 There are now 6 settled beds in 3 Children's Homes, 7 Emergency beds which accommodate 3 young people in the Bestwood area each on a short-term basis and 12 Semi-Independence beds (6 Sherwood Rise, 4 and 2 in NCC 2 transition houses in the NG7 area).

- 1.3 The number of internal beds in Nottingham City has increased from 17 to 25 which require further Regulation 33 visitors.
- 1.4 Regulation Visits are an important quality assurance process and also serve as a Safeguarding measure for Children in Care. They are able to inform practice and performance and ensure young people have access to someone independent, should they need to complain or disclose information about the care they are receiving.
- 1.5 Regulation 33 Visits are also a legislative requirement and completed reports are sent to Ofsted on a monthly basis. Some members of the Corporate Parenting Board have undertaken the training to add to the independent scrutiny. Other Board members have attended the training and have been out to visit the homes with other Reg 33 Visitors. Further training sessions are planned for the coming year in order to have a healthy number for the current and future rotas.

## **2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

- 2.1 Due to the nature of the provision it is imperative that the service is scrutinised independently to ensure it is delivering cost-effective services and improving outcomes for Children In Care. People carrying out Regulation 33 visits can make recommendations to improve practice as well as ensuring that minimum standards are being adhered to, if not exceeded.

- 2.2 Since April 2011 Regulation 33 Visits have been undertaken in all the Children's Homes.

- 2.3 They have identified recent performance issues such as:

Statements of Purposes and Welcome Guides needing to be updated to include new staff members, due to changes in staff and management in some of the Homes.

Training needs for staff identified to undertake Life Story work to assist them in the work they undertake with children/young people in the Homes.

- 2.4 Each visitor formulates an Action Plan which is completed by the Registered Manager and checked by the visitor on the next visit. Recommendations/Action plans have reduced significantly over the last few months with some homes having no actions to complete for several months concurrent. This has been reflected in recent ofsted inspections with two of our homes receiving outstanding judgments and several others receiving good judgements.

- 2.5 The majority of reports continue to be very positive with Inspectors describing the Homes as follows:

"Pleasant working environments, where staff all pull together and support each other".

"The Assistant Manager and the staff member I spoke to were very committed to the care of the young people and displayed an understanding of how to best manage the young people to improve attitude and performance in time keeping and attendance at college, school and activities".

"Staff are equipped with the skills to meet the needs of the children".

"I briefly saw 2 young people coming to staff for advice and the interaction was supportive and positive".

"Both young people said they were happy in the home and staff were good to them. One remarked that it was much quieter here than his own where he is one of ten children. They had no complaints when asked other than some staff were better cooks than others. We

discussed school and what they wanted to do in the future for a career. One wished to become a mechanic working with cars, the other an engineer". Also met with SR on her own. We had spoken to each other on my last visit.

"She spoke warmly of staff. She now understood the area where she had to take responsibility for her life and not leave things to others which showed some maturity".

"I spoke with both young people. Neither wished to raise any issue of concern. Indeed both young people stated how happy they were at the home. They spoke highly of staff members and felt they had a voice in helping to shape their environment. On both of my last 2 visits I have been impressed by the warm, homely young person centred environment. The staff are inviting and professional and have developed positive working relationships with both young people".

2.6 All continue to have been very positive about the décor and environment and comment how evident it is that staff and young people care about the Homes.

2.7 More importantly the young people have reported to visitors the positives about living in the houses. Some of the recent comments from children and young people are as follows:

"Staff were very welcoming and caring".

"Everyone here is caring and wants to look after me as well as everything else".

"You get looked after and everyone is nice".

"I didn't want to come here, but it's not what I thought it would be like. It's like, things are ordinary here. It's just like living in a house with different people".

"I have no issues and I'm very happy with my placement here. Staff are friendly and helpful. I Feel safe in the home and prefer this home to my foster placement".

"Staff are always available/willing to talk to me no matter what time of day or night".

2.8 The only recent recorded complaint was in relation to pocket money:

"Would be better if we had more money".

2.9 It has also been clearly noticeable that the level of missing young people is continuing to decrease, as is the number of Notifiable Events and young people being involved in anti-social behaviour for example arrests, convictions and emergency call-outs to police.

2.10 Young people's access to Education and Employment is improving all of which is recorded in the Regulation 33 Reports. Currently only 2 young people in our internal homes are not attending school or college and staff are working very hard along with other professionals in encouraging them back into education or work. Staff work very closely with the virtual head in supporting our children and young people in school and ensuring that educational packages are put in place for those children who don't currently have a school placement. The staff have high aspirations for the children and young people and achievements are celebrated as a matter of high priority.

2.11 Ofsted have recently requested that inspectors ensure they include in all Regulation 33

reports the opinions of children and young people about the care they receive. Young people had been absent from the home at the time of some of the inspections taking place. Ofsted have advised that in these circumstances it is acceptable for inspectors to telephone children and young people to ascertain their opinions and record accordingly. Inspectors have acted upon this recommendation and now every Regulation 33 report contains children and young people's views about the care they receive. The staff also gain feedback from children, young people and their families by way of a questionnaire which is shown to inspectors. The feedback from these questionnaires have generally been very positive and comments have also been made for improving the service which serve to shape the future of Children's Residential.

### **3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 None required.

### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY)**

4.1 The re-configuration of Children's Residential continues to be cost effective for the City Council. The increase in internal beds has reduced the need for external beds and costs are currently in line or lower than external provision. Also the increase in internal beds prevents some young people from being placed outside of the city as it is good practice wherever possible to keep children and young people near their family, friends, school and college.

### **5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS)**

5.1 Regulation 33 reports include legislative requirements (amended to meet new Minimum Standards, April 2011)

5.2 Record and capture information in relation to young peoples offending and anti-social behaviours.

5.3 They also report as to whether young peoples cultural and diversity needs are being met within their identified Care Plan

### **6 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

6.1 N/A

### **7 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

7.1 N/A