



# ALTERNATIVE CARE

## INSPECTION & MONITORING

### INSPECTION GUIDANCE SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

#### Theme 7: Use of Resources

# Children's Residential Centres

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## 1.0 Introduction

The Alternative Care Inspection and Monitoring Service is part of Children's Service Regulation and is a component of the Quality Assurance Directorate of the Child and Family Agency. The inspectorate which was originally established in 1998 under the former Health Boards was created under legislation purveyed by the 1991 Child Care Act, to fulfil two statutory regulatory functions:

1. To establish and maintain a register of children's residential centres in its functional area (see Part VIII, Article 61 (1)). A children's centre being defined by Part VIII, Article 59.
2. To inspect premises in which centres are being carried on or are proposed to be carried on and otherwise for the enforcement and execution of the regulations by the appropriate officers as per the relevant framework formulated by the minister for Health and Children to ensure proper standards and conduct of centres (see part VIII, Article 63, (1)-(3)); the Child Care (Placement of Children in Residential Care) Regulations 1995, the Child Care (Standards in Children's Residential Centres) Regulations, 1996 and the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) National Standards for Children's Residential Centres, 2018, which replace the 2001, Department of Health and Children, National Standards for Children's Residential Services.

The Child Care (Standards in Children's in Residential Centres) Regulations, 1996 provide the framework against which registration decisions of children's residential centres are primarily made. The HIQA, National Standards for Children's Residential Centres, 2018 provide the framework against which inspections are carried out and provide the criteria against which centres structures and care practices are examined.

The Alternative Care Inspection and Monitoring Service is committed to carry out its duties in an even handed, fair and rigorous manner. The inspection of centres is carried out to safeguard the wellbeing and interests of children and young people living in them.

## 2.0 Purpose

The Alternative Care and Monitoring Service, Inspection Guidance Support Framework has been developed as a guidance document to assist inspectors in understanding the process of inspection, complying with the Child Care (Placement of Children in Residential Care) Regulations 1995, the Child Care (Standards in Children's Residential Centres) Regulations, 1996 and the National Standards for Children's Residential Centres, 2018 (HIQA).

Whilst the importance of professional judgment remains paramount during the inspection process it is the purpose of this Inspection Guidance Support Framework to promote:

- A standardised approach amongst inspectors in relation to the process of inspection, complying with regulations and standards.
- A structured framework to identify to registered providers and persons who participate in the management of designated centres what is required in ensuring they are delivering a safe and effective service that complies with the regulations and standards and any other legislation.

### 3.0 Structure of the Inspection Guidance Support Framework

The Inspection Guidance Support Framework provides detailed guidance to assist TUSLA inspectors and approved centres to improve the quality of services provided to each child/young person.

For each Theme of the National Standards for Children's Residential Centres, 2018 (HIQA), the Inspection Guidance Support Framework shall outline the specific standard and examples of information/evidence in relation to observation and documentation reviewed as part of the inspection. Interviews with senior management, centre management, staff, child/young person and observations are also used as part of the process where appropriate.

The Inspection Guidance Support Framework aims to promote the continuous improvement of the quality of services provided to children/young people residing in non-statutory children residential centres.

### 4.0 Glossary of Terms

**Accountability** – being answerable to another person or organisation for decisions, behaviour or any consequences.

**Care plan** – A document generated from an assessment of the child, setting out their goals, needs, aims and objectives of the placement and how the centre proposes to address them. (The child's care plan, supervision and child in care reviews are requirements for the social work department under the Child Care (Placement of Children in Residential Care) Regulations 1995.

**Child** – a person under the age of 18 years. (Child Care Act, 2001)

**Child safeguarding** – ensuring safe practice and appropriate responses by staff and to concerns about the safety or welfare of children/young people, should these arise. Child safeguarding is about protecting the child/young person from harm, promoting their welfare and in doing so creating an environment which enables children and young people to grow, develop and achieve their full potential. (TUSLA, 2019)

**Child Safeguarding Statement** – a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child/young person availing of the service is safe from harm. (TUSLA, 2019)

**Competency** – the behavioural definition of the knowledge, skills, values and personal qualities that underlie the adequate performance of professional activities.

**Incident** – an event or circumstance which could have (near miss) or did lead to harm. Incidents can be practice related or non-practice related and includes incidents associated with harm to or impact on:

- Children/young people.
- Staff or visitors.
- Non-compliance with standards or regulations. (TUSLA, 2017)

**Person in charge** – in relation to a registered children's residential centre, means the person whose name is entered in the register as the person in charge of the centre - Child Care (Placement of Children in Residential Care) Regulations 1995. The person in charge's duties

include overseeing the day-to-day running of the centre, managing the training and development of staff and ensuring the management of records, incidents and investigations in the centre. From time to time, some or all of these duties may be delegated to one or more suitably qualified staff members in the centre as appropriate. (HIQA, 2018)

**Placement plan** – outlines the needs and goals of the placement for the child for the duration of their placement. In the context of children's residential centres, the placement plan is informed by the care plan. (HIQA, 2018)

**Registered provider** – means the person whose name is entered in the register as the person carrying on the centre - Child Care (Placement of Children in Residential Care) Regulations 1995. The registered provider's responsibilities includes overseeing the management of the centre's care practices, operational policies and procedures; ensuring the centre has sufficient resources, facilities and access to services in line with the centre's statement of purpose and ensuring each child/young person in the centre is suitably placed, receives effective care and support and is assisted in preparations for leaving care, in line with their individual needs. (HIQA, 2018)

**Risk** – The probability/likelihood of an adverse event, outcome, danger, loss or injury within the healthcare system. (HIQA, 2014)

**Safe care and support** – how children's residential centres protect children and promote their welfare. Safe services also avoid, prevent and minimise harm, and learn when things go wrong. (HIQA, 2018)

**Serious Event Review Group** – multidisciplinary fora concerned with serious incidents involving children/young people placed in Children's Residential Services. The aims of the SERG is to:

- review a serious incident/a number of interrelated serious incidents.
- identify opportunities for learning about the causes of that incident/those incidents and about care practice at centre level.
- to ensure that learning is operationalised in respect of that incident/those incidents i.e. that risk is managed, underlying issues are addressed and future occurrences of same are prevented wherever possible. (TUSLA, 2017)

**Workforce** – all people working in a service.

## 5.0 THEME 7: USE OF RESOURCES

### Standards 7.1 – Residential centres plan and manage the use of available resources to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support

A well-run residential centre uses resources effectively and seeks opportunities to improve the service and achieve better outcomes for children. Providing child-centred, safe and effective care is inherently linked to the use of financial and human resources. This includes how these resources are planned, managed and delivered. Decisions about resourcing take account of the needs of children and the level of demand on the service. Staff who make decisions on the use of resources are accountable for the decisions made and must ensure these decisions are well informed, as well as being child centred.

Regular audits shall be undertaken to determine compliance with Standard 7.1. These shall be completed via interviews, a review of relevant records, including incident reports, through observation and by utilising the appropriate audit tools.

#### ***Child Care (Standards in Children's Residential Centres) Regulations, 1996, Part III Article 7:***

*The registered proprietor and person in charge of a centre shall satisfy the relevant health board that the number, qualifications, experience and availability of members of the staff of the centre are adequate having regard to the number of children residing in the centre and the nature of their needs.*

#### **Examples of information/evidence that will be reviewed and how this will be done**

Standard 7.1:

##### **Documentation Review**

Inspectors will review documents including (but not limited to):

- Staff questionnaires
- Young people questionnaires
- Social work questionnaires
- Minutes of management meetings
- Minutes of clinical meetings
- Activity planners
- Service level agreements
- Maintenance logs
- Care plans
- Placement plans
- Access planning and family contact
- Risk register
- Supervision records

- Management meeting minutes
- Internal audit reports
- Quality improvement plan and actions
- Annual review of compliance
- Team meeting minutes
- Rosters
- Training records/schedules
- Handover records
- Petty cash records
- Young person's meetings
- Complaints logs
- Statement of purpose and function
- Centre policies and procedures including
  - HR policies
  - Financial policies
  - Recruitment policies
  - Vetting policies
  - Whistleblowing policies
  - Retention policies
  - Staff training and development policies
  - Staff support policies
  - On call policy

## Observation

Inspectors will observe:

- If the numbers of staff present in the centre support the care to be provided in line with the centre's mission, vision, policies and procedures, legislation, regulation, standards and evidenced based best practice.
- If there is adequate planning and allocation of staff resources through the centre hand over meeting/team meetings.
- If there is sufficient relief staff to cover periods of leave e.g. annual leave, maternity leave, unforeseen events.
- If the voices and wishes of young people are being heard and responded to.
- If there are adequate resources to meet basic needs e.g.: food, accommodation, recreation resources, pocket money, activity money.

## Interview

Inspectors will communicate with children/young people:

- If they feel there is enough money and staff to give them the care and support they need.
- If they feel they receive enough money for activities and pocket money.
- If they are getting support to maintain family contact.

Inspectors will communicate with staff:

- To determine if there are adequate staff in the centre in line with the centre's mission, vision, policies and procedures, legislation, regulation, standards and evidenced based best practice.
- To determine they are satisfied with the allocated resources they have to work with.
- To determine if resources are allocated effectively.
- To determine if resources are made available to support the staff to receive the training required to work with young people.
- To explore what specialist support is available to meet the needs of the young people.
- To determine that resources are provided to ensure the upkeep of the premises is maintained.
- To determine if supports are provided for staff support.
- To determine that there is adequate financial resources to support child centred, safe and effective services.
- To determine that resources are available to meet the identified needs on statutory care plans and placement plans.

Inspectors will communicate with the registered provider or designated other:

- To determine how resources are allocated and if they are allocated effectively.
- To explore what specialist support is available to meet the needs of the young people.
- To determine that resources are provided to ensure the upkeep of the premises is maintained.
- To determine if supports are provided for staff including training, clinical, etc.
- To determine that there is adequate financial resources to support child centred, safe and effective services.
- To determine that resources are available to meet the identified needs on statutory care plans and placement plans.
- To determine if there are adequate resources to ensure appropriate work force planning and development in line with the centre's mission, vision, policies and procedures, legislation, regulation, standards and evidenced based best practice.
- To explore and determine if there are adequate resources within the centre in order to implement and deliver quality improvements.
- To explore and determine if there is oversight of financial governance within the centre.
- To explore and determine if there are mechanisms in place to ensure transparent and effective decision making and accountability.

Inspectors will communicate with social workers/relevant professionals:

- To determine if they are satisfied that there are adequate staff in the centre to meet the needs of the children placed there.
- To explore and determine if there are adequate resources within the centre in order to implement and deliver quality improvements;

## 6.0 References

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