

Residential holiday schemes for disabled children

The inspection framework, evaluation schedule and grade descriptors

This document outlines the framework for the inspection of residential holiday schemes for disabled children and sets out the criteria and judgements that Ofsted inspectors will use from July 2014.

It replaces the 'Interim framework for the inspection of residential holiday schemes for disabled children' and 'Inspections of residential holiday schemes for disabled children: interim evaluation schedule and grade descriptors'.

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Introduction

1. This guidance sets out the judgements that inspectors make and report on when inspecting residential holiday schemes for disabled children.¹ It should be used to inspect residential holiday schemes registered by Ofsted under the Care Standards Act 2000 (the Act) and the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013.²
2. The framework and evaluation schedule remain subject to periodic review. Any changes will be published on our website.

Legal basis for inspection

3. The Education and Inspections Act 2006³ sets out Ofsted's general statutory functions. Through the Act, Ofsted must carry out its work in ways that encourage the services it inspects and regulates to:
 - improve
 - be user-focused
 - be efficient and effective in the use of resources.
4. The legal basis for the regulation of residential holiday schemes is set out in the Care Standards Act 2000, Part 2 (Extension of the Application of Part 2 to Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children) (England) Regulations 2013.⁴ These regulations extend Ofsted's powers to register, inspect and, where necessary, enforce compliance with the Act and relevant regulations to residential holiday schemes for disabled children. They also define a residential holiday scheme.⁵
5. When inspecting residential holiday schemes, we give consideration to knowledge and understanding gained from previous inspections, any other relevant information that comes to light, and:
 - the Care Standards Act 2000⁶
 - the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013⁷

¹ Also referred to as 'residential holiday schemes' or 'schemes' in this document.

² The Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013; www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1394/made.

³ Education and Inspections Act 2006; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents

⁴ Care Standards Act 2000, Part 2 (Extension of the Application of Part 2 to Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children) (England) Regulations 2013; www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/253/made.

⁵ The definition can also be found in regulation 2 of the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013.

⁶ Care Standards Act 2000; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/14/contents.

⁷ Ibid. reference no. 2.

- the Care Standards Act 2000 (Registration)(England) Regulations 2010⁸
- Residential holiday schemes for disabled children: national minimum standards.⁹

Frequency of inspection

6. The frequency of inspections is set out in regulations.¹⁰ Residential holiday schemes for disabled children are inspected at least annually.
7. The timing of any inspection is influenced by an assessment of:
 - any current concerns or enforcement action
 - notifications received
 - returned questionnaires from children, young people and other interested parties, including parents and staff and volunteers
 - the outcomes of previous inspections
 - other relevant information held by Ofsted.

Notice given for inspection

8. Inspections are unannounced. We are mindful of the operating times of any residential holiday scheme when planning to inspect.

Inspectors

9. Residential holiday schemes are inspected by suitably trained social care inspectors. Usually, there is one inspector for each inspection.

Inspection activity

10. Inspectors focus their inspection activities on evaluating the experiences for children and young people, and the quality and impact of the residential holiday scheme in providing positive outcomes. Key activities include:
 - an evaluation of a sample of children's care practice and records – this is undertaken in order to judge the quality of practice and management of the

⁸ The Care Standards Act 2000 (Registration) (England) Regulations 2010; www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2130/made.

⁹ Residential holiday schemes for disabled children: national minimum standards, Department for Education, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/residential-holiday-schemes-for-disabled-children.

¹⁰ Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) (Children's Homes, etc.) (Amendment) Regulations S1 2007/694, as amended; www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/694/contents/made.

scheme and the difference this makes to the lives of children, young people, their families and carers; it includes discussions with staff, volunteers, managers, parents and, as appropriate, other professionals working with the child or young person

- listening and talking to children and young people who attend the residential holiday scheme – inspectors always meet children and young people during the inspection unless there are extremely exceptional circumstances
 - observation of staff and volunteers' interactions with children and young people
 - observation of key activities, such as handovers of information between staff and volunteers
 - gathering views from partners and stakeholders, such as parents, carers and health professionals
 - examination of records
 - inspection of premises, facilities, and health and safety arrangements
 - meetings with managers and staff and volunteers.
11. The inspection specifically focuses on gathering evidence against the evaluation schedule. The detail of activities undertaken and discussions held may vary depending on the lines of enquiry for each individual inspection.
12. Further details of inspection activity for residential holiday schemes for disabled children are available in 'Conducting the inspection of residential holiday schemes for disabled children'.¹¹

Making judgements

13. Inspectors make judgements against the evaluation schedule using a four-point judgement scale:
- outstanding
 - good
 - requires improvement
 - inadequate.
14. Inspectors use the descriptors of 'good' as the benchmark against which to grade and judge performance. Inspectors are required to weigh up the evidence in a particular area and to consider it against the evaluation criteria for outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate before making a

¹¹ *Conducting the inspection of residential holiday schemes for disabled children* (140142), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140142.

judgement at a full inspection. A judgement of 'good' is made where the inspector concludes that the evidence overall sits most appropriately with a finding of 'good'. This is what we describe as 'best fit'.

15. In addition, inspectors identify areas of outstanding practice and make requirements and recommendations for improvement. Requirements relate to regulatory breaches and recommendations relate to areas that need improvement or adoption of good practice and may relate to the national minimum standards or other relevant statutory guidance. We expect that care and support for all children and young people are sensitive and responsive to age, disability, ethnicity, faith or belief, gender, gender identity, language, race and sexual orientation.

How the regulations and national minimum standards inform inspection judgements

16. Residential holiday schemes must meet the statutory requirements of the regulations. Where they do not, inspectors identify clearly what a provider must do in the form of requirements (see paragraph 15). The Department for Education also publishes national minimum standards. Where providers do not take account of the national minimum standards, this may indicate a failure to comply with the regulations and is likely to indicate poor practice. This influences the inspection judgement and may result in requirements being made. Where appropriate, we always make recommendations for improvement.
17. The Ofsted inspection framework operates on the basis that only good is good enough for children and young people, whether that is in respect of their care or their education. The concept of a 'minimum' standard therefore is not applied in the evaluation criteria for inspections of residential holiday schemes. This framework sets out what good looks like for the care of all children and young people attending residential holiday schemes. Where a scheme is not yet good, we judge that it 'requires improvement' and set out the improvements we find it needs to make to become good. Those improvements are aligned with the relevant regulations, standards and guidance.
18. Meeting all regulatory requirements does not necessarily result in a judgement of good or outstanding. Meeting the requirements of good must equate to high-quality care, good planning, a safe and protective environment, positive experiences and tangible progress for children and young people. Nevertheless, inspectors carefully consider the seriousness of any failure to meet regulations and the potential impact on the experiences and progress of children and young to determine how this should influence the outcome of the inspection.

Concerns

19. The great majority of our work is carried out smoothly and without incident. If concerns arise during an inspection, these should be raised with the inspector

as soon as possible during the inspection visit. This provides an opportunity to resolve the matter before the inspection is completed. Any concerns about the factual accuracy of the findings in the report can be raised after the inspection and will be considered as part of the quality assurance process.

Complaints

20. If it has not been possible to resolve concerns through the process detailed in paragraph 19, a formal complaint can be raised under Ofsted's complaints procedure 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted'.¹²
21. Lodging a complaint does not normally delay the publication of the final inspection report.

Summary of the evaluation schedule

22. The evaluation schedule for inspections of residential holiday schemes is:
 - the overall experiences of children and young people, taking into account:
 - how well children and young people are helped and protected
 - the effectiveness of leaders and managers
 - working with partners to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The overall experiences of children and young people

Children and young people enjoy their stay at the residential holiday scheme. There is a range of varied activities that interest them, are enjoyable and help to increase their independence. Children and young people's individual needs are identified and prioritised effectively. They are safe and feel safe. Any identified risks are managed well. Locations for schemes take into full account the safety and welfare needs of disabled children and young people. They and their parents or carers are positive about the scheme, which offers high quality individualised support from its staff and volunteers. Children and young people enjoy positive relationships with others attending the scheme, and with staff and volunteers. Children and young people's health is suitably protected and promoted and care planning is effective. There is good communication with other professionals and children are able to share their wishes, views and feelings, irrespective of how they communicate. Their feedback

¹² *Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted* (130128), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-procedure-raising-concerns-and-making-complaints-about-ofsted

informs improvements. Children, young people and their families know how to complain. Leadership and management arrangements are effective and identified weaknesses are tackled decisively, resulting in improvement.

Good

23. A judgement for overall experiences of children and young people of 'good' is likely to be made when the following are evident:
- Children and young people enjoy their time at the residential holiday scheme. Activities are suitably varied. Schemes identify and make the most of opportunities for activities in the wider community. Children and young people are able to make informed choices about which activities they pursue.
 - Children and young people's experiences during their stay increase their potential to become more independent and to develop new skills.
 - Children feel safe and happy during their holiday. They have access to the services and support they need to meet their physical, social, emotional and psychological needs.
 - Robust and proactive practice by staff reduces the risk of harm or actual harm. Staff and volunteers follow appropriately published procedures that accord with statutory guidance (Working Together 2013¹³) in order to keep children safe.
 - Children enjoy their holiday fully and all potential risks to their welfare are identified, assessed and managed effectively.
 - Children and young people enjoy positive relationships with other children and young people, and with staff and volunteers.
 - Staff and volunteers provide high quality support to children that is based on their individual needs; they have the skills and abilities to communicate effectively with children and young people attending the holiday scheme and develop constructive relationships with parents.
 - Staff and volunteers place the well-being of individual children and young people at the centre of their practice in the holiday scheme, irrespective of the challenges these present. Children and young people's achievements are identified and celebrated.
 - Children and young people are able to have positive and regular contact with their family and friends during their holiday wherever they wish to do so.

¹³ Working together to safeguard children, Department for Education, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children

- Children and young people are able to share their wishes, views and feelings, irrespective of how they communicate. Their wishes, views and feelings are consistently used to inform their individual plans and the overall development and improvement of the scheme.
- Children and young people, their parents and carers, and commissioners give positive views about the quality of the care received and report that staff and volunteers support children and young people to enjoy their holiday and to remain safe.
- Children and young people and their parents and carers understand how to complain, and understand what has happened because of their complaint. Complaints are treated seriously, result in a clear, decisive response and lead to improvement for children and young people.
- Leaders and managers lead by example. They routinely monitor activities to oversee the quality of care provided. They know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the residential holiday scheme. They take decisive and effective action when weaknesses are identified and are committed to continuous improvement.
- Holiday schemes are appropriately located, designed and maintained, taking into full account the safety and welfare of disabled children and young people.

Outstanding

24. A judgement for the experiences of children and young people of outstanding is likely to be made if all the requirements for a 'good' judgement are met or exceeded and the following are evident:
- High quality and consistent care that is responsive to individual needs adds considerably to children and young people's experiences, progress and development. Children and young people have access to a wide and varied range of new experiences at the residential holiday scheme that are likely to provide enduring benefits for them.
 - Leaders and managers know the strengths and weaknesses of schemes well and can provide evidence of continuous improvement. They are creative and focused on making an exceptional difference to the lives of the children and young people attending the scheme.
 - Staff and volunteers have effective partnerships as appropriate with key agencies such as local health professionals, social work services and local community facilities, in order to improve the experiences of all children and young people attending the scheme.
 - Research-informed, innovative practice and high quality experienced staff make an exceptional difference to the lives and experiences of children and young people attending the scheme.

Requires improvement

25. A judgement for the experiences of children and young people of requires improvement is likely to be made when it does not sufficiently demonstrate the characteristics of a good judgement. However, there are no widespread or serious failures that result in individual children and young people not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted. Regulatory requirements are met or, if they are not, any breaches do not have a negative impact on the welfare of children and young people.

Inadequate

26. A judgement for the experiences and progress of children and young people of inadequate is likely to be made if children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences harm them or increase the risk of harm to them.

Action following an overall judgement of inadequate

27. An overall effectiveness judgement of inadequate is made where there are widespread or serious failures to comply with requirements that result in individual children and young people not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted. Serious failures may affect only one child, but still lead to a judgement of inadequate. In these circumstances, the inspector sets requirements to achieve compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013. Inspectors may also make recommendations to help the registered provider or manager to improve the quality and standards of care further.
28. On making a judgement of inadequate, the inspector will consult with a Regulatory Inspection Manager and instigate a case review.
29. The inspector will also consult with a Regulatory Inspection Manager where there is any history of:
 - complaints against the residential holiday scheme provider that have not been dealt with satisfactorily or where practice has not changed accordingly
 - failures to comply with regulations and/or observe national minimum standards that have not been satisfactorily resolved
 - failures to take satisfactory action to meet requirements/actions and recommendations where the suitability of the registered provider or manager has been called into question.
30. Where necessary, Ofsted's formal compliance decision-making forum initiates a case review. The purpose of the case review is to consider whether any enforcement action must be taken.

31. When a residential holiday scheme is judged as inadequate, it is usually reinspected during the next operating period of the scheme. A reinspection always takes place within 12 months of the inadequate judgement if the scheme is operational within this period.

How well children and young people are helped and protected

Good

32. Helping and protecting children and young people is likely to be judged 'good' when the following are evident:
- Children and young people are safe and feel safe from harm, including neglect, abuse, sexual exploitation, accidents and bullying.
 - Robust and proactive safeguarding practice by staff reduces the risk of harm or actual harm, including regular, effective contact and planning with parents and local authorities as required. Children and young people can identify a trusted adult to whom they can express any concerns. Staff and volunteers take their concerns seriously, respond to them appropriately and follow published procedures that accord with statutory guidance (Working Together 2013).
 - There are formal plans and help in place that reduce the risk of harm or actual harm to children and young people. There is evidence that risks are well-managed and kept under review. Risk management should not unnecessarily restrict opportunities for children to enjoy their holiday fully.
 - There is regular and effective liaison with the relevant agencies such as children's social care, police, the host authority, school and family as appropriate.
 - Staff and volunteers provide high quality, individualised support to children; they have the skills and abilities to effectively communicate with all the children and young people attending the holiday scheme. Staff and volunteers develop constructive relationships with parents and carers and share information effectively.
 - Planning for the diverse needs of children during their holiday is timely, clear and effective. Sleeping arrangements and physical care, including any intimate care requirements, respect children and young people's rights to dignity and privacy. Children and young people, carers and parents are consistently and fully involved in the planning and review of children's holidays.
 - Staff and volunteers have consistently high aspirations for all children and young people who attend the scheme and consistently and effectively challenge any barriers to children and young people being able to fully participate in everything that the scheme offers during their holiday.

- Children and young people are able to identify an adult they would talk to if they felt unsafe or unhappy during their holiday. Positive and proactive behaviour management strategies are consistently in use. Positive behaviour is consistently promoted and rewarded. Staff and volunteers use effective de-escalation techniques and creative alternative strategies to manage behaviour. Behaviour management plans are sensitive to children's individual needs and their likely responses to the use of restraint, should it be required. Restraint is as unintrusive as possible and is only used to protect the child or young person and those around them when there are no safe immediate alternative actions. All incidents are reviewed, recorded and monitored. The views of the child or young person are sought and understood. Monitoring of the management of behaviour is effective. Any use of restraint is reported to a child's parent or carer immediately and it is recorded formally in the child's record and the record for the scheme.
- There are robust and effective systems for managing, administering and recording medication. These are known and always followed by all relevant staff and volunteers. Children receive medication that meets their individual needs safely and in line with any medical advice. Further medical advice is sought quickly whenever necessary. Plans to meet children and young people's health needs in an emergency or following an accident are clear at each venue where the residential holiday scheme operates and are relevant to the particular needs of all children attending the scheme.

Outstanding

33. Helping and protecting children and young people is likely to be judged outstanding if all the requirements for a 'good' judgement are met or exceeded and the following is evident:
- The quality of help and protection for children and young people who attend the scheme consistently exceed the characteristics of 'good' and leads to exceptional and enduring benefits for children. Staff and volunteers demonstrate a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues, including relevant child protection procedures and statutory guidance, and of the impact of abuse on children and young people. They apply this understanding appropriately and all staff are highly skilled and experienced in the care and protection of disabled children and young people. Proactive and creative safeguarding practice means that all children and young people, including the most vulnerable, have a strong sense of safety and well-being while attending the scheme. Innovative and research-informed practice makes a positive difference to the lives and experiences of children and young people.

Requires improvement

34. Helping and protecting children and young people is likely to be judged as 'requires improvement' if the following is evident:

- There are no serious failures that create or leave children and young people either being harmed or at risk of harm. However, children and young people do not yet experience good help and protection.

Inadequate

35. Helping and protecting children and young people is likely to be judged as 'inadequate' if the following is evident:

- There are serious and widespread failures that result children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Good

36. The effectiveness of leaders and managers is likely to be judged 'good' if the following is evident:

- Leaders and managers lead by example. They regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of care provided, including consulting with children and young people about their experiences and the promotion of their welfare. This leads to demonstrable improvement.
- Leaders and managers work directly with the staff group to ensure high quality physical and emotional care for the children and young people.
- The statement of purpose is clear, easy to understand, accurate and comprehensive. It focuses on the experiences for children and young people and has been developed in consultation with children and young people, parents and carers.
- Children and young people, carers, parents, staff, volunteers and, where appropriate, local authorities have a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the holiday scheme and the services and facilities it provides.
- Leaders and managers know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the scheme; they prevent shortfalls and take decisive and effective action to remedy weaknesses.
- Leaders and managers apply new legislation and practice developments effectively, and provide training to staff and volunteers in order to improve the quality of service provided and the capacity of staff.
- The team of staff and volunteers is sufficient, suitably vetted, and experienced to deliver high-quality services to children and young people.
- Staff and volunteers are trained, supervised and supported effectively to fulfil their roles. Their training needs are identified and met.
- There are timely and robust responses to feedback, including reports from previous inspections and complaints. Lessons are learned and appropriate

action is taken to improve the experiences and care of children and young people.

- The residential holiday scheme is adequately resourced to meet the needs of the children and young people who attend each venue. Leaders and managers demonstrate that they can adapt resources to meet children and young people's changing needs.
- Plans and records of children's care and support are clear, up to date and stored securely. These records contribute to a clear understanding of the experiences the child or young person had while at the holiday scheme.
- Any child protection concerns are addressed in accordance with relevant procedures and policies.
- Leaders and managers consistently use learning from research and good practice to inform the development of the holiday scheme.

Outstanding

37. The judgement regarding the effectiveness of leaders and managers is likely to be judged 'outstanding' if all the requirements for a 'good' judgement are met or exceeded and the following are evident:

- Leaders and managers are inspirational, confident and ambitious for children and young people. They are influential in improving the lives of those attending the scheme. They have high aspirations for children and young people and high expectations of their staff to provide high quality holidays for children that bring lasting benefits to children and young people.
- Leaders and managers innovate and generate creative ideas to sustain the highest quality care for children and young people. They know their strengths and weaknesses well and can provide evidence of continuous improvement. Relationships between the residential holiday scheme and parents and partner agencies ensure the best possible care, experiences and futures for children and young people.

Requires improvement

38. The effectiveness of leaders and managers is likely to be judged as 'requires improvement' if the following is evident:

- The characteristics of 'good' are not yet in place. It therefore requires improvement to be good. However, there are no widespread or serious failures that result in individual children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded and promoted. Where there are weaknesses in practice, leaders and managers have identified and remedied them.

Inadequate

39. The effectiveness of leaders and managers is likely to be judged as 'inadequate' if the following are evident:
- There are widespread or serious failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.
 - There is no registered manager during the periods that the scheme is operational and the absence of a manager risks the welfare of children and young people.

Working in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people

Good

40. Working in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people is likely to be judged 'good' if the following are evident:
- Planning for meeting the diverse and individual needs of children during their holiday is timely, clear and effective. Children and young people, carers and parents and relevant professionals, including commissioners, are consistently and appropriately involved in the planning and review of children's holidays.
 - Constructive working relationships are made with community representatives, including the police, in each area that the scheme operates, as necessary. These relationships support and promote the safety of children and young people.
 - The scheme identifies and makes the most of suitable opportunities to develop relationships with the local community, such as neighbours, faith groups, leisure organisations and local businesses, in the interests of children and young people's sense of belonging, security and purpose. Staff and volunteers consistently and effectively challenge any barriers to children and young people's participation within the local community.
 - Residential holiday schemes have effective links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Local Authority Designated Officer. There is regular and effective communication with key partners about key safeguarding issues, such as any injuries sustained during restraint or allegations against staff or other children and young people attending the scheme.

Outstanding

41. Working in partnership is likely to be judged 'outstanding' if all the requirements for a 'good' judgement are met or exceeded and the following is evident:

- Highly effective, well-embedded and mutually challenging partnership arrangements bring enduring benefits to children and young people attending the scheme. The scheme's consistently proactive and creative work with partners has maximised the range of activities available within the wider community to children and young people.

Requires improvement

42. Working in partnership is likely to be judged as 'requires improvement' if the following is evident:
- The characteristics of 'good' partnership working are not yet in place. It therefore requires improvement to be good. However, there are no widespread or serious failures in partnership working that result in individual children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded and promoted.

Inadequate

43. Working in partnership is likely to be judged as 'inadequate' if the following is evident:
- There are serious or widespread failures in partnership working that result in individual children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Fitness and conditions of registration

44. As well as the areas above, inspectors consider whether:
- the registered provider and manager remain fit for registration
 - the residential holiday scheme for disabled children is operating in accordance with any conditions of registration
 - there are, or have been, complaints or investigations that raise concerns about the fitness of the registered provider or manager and/or the viability of the residential holiday scheme continuing to operate.
45. Where the provider is legally required to do so,¹⁴ it is the registered provider's responsibility to have a manager in post, and failure to do so is a breach of regulation.
46. If there is a manager in post but they are not registered with Ofsted, the inspector ensures that the individual manager is aware that it is an offence not to be registered.

¹⁴ As required by regulation 6 of the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013.

47. Inspectors report on any concerns they identify relating to the registered person's 'fitness' or to whether the conditions of registration are being met. They consult the Regulatory Inspection Manager and Social Care Compliance Inspector as appropriate.

How to obtain more information

48. We have other guidance about children's social care establishments, agencies and residential holiday schemes for disabled children on our website.¹⁵
49. To obtain copies of any of Ofsted's guidance mentioned in this document you can:
- follow the links in this document if you are using it online
 - download the guidance from our website, www.ofsted.gov.uk
 - telephone our help line 0300 123 1231 and ask us to send you specific guidance
 - write to us at the following address:

Ofsted
National Business Unit
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester, M1 2WD.

Useful legislation and guidance

We have a list of useful legislation and statutory guidance on our website.¹⁶ You are strongly advised to check that the links provide the most up to date information. You can also contact The Stationery Office on 0870 600 5522 for hard copies of regulations.

¹⁵ See below.

¹⁶ www.ofsted.gov.uk/children-and-families-services/for-children-and-families-services-providers/regulating-children-and-families-services.