



A review of children's residential care: terms of reference

The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education have asked Sir Martin Narey to conduct an independent review of children's residential care.

Currently, around 12% of a total of 69,540 children in care are placed in residential care, which includes regulated children's homes, including secure children's homes, but also a range of other regulated and unregulated residential settings¹. Children entering residential care tend to do so relatively late in their childhood, having suffered abuse and neglect, and with highly complex needs – including special educational needs. It is vital that the residential care system is able to provide the best possible care for these children and improve their outcomes. At present, councils spend almost £1bn on residential care.

The overall purpose of the review is to set out the role of residential care within the wider care system, and to make recommendations about how outcomes for those 8,320 children who are currently placed in residential care can be improved.

The terms of reference are to explore:

- the role of children's homes within the spectrum of placement options, exploring when and for which children residential care settings of all types should be used
- what works within residential care settings, and how to improve outcomes for the young people placed in them
- what improvements could be made to the way that residential care provision is commissioned, delivered, regulated and inspected to improve outcomes
- any other issues which might contribute to better outcomes for children in care

The review will report in the spring of 2016. The review will launch with a call to evidence which will run until 31 December 2015 and a summary of the evidence received will be made available when the final report is published. The review will report to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Education.

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¹ Including hostels and supported lodgings which are largely unregulated, residential special schools, care homes, NHS provision, family centres or mother and baby units, and young offender's institutions or prison.