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Guidance

Social care common inspection framework (SCCIF): residential holiday schemes for disabled children

Updated 5 April 2024

Applies to England

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Introduction

The social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) applies to inspections of:

- children's homes
- secure children's homes
- independent fostering agencies
- boarding schools and residential special schools
- voluntary adoption agencies
- adoption support agencies
- residential family centres
- residential holiday schemes for disabled children
- residential provision in further education colleges

The SCCIF means that:

- we apply the same judgement structure across the range of settings listed above
- the experiences and progress of children and other service users, wherever they live or receive help, are central to inspections
- there are key areas of evidence that we usually report on at each inspection

The SCCIF is not a 'one-size-fits-all' framework. Where necessary, the SCCIF reflects and

addresses the unique and distinct aspects of each type of setting. However, the evaluation criteria we use to make judgements and the accompanying guidance are, wherever possible, consistent across settings.

The inspection principles

[Ofsted's corporate strategy](#) outlines how we will carry out inspection and regulation that are:

- intelligent
- responsible
- focused

Our approach is further underpinned by the following 3 principles that apply to all social care inspections.

To focus on the things that matter most to children's lives

We have reached a consensus with the main social care stakeholders that social care inspections should focus on the experiences and progress of children. We regularly ask children, and the adults who look after them, what matters most about children's experiences and progress. During inspections of residential holiday schemes for disabled children, we focus on children's experiences and their enjoyment of their holiday.

Using this to guide us, we focus the criteria for our judgements on the difference that providers are making to children's lives. Adults can only support children well if they're given the time, resources and information they need to do this, so we also take account of the quality of the support that the adults who care for children receive.

To be consistent in our expectations of providers

It's important that professionals and members of the public can compare services that do similar things. We make this possible by being consistent in what we expect from providers. We use the same judgement structure and the same evaluation criteria, wherever possible, irrespective of where children live or receive help.

Our inspection methods and published guidance only differ when there is a good reason. This includes taking a similar approach to deciding on the frequency of inspections.

To prioritise our work where improvement is needed most

We are committed to inspecting in a way that focuses our resources where they are needed most.

The focus of inspections

The SCCIF has a consistent and clear focus on evaluating the impact of care and support on the experiences and progress of children, largely through case tracking and sampling.

For residential holiday schemes for disabled children, we focus the inspection on children's experiences and their enjoyment of their holiday. This means that:

- we take a proportionate approach to inspection. The time inspectors spend on site during the inspection will usually be up to 4 hours
- inspectors will review most policies and procedures, risk assessments and plans before they are on site. They will use the time on site to evaluate the effectiveness of the holiday scheme and the quality of children's experiences
- as part of our evaluation of the overall experiences and progress of children on the holiday scheme, inspectors will look at whether children are enjoying their holiday and having good experiences, as well as whether they are safe and well cared for
- we give advance notice of an inspection, so that we can see the holiday scheme at a time when children are on site
- we have set out as clearly as possible the information that we require schemes to provide and by when, so that inspectors can carry out the inspection efficiently and effectively

When applying this guidance, inspectors will take appropriate action to comply with Ofsted's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

How inspectors make judgements under the SCCIF

Judgement structure

Our judgement structure stems from our first principle of inspection – to focus on the things that matter most to children's lives – and places the progress and experiences of children and other people who use children's services at the core of inspections. For residential holiday schemes for disabled children, we also take into account children's enjoyment while on their holiday.

All SCCIF inspections follow the 4-point scale (outstanding, good, requires improvement to be good and inadequate) to make judgements on the overall experiences and progress of children, taking into account:

- how well children are helped and protected
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers

Inspections of adoption support agencies, voluntary adoption agencies and residential family centres also look at, as appropriate, the experiences of adult service users.

The judgement about how well children are helped and protected is a limiting judgement. This means that, if inspectors judge this area to be inadequate then the 'overall experiences and progress' judgement will always be inadequate.

The judgement of the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers is a graded judgement. If inspectors judge this area to be inadequate, this is likely to lead to a judgement of inadequate, and certainly no more than requires improvement, for 'overall experiences and progress'.

Inspectors will make the limiting and graded judgements first so that they can take these into account for the 'overall progress and experiences' judgement.

How inspectors use the evaluation criteria

Inspectors will use the descriptions of what 'good' looks like as the benchmarks against which to grade and judge performance. The judgement, however, is not derived from a checklist. It is a professional evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the care and support on the experiences, progress and enjoyment of children. Failure to meet all of the criteria for good will not automatically lead to a judgement of requires improvement to be good.

Some criteria will have less relevance than others in some settings because of the nature of the setting and the needs of the children.

Even when all the criteria are relevant, there is always a degree of professional judgement in weighing and balancing evidence against the evaluation criteria.

The inspector judges a setting to be good if they conclude that the evidence sits most appropriately with this finding. We call this the 'best fit'.

The evaluation criteria for SCCIF inspections are broadly consistent across different types of setting but, where necessary, they have been adapted to reflect the varying and unique nature of each type of provision.

Required evidence

Inspectors look at several areas of required evidence for each judgement. Some areas are common to all SCCIF inspections, but others are specific to the type of provision. The areas of required evidence are set out in the bullet points at the beginning of the evaluation criteria for each judgement.

Evaluation criteria

Inspectors use the following criteria to make judgements, including benchmarks of what good looks like.

The overall experiences and progress of children

Areas of required evidence are:

- the quality of the individualised care and support provided and the impact of the holiday on children's experiences, progress and enjoyment
- the quality of relationships between professionals, parents, carers and children
- how well children's views are understood and considered and how their rights and entitlements are met

Good

The experiences and progress of children are likely to be judged good if there is evidence of the following:

Children enjoy their holiday and have fun. They take part in a wide range of positive experiences and activities. They receive care and/or help that is sensitive and responsive to their individual and diverse needs.

Staff and volunteers always place the well-being of individual children at the centre of their practice. Children have opportunities to develop their independence, make new friends, have new experiences, and learn new skills safely. Children's day-to-day needs are met, such as individual routines, personal and health care, privacy, personal space, opportunities to be sociable, nutritious food and enjoyable mealtimes.

Children can build warm and positive relationships with adults who are looking after them. Those adults are well informed about children's needs. They listen to children, protect them and promote their welfare.

All children can use their preferred means of communication to take part in day-to-day decisions about their holidays. Staff and volunteers understand the ways children express dissatisfaction and discomfort. Children are helped to understand where it may not be possible to act on their wishes and why other action is taken that is in their best interests.

Children, parents and carers know how to complain during and after the holiday. Staff and volunteers understand the ways that children express dissatisfaction. The scheme's complaints policy is understandable, accessible and child-focused. Their complaints are treated seriously and are responded to clearly. Urgent action is taken, and practice and/or services improve accordingly. Children and parents understand what has happened as a result of their complaint.

Children are supported to engage in faith-based activities if they wish.

Children's physical and emotional health needs are identified and met. There are clear and suitable arrangements to support children when they are unwell. Children get prompt and suitable medical attention when necessary.

Specialist help is made available according to the individual needs of children. The help is sought and provided as soon as it is needed.

Children are welcomed sensitively with careful and considered planning every time they attend the holiday scheme. When their holiday ends, staff and volunteers promote positive endings and encourage children to keep mementos of the holiday. Parents and carers receive information about how their child has enjoyed the holiday and their experiences and achievements.

If children are not settling at the scheme, leaders and managers ensure that the arrangements are reviewed with the child, their family and/or carers to consider the best course of action.

Children are treated with dignity and respect. Their achievements are celebrated. Children

are supported to keep in touch with their parents or carers during the holiday, if they wish. Children have appropriate access to telephones and other methods of communication, and can take calls from their parents or carers.

Requires improvement to be good

The experiences and progress of children are likely to be judged requires improvement to be good if there is evidence of the following:

The holiday scheme is not yet delivering good help, care and experiences for children. The weaknesses identified need to be addressed to fully support children's experiences, to promote their enjoyment and to mitigate risk. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that mean their welfare is not safeguarded and promoted.

Inadequate

The experiences and progress of children are likely to be judged inadequate if there is evidence of the following:

There are serious or widespread failures that mean that children are not protected or that their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, or that their care and experiences are poor.

Outstanding

The experiences and progress of children are likely to be judged outstanding if, in addition to meeting the requirements of a good judgement, there is evidence of the following:

The quality of care consistently exceeds the standard of good. It results in increased enjoyment and significantly better experiences for all children, including those with complex or challenging needs. There are examples of excellent practice that could be shared more widely.

The quality, range and accessibility of activities significantly enhance children's experiences, choices, understanding and independence.

The experiences that the children have on holiday are exceptional, and their interests and abilities are taken into account.

Exceptional practice, some of which may be innovative, continues to develop from a strong and confident base. It makes a demonstrable difference to the lives and experiences of children during their holiday.

How well children are helped and protected

Areas of required evidence are:

- how well risks are identified, understood and minimised, and whether the support and care provided help children to stay safe
- how effective the scheme's response is to children who may get lost or go missing from the holiday scheme or may be at risk of harm, including from exploitation, neglect, abuse, self-harm, medical conditions, bullying and radicalisation
- how well staff and volunteers respond to demanding situations and support children to manage their emotions, and how clear and consistent boundaries contribute to a feeling of well-being and security for children
- how well safeguarding arrangements to protect children meet all statutory and other government requirements and promote their welfare

Good

The help and protection offered to children are likely to be judged good if there is evidence of the following:

Children feel protected and are protected from harm, including neglect, abuse, exploitation, accidents, bullying and radicalisation. There is a strong and proactive response from all those working with children that reduces the risk of harm or actual harm to them, including self-harm. That response includes effective contact and planning with the child's parents and, where relevant, professionals involved in their care.

Children can identify members of staff or volunteers who they can talk to about any concerns. They say that staff and volunteers listen to them, take their concerns seriously and respond appropriately. Staff and volunteers have the knowledge to understand the diverse ways that children communicate and they respond to them promptly.

Children who get lost or go missing from the holiday scheme experience well-coordinated

responses that reduce the harm or risk of harm to them, in line with the requirements of the statutory guidance for children who are missing. Risks are well understood and minimised. Appropriate precautions minimise the risk of children going missing.

Plans and risk assessments are kept up to date and address effectively any known vulnerabilities each child may have. Children are given opportunities to take risks, try new things and learn to manage their own safety as appropriate to their developmental needs and vulnerabilities.

Children are protected and helped to keep themselves safe from disablism, bullying, homophobia, racism, sexism, marginalisation, exclusion and other forms of discrimination. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged. Help and support are given to children about how to treat others with respect.

Positive behaviour is promoted consistently. Adults use clear boundaries and effective modelling to help children to understand about socially acceptable behaviour and relationships. Children are supported to resolve any disagreements with other children and adults constructively.

Children receive help and support to manage their emotions safely. Staff and volunteers understand children's experiences and respond with appropriate boundaries about what is safe and acceptable for each child. Staff and volunteers seek to understand the triggers that cause upset and unsafe behaviour and know how to use positive support strategies that help children to feel calm and more able to resolve their difficulties. These strategies are agreed with the child, and where appropriate, their parents or carers, and relevant professionals who support them. The strategies are also regularly reviewed for effectiveness.

Restraint or restrictive practice are used only when necessary to protect the child and/or those around them and must be proportionate. All incidents are recorded, reviewed and monitored by leaders. The views of the child, dependent on their age and understanding, are sought and understood. Parents and carers are informed about any use of restraint on their child.

Staff and volunteers understand the risks that use of the internet and social media may

pose for children, such as bullying, sexual or criminal exploitation or radicalisation. They have well-developed strategies in place to keep children safe and to support them in learning how to keep themselves safe.

Careful recruitment and regular monitoring of staff and volunteers prevent unsuitable people from being recruited and having the opportunity to harm children or to place them at risk. The relevant authorities are informed of any concerns about inappropriate adults.

Staff working for the scheme know and follow procedures for responding to concerns about the safety of a child. Any child protection concerns are immediately shared with the host local authority, and if appropriate with the parents or carers, and a record of that referral is retained.

There is evidence that staff follow up the outcome of the referral quickly and that appropriate action has been taken to protect the child from further harm. If the holiday scheme is not satisfied with the response from the local authority where the holiday is situated, it escalates its concerns, including by contacting the director of children's services (DCS) in the host authority.

Allegations or suspicion of harm are shared with the appropriate agencies and are handled fairly, quickly and in accordance with statutory guidance. Children are supported and protected. Support is given both to the person making the allegation and the person who is the subject of the allegation.

The holiday scheme has effective links, as appropriate, with the local authority where the holidays are located and with the relevant designated officer. When necessary, there is good communication about safeguarding issues, such as any injuries sustained during restraints or allegations against staff.

The physical environment of the holiday scheme is safe, secure and protects children from harm or the risk of harm. Before the holiday starts, appropriate health and safety checks inform risk assessments for the physical environment and fire safety. They are updated each time the holiday scheme operates.

Sleeping arrangements are safe and based on each child's assessed needs. They are made in agreement with the child and their parents, carers or professionals who support them.

Arrangements for managing medication and carrying out healthcare tasks are safe and effective and promote independence wherever possible. Individual children's plans to meet health needs in an emergency or following an accident are accessible and known to the adults who are caring for them.

Requires improvement to be good

The help and protection offered to children are likely to be judged requires improvement to be good if there is evidence of the following:

Children are not yet receiving good help and protection, but there are no serious failures that leave them either being harmed or at risk of harm.

Inadequate

The help and protection offered to children are likely to be judged inadequate if there is evidence of the following:

There are serious or widespread failures that leave children being harmed, at risk of harm or with their welfare not being safeguarded.

Outstanding

The help and protection offered to children are likely to be judged outstanding if, in addition to meeting the requirements of a good judgement, there is evidence of the following:

The standard of care provided enhances the quality of children's experiences and lives. Highly effective planning manages and minimises risks to children while they are attending the holiday scheme. Where children are attending the holiday scheme for the first time, any risks are well understood, and children are supported positively to stay safe.

Proactive and creative safeguarding practice means that all children, including the most vulnerable, have a strong sense of safety and well-being. Children are involved in creating positive, effective strategies to help them when they are upset or in crisis.

Exceptional practice, some of which may be innovative, continues to develop from a strong and confident base, making an exceptional difference to the lives and experiences of children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Areas of required evidence are:

- whether leaders and managers have ambitious expectations of children's abilities, ensure high standards of care and provide a rich and varied programme of activities
- whether leaders and managers provide the right environment for staff and volunteers through effective support and high-quality induction and training programmes that are tailored to the specific needs of the children
- how well leaders and managers understand the holiday scheme's strengths and weaknesses, prevent shortfalls, identify weaknesses and take decisive and effective action
- whether the holiday scheme is achieving its stated aims and objectives
- the quality of professional and family/carer relationships to ensure the best possible all-round support to children during their holiday
- whether leaders and managers challenge when the responses from other services are not effective
- the extent to which leaders and managers actively promote tolerance, equality and children's rights, and diversity

Good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers is likely to be judged good if there is evidence of the following:

The scheme is managed effectively and efficiently by a suitably experienced and competent registered manager. Urgent action is taken to address any vacancy of the registered manager post.

The culture of the holiday scheme is characterised by high expectations and aspirations for all children. Its ethos and objectives are demonstrated in practice.

Leaders and managers make child-centred decisions about children attending the holiday scheme. They prioritise the safety and stability of the group environment. The planning for

each child's holiday is thorough. It enables children to enjoy their holiday. Leaders and managers ensure that staff and volunteers have the experience, skills and training to meet each child's specific needs safely.

Leaders and managers regularly review and act on any known risks to children, taking advice and guidance from local partners and agencies and any professionals who support the child.

Each holiday is properly staffed and resourced to meet the needs of the children. Staff and volunteers are suitably inducted and trained and have the skills to deliver high-quality services to children and their families. Arrangements for recruitment are robust.

There are clear responsibilities and accountabilities, and the team has a sense of shared ownership about its practice. Staff and volunteers have confidence in managers when reporting and addressing safeguarding matters. Staff and volunteers report that they are well led and managed and there is other evidence to support this.

Leaders and managers actively monitor the quality of care provided. They use learning from practice, complaints and feedback from children, parents and relevant professionals to improve the experiences and care of children. Activities are evaluated thoroughly to ensure that they are enjoyable and stimulating, meet children's needs and align with their interests and talents.

Effective action has been taken to address all requirements and recommendations from previous inspections. Leaders and managers take steps to ensure that plans for individual children comprehensively address their needs.

Leaders and managers seek to build effective working relationships with parents and, where necessary, other professionals and with the local authority where the holidays are located, in order to secure positive experiences for children.

Leaders, managers and staff are accessible to parents and carers. They keep parents and carers informed about their child's stay.

Leaders and managers understand the plans for the children and actively promote children's enjoyment of their holiday. Leaders and managers can demonstrate the positive impact that the holiday has had on individual children's lives.

Staff and volunteers work collaboratively to provide consistency and stability.

The statement of purpose, which is kept under review, clearly sets out the ethos and objectives of the holiday scheme.

The registered person ensures that notifications of all significant events that relate to the welfare and protection of children attending the holiday scheme are made to the appropriate authorities and parents or carers. The registered person reviews and evaluates any use of restraint or restrictive practices. They take the necessary action following any incident to ensure that the child's needs are met and that they are safe and protected.

Requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers is likely to be judged requires improvement to be good if there is evidence of the following:

The characteristics of good leadership and management are not in place. Where there are weaknesses in practice, leaders and managers have identified the issues. They have plans in place to address them or they are less serious and there is capacity to take the necessary action.

Inadequate

The effectiveness of leaders and managers will be judged inadequate if there is evidence of the following:

There is no registered manager during the periods the scheme is operational, and the absence of a registered manager risks the safety and welfare of children.

The provider has not taken effective and timely steps to appoint an appropriate, permanent manager within a reasonable timeframe and/or the appointed manager has not registered as soon as possible.

The experiences, care or protection of children are inadequate, and leaders and managers do not know the strengths and weaknesses of the scheme. They have been ineffective in prioritising, challenging and making improvements.

The scheme fails to work effectively in partnership with others in the best interests of children.

Outstanding

The effectiveness of leaders and managers is likely to be judged outstanding if, in addition to meeting the requirements of a good judgement, there is evidence of the following:

Leaders and managers are inspirational, confident, ambitious for children and influential in improving the experiences of those on the holiday.

Leaders and managers create a culture of aspiration and positivity and have high expectations of their staff and volunteers to ensure that all children have high-quality, enjoyable holidays.

Leaders and managers lead by example, innovate and generate creative ideas to sustain the highest quality care for children, which significantly enhances their experiences and enjoyment.

Leaders and managers know their strengths and weaknesses well and can provide evidence that they take prompt action to promote improvement for current and future holidays.

Legal context

Under the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), Ofsted carries 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

HMCI is the registration authority for residential holiday schemes for disabled children and other establishments and agencies to which Part 2 of that Act applies.

The [Care Standards Act 2000, Part 2 \(Extension of the Application of Part 2 to Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) sets out the legal basis for the regulation of residential holiday schemes. The regulations extend Ofsted's powers to register, inspect and, where necessary, to enforce compliance with the Act and relevant regulations for residential holiday schemes. They also define a residential holiday scheme.

When inspecting residential holiday schemes, Ofsted considers the knowledge and understanding gained from previous inspections, and the:

- [Care Standards Act 2000](#)
- [Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [residential holiday schemes for disabled children: national minimum standards](#)
- [Care Standards Act \(Registration\)\(England\) Regulations 2010](#)

The Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013

Residential holiday schemes must follow the requirements of the regulations. When they do not, inspectors identify clearly what the schemes must do by setting requirements or taking compliance or enforcement action.

The Department for Education (DfE) also publishes [national minimum standards \(NMS\)](#). If providers do not meet the NMS, this may indicate a failure to meet the regulations. Inspectors consider carefully the impact on children and how it should influence the judgements and outcome of the inspection, including any enforcement action.

A failure to meet a regulation does not automatically lead to a judgement of requires improvement to be good. Requirements may still be made when providers are judged to be good if those failings do not directly impact on the safety and welfare of children.

National minimum standards

Inspectors can make recommendations to improve practice when an NMS is not met to indicate where practice can improve. They should always give enough detail for the holiday scheme to be clear about what it needs to do. The relevant part of the NMS should be summarised. Inspectors may also make recommendations in relation to other relevant statutory guidance, such as [‘Working together to safeguard children’](#).

If, during an inspection, the holiday scheme rectifies a minor administrative error that has minimal impact on the quality of care and support of children, an inspector may not need to make a recommendation about that matter. However, they may refer to this in the leadership and management section of the report.

Notice of an inspection and pre-visit arrangements

We require providers to submit a ‘notification of intention to operate’ form by 30 April each year or by end of January if they intend to operate in April. The provider sets out when and where it intends to operate a holiday scheme in the inspection year. It should provide full information about the dates and addresses of each holiday.

If the provider is unable to confirm agreed plans by these dates, it should do so as soon as possible, and no later than 3 months before the holiday scheme starts.

If a holiday scheme runs from several separate locations during the year, the inspector will decide which site to inspect based on the information that we hold about the scheme, including which sites we have inspected previously.

The inspector will normally contact the provider to give notice of an inspection by phone, followed up by an email containing:

- the [letter of notice](#)
- [Annex A](#)
- a pen portrait of the inspector to share with children and their families
- a list of additional documents that the inspector may require

This will occur approximately 10 working days before the start of the holiday. If phone contact with the provider cannot be achieved, notice will be sent by email. The notice letter sets out the practical arrangements for the inspection, including the information requirements, and asks that the provider confirm that the holiday is going ahead.

The inspector will agree the date for the manager’s interview at a time suitable for both the inspector and the provider. The provider will also confirm the email address of the individual who will arrange for the requested information to be provided to Ofsted before the inspection visit.

The inspector and provider agree the date by which the provider will provide the information on the Annex A form. The agreed date should give the inspector enough time to choose which children’s records they are going to use for their case sample. It should also give the provider enough time to make the requested information available before the manager’s interview date. If a holiday

scheme's records are not electronic, the inspector will complete case-sampling activity during the site visit.

This information is requested under [section 31 of the Care Standards Act 2000](#). The information supports the inspection process and informs the inspection findings. It may generate supplementary lines of enquiry.

Following the call, the inspector will email the manager a link to a survey that parents and carers can complete, with a letter of explanation. The closing date for the survey will be 6 days after the inspection announcement call. Completed surveys will be returned directly to Ofsted before the holiday begins.

Schemes can download a copy of [Annex A](#) and keep the information updated in preparation for their inspection and send this electronically to the inspector once they receive the notice of inspection. We store some of the information as inspection evidence. We do not store any personal data.

Manager's pre-inspection-visit interview

The manager's interview will usually take place by video call and will usually last about an hour. The interview forms part of our inspection evidence. If agreed, the responsible individual can join this interview or speak to the inspector separately. In addition to this, the inspector may ask to speak to the responsible individual before the inspection visit at a different time.

During the manager's interview, the inspector will discuss the arrangements for the holiday scheme. This will include:

- the overall plans for the holiday scheme
- staffing arrangements for the holiday scheme
- the programme of holiday scheme activities
- the progress made on any requirements or recommendations that were made at the last inspection
- arrangements for the children who are going to attend this holiday
- any matters arising from the inspector's review of notifications
- the review of any previous holidays or quality assurance activity
- any matters arising from the submitted Annex A form
- the date on which the site visit will take place (this will always be a day or part of a day when the children and staff are on site)
- information about how the scheme gathers pre-event information about children, such as arrangements for medical and personal care and support
- arrangements for communication with staff and volunteers
- the recording systems used for events and incidents
- any other matter raised by the inspector or provider

The inspector will ensure that Ofsted holds the correct details on the inspection database (as

required by regulations), including email addresses and contact phone numbers for the manager, registered provider and/or responsible individual, any other partners, or directors or trustees.

The inspector may contact appropriate stakeholders, including social workers and other health professionals supporting a particular child, to gain their views on the quality of the scheme. If concerns emerge during the visit, the inspector may contact appropriate stakeholders to follow up any lines of enquiry.

The inspector will ask the manager to provide details of how to access the premises for the visit and, if possible, to provide space for the inspector to work. They will also advise of any further records they require during the visit, although these requests will be kept to a minimum. Inspectors may need some help to navigate electronic record systems. Providers do not need to provide files in hard copy unless these are already used.

This information is requested under [section 31 of the Care Standards Act 2000](#). The information supports the inspection process and informs the inspection findings. It may generate supplementary lines of enquiry.

Scheduling and the inspection team

Frequency and scheduling of inspections

We inspect residential holiday schemes for disabled children once a year under [Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills \(Fees and Frequency of Inspections\) \(Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children, etc.\) Regulations 2015](#) (SI 2015/551). This means that we will visit at least 1 site that the scheme uses for its operation each financial year.

The scheduling of inspections takes account of:

- the dates when the scheme is running
- legal requirements
- previous inspection findings
- complaints and concerns about the service
- notifications
- the contents of monitoring reports given to Ofsted by residential holiday schemes under regulations 29 and 30 of the [Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

If possible, the same inspector will not inspect a residential holiday scheme for more than 3 consecutive inspection cycles. However, in certain instances, for example, if Ofsted is taking enforcement action, it may be important for continuity purposes to retain the same inspector until the enforcement action has been finished.

Length of inspections

Residential holiday schemes for disabled children are inspected by suitably experienced social care inspectors and usually by a single inspector.

An inspector usually spends up to 4 hours on site. The length of the inspection may be extended if there are specific concerns that are being considered or that emerge during the visit.

The inspector and the RIM should decide how best to allocate resources for inspections.

Timeframe

Timeframe for an inspection from planning to publication of the report.

Day(s)	Inspection activity
1 and 2	Prepare and review documentation and Annex A form, carry out interview with manager, plan the inspection, and contact professionals (as necessary)
3	Carry out the site visit which will normally last no longer than 4 hours
4	Draft the report
5 to 8	Inspection evidence and report submitted for quality assurance
21	Draft report sent to the registered provider within 18 working days from the end of the inspection. The provider then has up to 5 working days to send in comments on the draft report or submit a formal complaint
26	Provider returns the report with comments or submits a formal complaint within 5 working days
33	Final report sent to the registered provider within 30 working days of the end of the inspection (longer if there has been a complaint)
38	The final report will be published on the Ofsted reports website (5 days after it is sent to the provider)

Figure 1: Ofsted's post-inspection and complaints procedure



[View this information in an accessible format.](#)

Deferrals

While it is important that we carry out our planned inspections wherever possible, we understand that sometimes there may be reasons that this is not possible. A provider may request a deferral of an inspection during the initial notification phone call. We will decide whether to grant a deferral in line with our [deferral policy](#). We make these decisions on a case-by-case basis.

Preparing for an inspection

Analysis and planning

Inspectors are allocated up to 2 days to prepare for a full inspection, review the information provided by the manager and carry out the manager's interview.

Inspectors look at the information that Ofsted already holds about the holiday scheme, including:

- previous inspection reports
- the scheme's statement of purpose
- any concerns and complaints received
- notifications of serious events
- reports of visits received under regulation 29
- quality assurance reports received under regulation 30 (including monitoring by the registered person of any incident when a child accommodated at the scheme goes missing)
- any changes to registration, including change of manager received under regulation 32
- any enforcement activity within the last inspection year

If we have received information that indicates potential non-compliance with regulatory requirements, we may use the information as a line of enquiry during the inspection. The inspector usually outlines the concern to the registered person(s) or person in charge of the residential holiday scheme at the beginning of the inspection or during the manager's interview, if appropriate. There may be circumstances when it is not appropriate to share all the information about a concern: for example, when the allegation is about the registered person or person in charge themselves, or when sharing the information could compromise an investigation being carried out by another agency, such as the police.

The plan for the inspection should identify:

- lines of enquiry
- any areas of apparent weakness or significant strength

- areas where further evidence needs to be gathered

The focus of the inspection may change during its course as further evidence emerges.

Notifications and reports made under regulations 29 and 30

Inspectors must regularly review notifications and reports made under [regulations 29 and 30](#). Inspectors must focus on both their content and quality as part of their evaluation of the scheme's monitoring of its impact on the experiences of children.

Information from any of these sources may result in:

- further activity, such as speaking to the registered manager and/or responsible individual or other stakeholders
- lines of enquiry for the next inspection about what is happening during any holiday events the scheme holds, including: the management of issues and concerns; the quality and effectiveness of leadership; oversight concerning the care of children; and the timeliness of notifications to Ofsted and other parties

Any emerging lines of enquiry must be noted on the scheme's records and inform pre-inspection planning.

Notifications

Registered persons (providers and managers) are required to notify Ofsted about specific incidents and events as set out in regulations. Residential holiday schemes for disabled children will only complete required notifications when the holidays are in operation. Our [Report a serious incident service](#) has further guidance on this.

Providers should always seek advice from their link inspector about individual cases if they are uncertain how to proceed.

If the inspector identifies issues that give them cause for concern about the welfare of children, they should ask for evidence that shows what has been done to help and protect the child.

If notifications are incomplete, the inspector should always contact the scheme's manager to ask for more information.

If Inspectors will escalate any concerns about the safety and welfare of children that arise from the notifications to the appropriate authorities and persons.

Providers can submit reports under regulations 29 and 30 by email to enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. They must include Ofsted's unique reference number (URN) and the date on which the visit occurred on the report.

The on-site inspection

The start of the inspection

At the heart of our inspections is a constructive, respectful and empathetic dialogue between inspectors and providers.

At the start of all inspections, the inspector confirms their identity by producing their Ofsted inspector identification. They do not need to carry paper copies of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

The inspector always meets briefly with the registered manager or person in charge at the beginning of the inspection to:

- outline the plan for the inspection
- outline identified lines of enquiry for the inspection, including those generated through reading the statement of purpose and the Annex A form
- provide the person in charge with the opportunity to share any current information or personal issues relating to any of the children attending the scheme that the inspector needs to be aware of, such as information about recent incidents or activities occurring during the site visit
- arrange the approximate time that verbal feedback at the end of the inspection will be given and who is to receive this; feedback is normally given to the registered manager or senior member of staff present and the responsible individual; if the registered manager is unavailable and the responsible individual is unable to attend the inspection, the provider should identify a suitable representative
- check the registered manager's welfare, and whether any steps need to be taken to ensure their well-being. The inspector should ascertain how to contact whoever is responsible for the registered manager's welfare on a day-to-day basis, so that they can pass on well-being concerns when appropriate and necessary
- provide the opportunity to raise any issues or concerns, or to seek clarification about the inspection, and explain how the provider can raise any matters during the inspection itself
- provide an opportunity for the registered manager to discuss and/or give us information on potential equalities duties, including reasonable adjustments for individuals

Inspectors will agree a process for keeping managers informed of progress throughout the inspection. This will normally mean regular meetings with managers to enable them to raise concerns or seek clarification. Inspectors will inform managers if there is evidence that the service may be judged inadequate. They will emphasise that final judgements are not made until the feedback meeting at the end of the inspection.

If the inspection has been prompted by our receiving information about a concern or allegation, the inspector should explain to the registered manager or person in charge of the nature of that information. This is so that the manager is fully aware of the concerns. This also provides an opportunity for the manager to provide additional information and for the inspector to be as open with them about the information as possible. If the information is from a whistle-blower or from someone who wishes to remain anonymous, then the inspector must take the utmost care to

ensure that the person's identity is not revealed.

Case sampling

Evaluating children's experiences and enjoyment are core inspection activities. This is based on evidence from observations of children and supported by case sampling.

Inspectors look at the quality of the help, care and protection that individual children have experienced. They choose case records for a small number of children to sample from the case list provided. The size of the scheme and the nature of any lines of enquiry determine how many cases are sampled. The information should be made available for the inspector to review before they arrive on site.

An inspector's choice may include:

- a child who has complex needs
- a child who is attending the scheme for the first time
- a child who requires more than one-to-one support at all times
- a looked-after child, or a child who is subject to a child protection or a child in need plan

Case-sampling activity will be proportionate and will be conducted by accessing documents that the holiday scheme has in use. It will not unnecessarily distract children from enjoying their holiday.

We consider children's interests, abilities and circumstances during inspections. We recognise that children are on holiday and that the quality of their experiences, and their participation and enjoyment in them, is the most important factor. Inspectors may also sample specific elements of other children's care plans if specific lines of enquiry emerge during the site visit.

Any impact of the scheme on children's progress is likely to be restricted by the time-limited nature of the holiday. Children should be supported to enjoy experiences that may not be otherwise available to them and have their achievements celebrated.

Children's overall experiences, progress and enjoyment are, in part, a result of how well they are helped and protected and the effectiveness of leaders and managers. Inspectors consider the 'help and protection' and 'leadership and management' judgements first so that they can take these into account when reaching the 'overall experiences and progress' judgement.

Inspections also assess the management of any serious incident encountered during the holiday (where relevant). This is so that they can understand how the staff and volunteer team respond to complex and difficult circumstances and whether the actions and responses of leaders, managers, staff and volunteers are focused on promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children.

Inspectors increase their understanding of the child's experience through observing activities and through talking to the child themselves, their parents or carers and other professionals involved in their care. Inspectors should spend most of their time on site with children, staff and volunteers.

When sampling the case of a looked after child, wherever possible the independent reviewing

officer, the placing social worker and the foster carer (or key worker, if the child lives in a children's home) should be consulted, which could be before the site visit.

The details of activities carried out and discussions held vary depending on the lines of enquiry for each individual inspection.

Listening and talking to children

The views of children who attend the scheme provide important evidence of their experiences, progress and whether they are enjoying the holiday scheme.

Inspectors assess how well the scheme consults with children. Providers can share with inspectors any consultation or collaborative planning that they have with children either before or during the holiday, so that inspectors can consider how children's views are contributing to the experiences that they are having.

Inspectors always try to meet with children during the inspection. Sometimes, inspectors will spend time observing activities and situations where children are present rather than engaging in direct communication with them. This is to limit any stress caused to children. These approaches will be discussed throughout the inspection as necessary.

Inspectors should involve children in inspection activity wherever they can. Opportunities to gather the views and experiences of children may include:

- asking children to show inspectors around the premises
- having individual conversations
- joining in activities
- preparing snacks or drinks
- spending mealtimes with children

Communication methods

Inspectors should consider the limits of verbal consultation with some children, particularly those who are disabled or have complex health care needs, and they should take this into account in their evaluation. In these cases, they would expect to see appropriate alternative means of gathering children's views and providing them with feedback about the impact of their consultation.

Children, including those who communicate non-verbally, may wish to share their views in their preferred way to the inspector.

Inspectors must consider the specific communication skills of individual children. For some children, the inspectors may request the assistance of staff, carers or an independent person who know and understand the child's preferred means of communication, particularly if this is unique to the child. In other instances, it may also be appropriate for inspectors to spend time observing children and how they interact with staff and respond to their environment.

Inspectors can request the services of an interpreter to join the inspection. This is helpful when the

children are fluent in British Sign Language. Inspectors request this service through the inspection support team and give 2 weeks' notice where possible.

Practice when gathering the views of children

Inspectors will demonstrate safe and sensitive practice by:

- recognising children's unique communication skills and preferences, and respecting those abilities and choices in any interaction with them
- where possible, telling staff when and where conversations with children are taking place and who is involved
- being sensitive to the fact that some children may not want to be involved in the inspection
- explaining to children that they will not include comments that will identify them in the inspection report or in feedback to staff without their permission
- as appropriate, explaining to children that information suggesting that they or another child is at risk of harm will be passed by the inspector to an appropriate person able to take necessary action

Observing activities

Inspectors can use the scheme's scheduled activities as opportunities for observing and following lines of enquiry. These activities could include:

- recreational activities
- personal and health care routines where appropriate, where this would not compromise the privacy or dignity of the child
- mealtimes
- the provider's regulation 29 visits, if they occur during the inspection visit
- staff and volunteer meetings or briefings

The privacy and confidentiality of personal information are always respected by inspectors. The inspector always involves the scheme in any decisions about children's involvement in the inspection.

Inspectors always try to strike a balance between the time it takes to observe an activity and the significance of the likely evidence to be gained.

Gathering views of other professionals

Inspectors consult with professionals to inform the inspection findings. This is usually by telephone during the timescale for the inspection. Professionals may include medical professionals, therapists, social workers, local police, any placing local authority quality assurance officer and the designated officer.

Inspectors ask managers or staff for the relevant contact details through [Annex A](#).

Inspectors should always take account of privacy and confidentiality when talking to stakeholders on the phone.

Discussions with managers and staff

Individual interviews are always held with the registered manager (or, if they are not available, a nominated person in charge) before the holiday begins. Individual interviews are held with other staff and volunteers during the inspection visit. The number interviewed depends on the size of the holiday scheme but will include a sample of staff and volunteers working at the scheme at the time of inspection. Inspectors should ensure that their talking to staff or volunteers does not hinder them from supporting children to take part in activities unless essential to pursue a clear line of enquiry.

Where the registered manager is not available, the inspector usually asks to speak to the responsible individual during the site visit.

The inspector always asks to interview the responsible individual by telephone before or during the site visit where:

- there is no registered manager in post
- there are concerns about the quality of care and support, or the effectiveness of monitoring arrangements, or the quality of leadership and management of the scheme
- evidence indicates that the scheme is failing to protect children
- there are concerns about staffing, the premises or resources to manage and run the holiday scheme

During the inspection, the inspector must share emerging findings about the scheme's strengths and weaknesses with the manager so that they fully understand the issues. The manager can prepare or direct inspectors to any specific information or evidence required.

To help managers understand how the inspection is progressing, and to continue the constructive professional dialogue where meetings are held to keep them informed of emerging findings, the manager can be accompanied by a colleague, where appropriate. This will allow them to raise any issues or concerns or to seek clarification, including related to the conduct of the inspection.

If the registered manager is not present, inspectors will agree a process with the responsible individual (if available) for keeping other people informed of progress throughout the inspection.

Shortfalls that could have an immediate impact on the safety of staff or children should be brought to the attention of the manager, or the senior member of staff on duty as soon as the inspector has identified the problem.

Inspectors will establish whether the scheme's monitoring systems are robust enough to identify strengths and weaknesses in practice. Inspectors do not spend time routinely counting medication or petty cash, carrying out vehicle checks, or checking water temperatures or contents of fridges,

freezers and food storage areas unless it relates to a specific line of enquiry.

Inspectors should be prepared to alter interview arrangements if staff or volunteers must attend to the children.

In most cases inspectors will want to have confidential conversations with staff and will usually ask to speak to them alone so that staff can express their views freely. However, individuals may ask to have a colleague present to support them if they prefer.

If inspectors see that a staff member is upset or distressed at any point during the inspection, inspectors will respond sensitively. Where appropriate, inspectors will consider suitable adjustments to enable the staff member to continue. Where appropriate, inspectors will inform those responsible for the person's well-being. The inspector will also contact their manager/regional duty manager to take advice.

There may be exceptional occasions when we need to consider pausing an inspection. We will consider these on a case-by-case basis according to our published [guidance on pausing inspections](#).

Examination of records, policies and procedures

Inspectors do not routinely examine all policies and procedures. They examine documents when they may inform a line of enquiry for that individual inspection. We request that most of these documents are returned with the Annex A form. Schemes should return the completed Annex A before the holiday starts. This is so that the inspector can review documentation before the on-site part of the inspection.

Inspectors focus on the impact of documents such as risk assessments and how they work in practice, rather than on the format. What matters is that they are fit for purpose and provide enough information to staff and volunteers for them to be able to care for and support children safely. Where paper or electronic personnel records are maintained, the inspector may ask to see those records if they are included within the lines of enquiry for the inspection. Schemes can maintain electronic records if they:

- meet the requirements of regulation
- are appropriately accessible to children and their parents if they want to access their records
- staff have access to the information they need to assess, care and support children

Inspectors may look at a sample from any electronic recruitment records for newly recruited staff or volunteers. These records could be maintained within checklists or spreadsheets. The manager or provider must be able to supply evidence that they are satisfied that all staff and volunteers working at any holiday scheme they intend to run are fit to do so and that recruitment and selection arrangements comply with regulations 21 and 22 of the [Residential holiday schemes for disabled children \(England\) Regulations 2013](#). This activity will be carried out before the site visit, where possible

If the provider uses the [DBS update service](#) to check the status of an individual's DBS certificate, the provider should be able to demonstrate how it manages and records details of any check it

carries out. If any lines of enquiry require additional information, the inspector may request that a small sample of full personnel records are made available.

Finding evidence of possible offences

If, during the inspection, the inspector thinks that an offence may have been committed, they should contact a social care compliance inspector or RIM immediately to take advice and discuss whether the inspection should continue. If, during the inspection, the inspector finds evidence of an unregistered children's home or any other unregistered provision being operated elsewhere, they should record the details, including the provider's name, the address and any other evidence that indicates there is an unregistered service operating. The inspector should inform the provider/manager that they have recorded this information and will pass this on to their regional team to investigate. The inspector should make it clear that any information they gather on unregistered provision being operated elsewhere will not form any part in determining the outcome of the inspection or inspection judgement. Further guidance is available in the [social care enforcement policy](#).

Implications of the Equality Act

The [Equality Act 2010](#) came into effect on 1 October 2010. The Act makes it unlawful for an employer to ask a potential employee questions about their health or disability before they are offered employment, whether on a conditional or unconditional basis.

Social care providers must comply with both the Equality Act and the remit-specific regulations that require them to employ people who are fit, both physically and mentally, for the work.

To comply with both laws, providers may give conditional offers of employment to potential employees after the recruitment process, subject to appropriate medical and health checks.

There are a number of exemptions to the provisions in the Act. If a provider believes that an exemption applies to its recruitment of staff, it should take its own legal advice on the matter.

Inspectors will assess whether providers have a rigorous recruitment and vetting process in place, including ensuring that their employees are mentally and physically fit before they begin work as part of their inspection.

How inspectors record the evidence

Inspectors must analyse the information they gather on inspection and use their professional judgement to assess the impact on the experiences and progress of children.

Inspectors' evidence should be clear, evaluative and sufficient to support the judgements. They

should not include information that could identify individuals unless it is necessary to protect a child or to support further action. In these instances, inspectors can use individuals' initials.

Inspectors can record direct quotes from children and other interested parties in evidence to support judgements.

The record should clearly indicate the source of the evidence (for example, whether the evidence is from observation, a written record or a face-to-face interview). If evidence comes from an interview, the record must indicate the time of the interview and the interviewee's job title or relationship to the child.

Throughout the inspection, inspectors maintain a record of their evidence. Electronic evidence is recorded within the inspection database. Summarised evidence must be sufficient to support the judgements and any recommendations or requirements. Inspectors must ensure that the provider understands the evidence that the judgements are based on and any requirements that stem from the judgements.

After the summarised evidence has been placed in the inspection database, inspectors should not destroy any duplicate handwritten evidence until after the inspection report is published. In some circumstances, inspectors will be required to keep any handwritten notes they have made during the inspection for longer. This may, for example, be necessary when legal action or a complaint about the judgement is being considered.

All handwritten evidence should be legible and dated. Handwritten evidence that has not been summarised forms part of the inspection evidence base and should therefore be scanned and added into the inspection database within 5 working days of the end of the on-site visit.

Evidence may be scrutinised for quality assurance and will be considered in the event of any complaint.

End of the inspection and feedback

The inspector will give verbal feedback of the main findings and provisional judgements at a time agreed with the provider after the end of the inspection period. This feedback will usually be given to the manager and/or responsible individual. Additional senior staff from the provider may also attend, if agreed in advance with the inspector.

If the feedback is likely to be challenging or is likely to raise sensitive issues, the inspector will be sympathetic to the implications of this feedback. The inspector will discuss with the provider which other people should attend to ensure the necessary support is given. Attendance at the feedback meeting is voluntary and any attendee may leave at any time.

The day of feedback is counted as the last day of the inspection.

The inspector should:

- cover the main findings of the inspection, including both strengths and weaknesses
- clearly communicate the likely judgements

- indicate likely recommendations, with clear reference to the relevant NMS and a clear direction for improvement
- use the grade descriptors and the evidence to clearly indicate how the judgements have been reached
- ensure that the provider has the opportunity to raise any issues or concerns, or to seek clarification about the inspection, and can contact Ofsted on the working day after the end of the inspection, if necessary
- confirm [when the report](#) will be sent to the manager for comments

Inspectors will not provide a written summary of the inspection or written feedback in advance of the inspection report being sent. Providers may choose to take their own notes at feedback.

Managers may share the provisional inspection outcome and findings with whoever they deem appropriate, though providers may need to be cautious/sensitive to the risk of provisional outcomes that may be subject to change potentially being shared with children when this could create uncertainty for them. Provisional inspection outcomes may also be shared, in confidence, with others who are not involved with the setting. This may include the managers' colleagues, family members, medical advisers and/or wider support group. However, the information should not be made public.

Making requirements and recommendations

Requirements

Inspectors make requirements when there has been a breach of a regulation.

When imposing a requirement, inspectors must ensure that there is sufficient evidence of the breach and that they can show this is having an impact, or is likely to have an impact, on children's experiences, progress and enjoyment. They must weigh up and balance evidence from more than one source to support making a requirement.

The requirement should refer to the specific regulation that has been breached. It should be detailed enough for the registered person to be clear about what they need to do to correct the breach of regulation and a date by which they should achieve this.

In deciding whether to impose a requirement, the inspector must assess the extent of the impact, or potential impact, on the experiences and progress of children, whether this is affecting their enjoyment of the holiday, and whether the matter could be dealt with more appropriately by making a recommendation.

The inspector will always impose requirements when there are significant concerns about the welfare, safety and quality of care for children.

Sometimes the registered person needs to take action to meet a requirement that they can

complete quickly. Inspectors can impose a requirement with a date that is likely to be before the registered person will receive their inspection report. Here, the inspector must be clear at the inspection feedback what the requirement is and its deadline.

[Statutory guidance for children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

Inadequate judgements: next steps

If we make an overall judgement of inadequate, this leads to a post-inspection debrief as soon as possible, and then a case review. The timing of the case review should be proportionate to the risk and take into account when the provider next proposes to operate another holiday scheme.

Following an inadequate judgement, we will usually reinspect the scheme the next time that it is operating, even if this is within the same inspection year. If a provider operates several schemes, we may wish to review the timeframe for inspections of those schemes.

We have the power to suspend a scheme or provider if we have concerns about the safety and welfare of children. The process will follow that outlined in the [‘suspension’ section of the social care enforcement policy](#).

We may also serve compliance notices if we believe this to be the most suitable way to address a particular shortfall.

Compliance notices and enforcement action

Ofsted’s compliance powers are set out in the [Care Standards Act 2000](#) and associated regulations. They are detailed in our [social care enforcement policy](#).

We serve a compliance notice following an inspection if either of the following apply:

- we consider that this is the most appropriate way to promote the welfare of children or we believe that they are at risk of harm or being harmed
- a registered provider has failed to comply with a requirement made at an inspection and we consider that this is the most appropriate way to deal with this concern

We will make decisions about a compliance notice by case review and we record these accordingly.

The inspection report

The report should be succinct and evaluative. Inspectors’ analysis must include clear evidence for

their professional judgements.

In most instances, each inspection judgement section of the report should be no more than 6 to 8 short paragraphs, with each usually only 2 or 3 sentences long. Reports for settings that have several weaknesses or that are found to be outstanding may require more detailed explanations for the judgements. Inspectors should ensure that the reports are long enough to say what needs to be said and no longer.

Content of the SCCIF report

Section of the report	Details
Information about this service	Brief contextual information about the service
Date and judgement of last inspection	The date and overall judgement of the last inspection
Enforcement action since the last inspection (registered providers only)	A brief summary of any enforcement activity we have taken since the last inspection
Inspection judgements	The judgements made and accompanying text
Areas for improvement	Any recommendations and statutory requirements (where relevant)
Information about this inspection	What we have looked at and information about the legal basis for the inspection
Service details	Information on the provider running the service

Quality assurance and arrangements for publishing the report

The inspector is responsible for the quality of the report. The inspector will check the completed report carefully before submitting to their manager for pre-publication quality checks before it is shared with provider.

Any proposed change of judgement from the provisional judgement given at verbal feedback during the inspection will be discussed by the appropriate managers within Ofsted. On these rare occasions, the inspector must inform the provider of the revised judgements and provide reasons for the changes before the provider receives the draft report.

We will send the draft inspection report to the provider within 18 working days of the end of the inspection.

The provider will have 5 working days to comment on the draft report, process and findings.

We will consider all comments and we will respond to the comments when we share the final report with the provider within a maximum of 30 working days after the inspection.

We expect managers to share the inspection outcome and findings with whoever they deem appropriate.

Following the inspection, we will ask providers for feedback about the inspection through a post-inspection survey. This is sent to the provider when it receives the final inspection report. We will use feedback from providers to improve the quality of inspections.

Conduct during inspections

Ofsted's [code of conduct](#) sets out the expectations for both inspectors and providers. At the start of the inspection (usually during the preparatory conversations) the lead inspector will explain these expectations and will ask providers to read the code. Inspectors will work constructively with providers and staff, demonstrating professionalism, courtesy, empathy and respect at all times.

Concerns or complaints about an inspection

Concerns

Most of Ofsted's work is carried out smoothly and without incident. If concerns do arise during an inspection, they 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 raised, and actions taken, will be recorded in the inspection evidence.

If, during the inspection, the provider is unable to resolve the matter with the inspector, they should contact the inspector's RIM for further discussion.

If an issue remains unresolved, the provider can contact Ofsted on the working day after the end of the inspection. This will be an opportunity for the provider to raise informal concerns about the inspection process or outcomes, ask about next steps or highlight information that they feel was not fully considered during the inspection. This will be directed to a RIM who is independent of the inspection to discuss and to resolve, where appropriate, at the earliest opportunity.

Providers also have another opportunity to raise concerns about the draft inspection report, process and findings when they receive the draft report.

Complaints

If it is not possible to resolve concerns during the inspection, shortly after the inspection or through submitting comments in response to the draft report, the provider may wish to lodge a formal complaint when it receives the final report. The inspector will ensure that the provider is informed that it is able to make a formal complaint, and that [information about how to complain](#) is available on GOV.UK.

Checks on responsible individuals

The [Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) require holiday schemes to have a responsible individual.

A provider must demonstrate to Ofsted that the responsible individual they appoint is able to meet the requirements of regulation. Ofsted's inspectors scrutinise the steps providers have taken to determine that a responsible individual who has been appointed to a registered establishment or agency is fit to supervise the management of an establishment or agency.

For further information, see our guidance [‘Changes to children’s social care services that are registered and/or inspected by Ofsted’](#).

Residential holiday schemes with no registered manager

The [Care Standards Act 2000](#) requires any person who carries on or manages a residential holiday scheme for disabled children to be registered with Ofsted. It is a criminal offence to operate or manage a residential holiday scheme without registering with Ofsted (section 11 of the Care Standards Act 2000).

Any failure to either notify Ofsted of the absence or change of a manager, or to put in place satisfactory management arrangements, will be taken into account when planning and carrying out inspections. For more information, see our guidance [‘Changes to children’s social care services that are registered and/or inspected by Ofsted’](#) page.

If a provider fails to notify Ofsted of a change of manager, this may also influence our assessment of their fitness to manage. For more information about what regulatory action we can take, you should refer to the [social care enforcement policy](#).

Incomplete inspections

We will apply our policy on incomplete inspections, [‘Gathering additional evidence to secure an](#)

[incomplete inspection](#), where appropriate.

This protocol sets out the arrangements for inspections that are deemed to be incomplete because there is a need to gather additional evidence to secure the inspection evidence base where the report has not been published. An example of why we would need to gather additional evidence would be a serious event occurring during the holiday scheme but after the inspection visit. Further action to complete the inspection and revise and report the findings may be required.

Safeguarding and child protection concerns

If serious issues of concern arise during the inspection, such as a failure to follow child protection procedures or if a child is discovered to be at immediate risk of harm, the inspector must notify the responsible individual (where relevant) or the person in charge as soon as possible. If that may compromise a child or adult's safety, the inspector must ensure that the appropriate authorities are notified immediately.

Inspectors should always follow [Ofsted's policy on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults](#).

Inspectors should contact their manager or regional social care compliance inspector if they need advice.

The inspector ensures that the referral is made to the relevant local authority children's services and the child's allocated social worker and/or the relevant local authority adults' services and, where appropriate, the vulnerable adult's allocated social worker. You can find further guidance in [Safeguarding concerns: guidance for inspectors](#). If the concerns relate to allegations against staff, they are referred to the designated officer.

Inspectors must ensure that concerns about the safety and welfare of a child are communicated immediately to the DCS for the responsible host local authority, where this is relevant. A record that this has been done must be kept. The regional Senior HMI should follow up the action that has been taken by the local authority.

The 'Prevent' duty

Extremism is unlikely to be a routine line of enquiry during SCCIF inspections. Inspectors should, however, be alert to signs of risks of extremism, such as literature, posters, videos or DVDs, or regular visitors to the setting when the purpose of their visit is not clear. Initial enquiries about the possibility of extremism must be directed to the manager or person in charge.

Inspectors should note the detail of any relevant concerns or referrals made by the responsible individual and how effective the multi-agency response has been. The DfE has published [advice for schools and childcare providers on the 'Prevent' duty](#), and inspectors should note where this applies to the type of setting inspected.

Inspectors can contact their RIM, who may seek specialist advice. If inspectors are unable to

contact their RIM and remain concerned, they should follow [Ofsted's policy on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults](#).

Female genital mutilation: the duty to notify police

Since 31 October 2015, when [section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015](#) inserted new section 5B into the [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#), specified regulated professionals (including social workers) must report to the police any cases of female genital mutilation in girls under 18 that they come across in their work.

The duty applies when the professional either:

- is informed by the girl that an act of female genital mutilation has been carried out on her
- observes physical signs that appear to show an act of female genital mutilation has carried out and has no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

If a child discloses information regarding female genital mutilation to an inspector, the inspector should follow Ofsted's [Safeguarding concerns: guidance for inspectors](#).

Reporting concerns about the administration and management of controlled drugs

Providers must report incidents related to controlled drugs (including loss or theft) to their local NHS controlled drugs accountable officer at NHS England. They should also report incidents to the police, if necessary.

If inspectors become aware of an incident related to controlled drugs that the provider has not reported to the appropriate authority, they should convene a case review to consider next steps. Actions may include the Ofsted region making the referral. This action is in addition to any regulatory action or recommendations made because of the concern. Inspectors should make a referral even when there are no requirements or recommendations to be made.

Use of personal data

As part of our inspection activities under the SCCIF, we may gather personal data that is necessary to help us evaluate children's social care services.

Our [personal information charter](#) sets out the standards you can expect from Ofsted when we collect, hold or use personal information, and that we will follow all applicable data protection legislation in how we treat personal information.

Our [privacy notice for social care](#) sets out in more detail what data we collect and our powers to do so, what we do with it, how long we keep it for and people's rights under data protection legislation.

Annex for figures

Ofsted's post-inspection and complaints procedure

Steps	Description
Step 1	The provider should raise any concerns during an inspection with the lead inspector in the first instance
Step 2	If an issue remains unresolved, the provider can ring Ofsted during the inspection or on the working day after
Step 3	We will normally send a draft report to the provider within 18 working days of the end of the inspection
Step 4	Within 5 working days of us sending a draft report, the provider can raise minor points about the report or submit a formal complaint
Step 5a	We will consider minor points of clarity or factual accuracy quickly so that the report can be published promptly
Step 5b	We will respond to any formal complaint before we finalise and send the report to the provider
Step 6	We will normally send the final report to the provider within 30 working days of the end of the inspection (longer if there has been a complaint). The report will be published on our website 5 working days later

[See Figure 1.](#)

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