



**Open Report on behalf of Janice Spencer OBE, Assistant Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>22 July 2021</b>
Subject:	<b>Regulation 44 Independent Visitors Report</b>

**Summary:**

This is the yearly report on the Regulation 44 Independent Visiting Service. It serves to update members of the Corporate Parenting Panel on the work undertaken between March 2020 and April 2021.

This report is submitted to the Panel for background information and a presentation will be delivered in the meeting.

**Actions Required:**

Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are requested to note the yearly report on the Regulation 44 Independent Visiting Service and make comments on the presentation provided at the meeting.

## **1. Background**

This report is being prepared in order to provide the Corporate Parenting Panel with an update of the work of the Independent Visitor.

Part six, regulation 43 of the Children's Home Regulation 2015 makes provision for the appointment of an Independent Visitor. There remains an expectation that the appointment of an Independent Visitor will continue to be the responsibility of the Local Authority, with clear guidance being offered as to the criteria which must be met in terms of ensuring the visitor's independence is clearly demonstrable. The visits continue to be required to be made on a monthly basis.

The Independent Visitor continues to be expected to provide a report following each visit. Part six, regulation 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations provides for the reporting of the standards.

The Regulation 44 report maintained its format providing a succinct summary of the homes under the signs of safety headings and there remains the inclusion of the

recommendations section to ensure there is clarity in prioritising areas for immediate action where these are identified during visits.

The Regulation 44 Independent Visiting Officers are Independent Reviewing Officers. During this period of reporting, the duties have been exercised by three Independent Visitors who have shared the duties across the seven Local Authority homes and two Independent schemes.

The attached report therefore details the homes performance against the standards and provides an overview of how the standards are being met. A particular focus is given to the way in which the Local Authority have adapted their practice and safeguarded young people during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

**2. Conclusion**

Overall, the homes have provided good, if not in some instances exceptional, levels of care for the young people in their homes. There have been further concerns raised over the quality of care and leadership within one home and the Local Authority are working proactively to manage this and make the necessary improvements.

The Registered Managers have responded robustly to COVID in very exceptional and unprecedented circumstances to ensure the physical and emotional safety of welfare of the children in their care with positive feedback of their experiences.

Independent Visitors have seen first-hand the motivation and commitment across the homes by staff members that have worked in challenging conditions, but nevertheless have continued to go above and beyond to provide the best care and stability they can to the young people.

Despite the impact of the COVID pandemic, the staff teams have worked tirelessly with the young people and their families to maintain their links and attachments and this has been evidenced in the creative way that family time has been promoted through range of safe opportunities.

**3. Consultation**

**a) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Report for the Independent Visiting Service Mar 2020- Apr 2021

**5. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Carolyn Knight, who can be contacted on 07879603618 or [Carolyn.knight@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:Carolyn.knight@lincolnshire.gov.uk).