

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
2nd August 2007

SUMMARY OF ROTA VISITS AND REGULATION
33 REPORTS

**BRENDA THOMPSON - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN,
FAMILIES & LEARNING**

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of the report is to inform Corporate Parenting Board of the outcomes of Rota Visits and Regulation 33 visits relating to Five Rivers and Gleneagles Resource Centre.

BACKGROUND

2. The Care Standards Act 2000 provides the legislative framework for Rota Visits and Regulation 33 visits. The Act stipulates that:
 - The home shall be visited by someone independent of the direct management the home.
 - Visits shall be at a minimum monthly and can be unannounced.
 - The person undertaking the visit must interview any child accommodated in the home and any staff present, to form an opinion on the standard of care.
 - Inspect the premises; the daily log of events and any record of complaint.
 - Complete a written report.
3. Middlesbrough Council's Corporate Parenting Policy (May 2001) states that 'the Council will ensure all appropriate inspections of children's homes are carried out, including rota visits by Elected Members'.

REGULATION 33 VISITS

4. Five Rivers, as the providers of residential childcare, has commissioned two independent Social Workers to undertake the Regulation 33 inspections on a monthly basis. The reports are circulated to the Commission for Social Care Inspection; Executive Director Children, Families & Learning; Head of Family Services; Service Manager Children Looked After and to the Manager of the home.
5. Identified actions are progressed by the Manager and Operational Manager within Five Rivers. The outcome of the reports are also discussed at the Middlesbrough Council/Five Rivers Partnership Board and operational meeting.
6. The reports contain detailed actions and 'good practice' recommendations as appropriate. Overall the reports from October 2006 – February 2007 have been positive and reflect a high standard of care.
7. Sample of recommendations/comments:

Holly Lodge

October 2006	'Immediate repair of wardrobe door in bedroom', young person 'fed-up with having to keep asking for it to be repaired'.
November 2006	During this month, 11 sanctions have been imposed resulting in delay in receiving pocket money or repayment of monies.
December 2006	Incentive scheme to encourage a young person to attend college.
January 2007	Young person's comments: 'it's great here' 'being here has helped me to change'.
February 2007	'That minutes of a LAC Review are received and placed on file' 'That staff ensure young people's comments noted in sanction book' 'Fire drills undertaken 3-monthly'

Rosecroft

September 2006	Ensure documentation completed in respect of Emergency Light test.
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'Fabric of the building has changed beyond belief a feeling of warmth and cosiness that was previously sadly lacking'

November 2006 Young person requests that Christmas allowance be increased to £100.

December 2006 Concerns about one young person who continues to absent himself from placement. Risk assessments updated.

January 2007 Agenda for young peoples meeting:
Outings/activities; keep the small lounge tidy.

February 2007 'Each young person is allowed to purchase magazines of their choice. Rosecroft takes the Evening Gazette and a Sunday tabloid newspaper.

Firtree

September 2006 Upstairs 'sleep room' untidy. Stair carpet worn and coming away – needs to be tacked down.

'Looked after nurse visits regularly'.

November 2006 'Young people not prepared to discuss education or issues regarding themselves. They were willing to discuss football and some articles in local paper. Their demeanour and attitude indicated satisfaction in their placement'.

December 2006 Risk assessment is required following threats to staff on a contact visit.

Identify NVQ assessors.

January 2007 'I am impressed with the tolerance and patience shown to the young people and high standard of care offered'.

February 2007 Fit new lock on toilet door. Neighbours expressed thanks for the prompt action of Firtree staff regarding the fire in their house.

Gleneagles

There is a rota of 'Regulation 33 visitors' which includes the Head of Family Services; Head of Capital and Assets (CFL), Education Psychologist and other managers not directly involved with the service. This allows for independence in the inspection role.

The reports are positive and reveal a service valued by parents and other professionals.

Sample of comments/actions:

October 2006	Log shows liaison with schools to identify areas of interest for the children
November 2006	Safety of children is prime consideration. Identification checked on entry. Fire drills in place.
December 2006	Parents comments: 'No issues, good staff, cheerful'. 'Fully satisfied', 'would like more days if possible, really appreciate the facility'
March 2007	'Oven broken, replacement needed'

ROTA VISITS

8. There have been some visits over the past year, the most recent at Gleneagles in January, however, these have been irregular. Members complete a visit sheet, which the home managers respond to. These are then forwarded to the Head of Family Services for action if needed. Overall the reports have been positive.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

9. There are no financial or Ward specific implications.
10. The report demonstrates Middlesbrough Council is fulfilling its statutory duty in relation to Children Looked After.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board advise the Executive to note the information in relation to Regulation 33 and rota visits.

REASONS

12. The Council is responsible for ensuring the welfare of all Children Looked After and that their places of residence meet the Minimum Standards for Children's Homes.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reg 33 Reports relating to 5 Rivers and Gleneagles
Rota Visit Reports

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