

# **SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES**

## **Notification of Significant Events Policy and Practice**

Date created or revised: 0224

Date of next review: 0225

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## 1 **INTRODUCTION**

There will inevitably be occasions when significant events occur both within and external to SES, which directly affect the health, safety or well being of young people or staff. Staff all have a responsibility to ensure that SES responds appropriately and promptly to such incidents.

This policy document does not operate in isolation but forms part of a wider policy framework and staff will need to be familiar with a range of other policy documents including: Safeguarding and Child Protection, Health & Safety, Children Missing from Care and Education and Leadership and Management in the Deputy Care Manager's Role. If staff are unsure about any aspect of this policy they should seek immediate assistance from the Registered Manager, Head of Care, Head of Education or one of the Deputy Care Managers. In addition staff can refer directly to Regulation 40 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015. Further advice is available on the Ofsted website, Reporting Serious Incidents in a Children's Social Care Service to Ofsted (last updated October 2023).

Events listed in the Children's Homes Regulations as significant are:

- Death of a child
- Referral of a person working in a home pursuant to section 35 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Child involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation
- Allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there
- Child protection enquiry involving a child has been instigated
- Child protection enquiry involving a child has been concluded
- Incident requiring police involvement has occurred in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious\*
- Other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious\*

\*serious being defined as significant or worrying because of possible danger or risk; not slight or negligible

## 2 **OPERATION**

In accordance with the Children's Homes Regulations 2015 and Guide to the Children's Home Regulations including the Quality Standards 2015, the Home's Registered Manager or their designate has a responsibility to notify the appropriate authorities without delay (normally within 24 hours) of any such incident occurring. Ofsted advise that providers should take a proportionate approach towards other incidents and the timeframe of notifying Ofsted. It may be that SES need sufficient time to collect further information before considering it to be an incident serious enough for a notification.

Any member of staff who is aware of a notifiable event having occurred, suspects it may have occurred, or who feels there is a significant likelihood of it occurring, must inform the Registered Manager immediately. In the absence of the Registered

Manager then the Principal, Head of Care, Head of Education or duty DCM should be informed.

Consultation with the 'First Port of Call' is essential before any decision is taken to notify authorities and/or relevant persons of an event; this is due to the discretion now provided to the registered person to judge whether an incident is sufficiently serious to make formal notifications.

The Registered Manager or their designate will inform the appropriate authorities and relevant persons in accordance with Regulation 40 of the Children's Home Regulations of any significant event. They will ensure that the child's parents are informed of any significant event affecting their child's welfare, unless this is not reasonably practicable or would place the child at risk. Ofsted and the child's placing authority will be informed of every notifiable event.

In the rare event of the death of a young person, the Registered Manager or their designate will inform Ofsted, the child's placing authority, the Secretary of State, Norfolk local authority (for young people placed out of their local authority), the Clinical Commissioning Group for the area and other relevant persons.

The Registered Manager or their designate also has a responsibility to inform the child's placing authority of any serious concerns about a child such that a mental health assessment would be requested under the Mental Health Act 1983.

- Ofsted must be notified without delay (normally within 24hrs), and the details of the incident completed on the Ofsted online Notification form, which can be located on the [Gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk). Once completed this form will automatically be submitted to Ofsted, no email is required. A copy of the notification form must be printed off and retained for our records. An electronic version is saved and kept in the individual child's folder located on the network. The only exception to this is for child protection related notifications; these are kept by the LDPCP.
- The details, including the Ofsted notification reference number, must be recorded in the **Notifiable Events** book, which is kept in the house office. Ofsted will return an email acknowledging receipt of the notification, which should also be printed for our records and attached to the notification. This email can take a couple of days.
- Ofsted require a formal notification of outcomes (resolution) where a child protection enquiry involving a child is instigated or concludes. This is the same online submission form as for the initial notification. When completing the form it will initially look identical, however a reference number is required to enable the adult to submit the resolution to the corresponding notification. This can be found on the copy of the original notification or in the Notifiable Events book. A copy of the resolution must be printed off and retained for our records. An electronic version is saved and kept in the individual child's folder located on the network. In most circumstances inspectors will request and accept email updates in relation to the initial notification.
- All other notification updates and resolutions (non child protection) must be communicated to Ofsted via email to the allocated inspector for the home.

- The final section in the **Notifiable Events** book must then be completed to confirm that the form has been sent. This is the responsibility of the Case Coordinator in liaison with the Registered Manager or the Head of Care.
- If the online system is unavailable for reasons beyond our control, an email should be sent to Ofsted stating a brief outline of the notification highlighting the reason for not being able to complete the online form, and that it will be forwarded as soon as the system is available. The Notifiable Events book must be completed as in the above stages. Printed and electronic copies must be retained for the individual child's folders.

Written records are kept of all notifications in a hard bound central log and detailed reports and any actions taken are placed in the child's individual main file.

**Notifiable Events** are those listed in the Children's Homes Regulations 40.

To summarise:

On the occasion of a **Notifiable Event** the duty DCM must:

- Consult with the First Port of Call, and inform the appropriate authorities and other relevant persons in accordance with Regulation 40 of the Children's Homes Regulations.
- Complete an Ofsted **Notification of Significant Events** online form and submit without delay (normally within 24 hours).
- Make an entry into the **Notifiable Events** book.
- **Print a copy of the completed online form before submitting to Ofsted**
- **Save a copy of the notification for the network.**
- **Record the reference number** on the notification form and in the Notifiable Events book.
- Pass the completed **Notification of Significant Events** form to the RM immediately on completion.
- **Communicate** the event to colleagues and key adults as appropriate.
- **Once the outcome of the significant event is known, a resolution to the significant event must be submitted.** This is likely to be completed by the Registered Manager or designate. The process is either:
  - For child protection notifications, the formal resolution must be submitted following the same procedure as for the notification.
  - For all other notifications, the outcome of the notification must be communicated in email to the allocated Ofsted Inspector for the establishment.

### 3 **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.