

The Role of the Registered Service Manager (RSM)

Introduction

NCB is the provider of the [Sector Awareness and Provider Preparedness programme](#) in relation to the Quality Standards, registration, and regulation regime for supported accommodation for young people aged 16-17 who are in or leaving care.

This resource explores the role of the Registered Service Manager (RSM). Each supported accommodation service must have one RSM ([The Supported Accommodation \(England\) Regulations 2023](#)). The RSM is responsible for the running of the service and accountable for all elements of service delivery, across supported accommodation premises and categories.

Approach

While the RSM is ultimately responsible for ensuring the provision complies with the Regulations and Quality Standards, the role can look different depending on the size and nature of the supported accommodation provision. For example, the RSM in a small provider with one setting might have hands-on day-to-day involvement with the service while the RSM in a larger organisation may conduct their role with the support of a management team.

To understand the varied responsibilities and diverse nature of the role, NCB developed this resource by interviewing two RSMs:

- RSM of a small provision consisting of two ring-fenced accommodation settings
- RSM of a larger provision consisting of 42 solo accommodation settings

We explore a typical day for each RSM, the areas of the service they have oversight of and how this might differ depending on the size of the service.

Ensuring policies and documentation are up-to-date

The Regulations outline that the RSM is accountable for overseeing the management of the supported accommodation settings. A central part of managing these settings is ensuring all policies and documentation meet the requirements and are kept up to date.

This is a significant responsibility and the RSMs we interviewed both referenced the process of regularly updating policies against the regulations to ensure compliancy.

The RSM of the **small provision** also highlighted the below responsibilities:

- Tracking staff training

- Updating risk assessments
- Induction/supervision documentation
- Overseeing referrals and matching processes
- Ensuring compliance with health and safety policies through use of a specialist health and safety company to provide guidance and make recommendations.

The RSM of the **larger provision** has a number of senior staff, such as a regional manager, who oversee the responsibilities above. The RSM is therefore responsible for directly supervising regional managers and creating strategic documents, such as workforce plans and training matrixes, to meet the organisation's mandatory core training requirements that cover the whole staffing body for the organisation. Regional managers are responsible for aligning these to meet the needs of placing local authorities.

Ensuring the involvement of young people in the service

A central theme of the Regulations and Quality Standards are the views, wishes and feelings of young people. Staff should work to ensure that each young person is provided with support to communicate their views and is able to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of the service. Their feelings should be considered in areas such as regarding their personal space, their support package, transition and the quality of support they receive.

Both RSMs highlighted the importance of listening to and involving young people and emphasised that they are consistently seeking to develop new approaches in this area.

The RSM of the **small provider** involves young people in their ongoing risk assessments to help them understand how certain behaviours create risk and develop strategies to manage this where possible. They also involve young people in support assessments to solicit their ideas on support, recognise what is working well, and what could be done differently.

The RSM of the **larger provider** described the overarching organisational ethos they have of working *with* the young person and consistently putting the young person first to help build trusting relationships with the young person and those supporting them. Six monthly quality assurance interviews with young people provide an opportunity for young people to review the quality of the accommodation and the service, how their needs are met and what they would like to change or work towards.

Managing staff and recruitment

The Regulations outline that the RSM needs to have effective oversight and that there must be appropriate management and staffing structures in place to support that. The RSM therefore plays a key leadership and management role in the day-to-day running of the settings. Depending on the size of the organisation, staffing structures are likely to vary.

Both RSMs were involved in managing staff and recruitment processes, including shadowing staff members, when possible, to ensure that a high quality of support is provided.

The RSM of the **small provider** was frequently based at a particular setting during the week and supports staff directly, through shadowing key-working sessions and holding supervision sessions with staff members. They also run training in monthly staff meetings and support the development of staff to progress to senior roles.

While the RSM of the larger provider does not work directly from settings, they virtually shadow staff through virtual meetings, for example when auditing staff files to ensure safer recruitment compliance. They are also involved and have responsibility for recruitment and outlining job requirements and necessary previous experience for new staff to ensure they are appropriate for the role.

Developing multi-agency partnerships

The importance of multi-agency working is highlighted in the Regulations and Quality Standards, requiring providers to work collaboratively with other professionals and agencies.

The RSMs described the importance of making connections with professionals and being able to communicate and collaborate with organisations and local authorities. Working with accommodating local authorities is an important element to multi-agency partnerships.

The RSM of the **small provider** emphasised how being able to directly liaise with the local authority and local police forces had ensured that staff had high-quality training and support, as this was offered through these agencies. They also had direct contact with agencies such as the local police force, for example when managing missing person incidents.

The RSM of the **larger provider** works in partnership across many different accommodating local authorities, as well as regional police forces. They use staff training to ensure that regional managers and staff in settings are communicating effectively with multi-agency professionals and working in partnership to ensure the best outcomes for young people.

Evaluating and monitoring the service

Reviewing the quality of the supported accommodation service forms another important part of the Regulations, for example through Quality of Support reviews.

The RSM of the **small provider** has quality assurance mechanisms in place, such as feedback forms for young people and professionals, including referrers, as well as an evaluation form that forms part of a larger audit of the service. These mechanisms will support the RSM to collate information for the Quality of Support review.

The RSM of the **larger provider** collates information from independent living skills assessments on a regular basis. These assessments monitor outcomes on areas such as education, training, and employment. Feedback from six monthly satisfaction surveys for young people and professionals and quality assurance interviews form part of data sets which are analysed and individual, local, and strategic priorities are then identified. They then feedback the improvements made directly to the young people.

Experience, skills and knowledge

The Regulations state that the provider's Statement of Purpose should outline the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff including the RSM.

The RSM must meet the fitness requirements for the role, including the requirement that they must have experience of having worked in a position relevant to the residential support of children or adults for at least 2 years, within the five-year period before they apply to register.

The RSM of the small provider referenced the importance of having worked with young people and experience of interpreting legislation. They emphasised that RSMs should have good networking skills, to aid multi-agency working and create connections with other RSMs. Because RSMs in smaller provisions are likely to be working directly with staff and young people, pastoral care and an excellent knowledge and awareness of safeguarding is crucial.

The RSM of the larger provider emphasised the importance of a RSM being open-minded, reflective, and adaptable with a transferable skill set. There is rarely a typical day as an RSM, so they should always be willing to learn and use all situations that arise with young people and staff as a learning opportunity.

More information

To learn more about the support and resources available through the Sector Awareness and Provider Preparedness programme, visit [our microsite](#).

If you are a supported accommodation provider, our online Community of Practice offers an online space to share ideas and support each other – email SAPP@NCB.org.uk to join.

With thanks to the providers who took part in the development of this resource:

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