



CICADA Response to the article “For Regular Regulation Wherever a Child Resides, Jonathan Stanley CEO ICHA”

The sector desperately needs a level playing field for a number of reasons:

1. It will increase the choice of placements, resulting in better matching and outcomes
2. It will allow for fairer comparison of the outcomes delivered by different services
3. It will reduce the heavy costs associated with the bureaucracy of procurement
4. It will drive up competition thereby reducing price and increasing quality

In 2002 Choice Protects called for a level playing field and it's since been one of the most repeated recommendations made by those independently researching commissioning for children in care. Despite this, it is still not adopted by Local Authorities. Cynically one could say this is because it opens up their own services to serious competition.

But we MUST be child led, not service led.

We also need to gain a universal understanding of the purpose of OFSTED inspections. Surely the purpose should be to assist those purchasing services to choose those of the best quality? Yet, we know that many Local Authorities have placement procedures that instruct those looking for placements to look at ‘adequate’ provision before they are allowed to contact providers that may be good or outstanding.

We need a level playing field. And we need an agreement as to the purpose of an inspection rating and its role in the commissioning process

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