

CYPF

Sheffield Fostering Service

Bedroom sharing policy



Reviewed 4/9/15

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Bedroom Sharing Policy

1. All children must have their own bed and the accommodation must allow for any assessed need for privacy for individual children (Fostering National Minimum Standard 6.4).
2. Bedrooms should be large enough to accommodate not only a bed, but also sufficient storage for the child's personal possessions.
3. The bedroom should be large enough for the child to retreat to for some private time, if they wish. This is particularly important for older children and teenagers.
4. New applicants must be able to provide a bedroom available specifically for fostering. Foster carers approved prior to 1st October 2013 are exempt from this; however, the rest of the bedroom sharing policy should be adhered to.
5. Preferably all looked after children will have their own bedroom (National Minimum Standard 10.6). However, there are occasions where sharing a bedroom is allowed and where this is the case, (either in terms of two siblings sharing or a looked after child sharing with a foster carer's birth child or another looked after child) each child must have their own area within the bedroom. Where a child in placement has been abused or has abused others, then the needs of all the children in the household must be assessed before this happens and the outcome recorded in writing (National Minimum Standard 6.5).
6. A risk assessment will be carried out by the Supervising Social Worker before any child shares a bedroom. This will consider a range of issues including:
 - a. The ages and genders of children who will share
 - b. The relationship between the children – will they all be siblings or will there be a mixture of birth and foster children or unrelated foster children?
 - c. The beds being used – if bunk beds are proposed are they suitable for the age for the child to be placed?
 - d. The wishes of the children concerned
 - e. What are the specific needs of children to be placed and what are the implications of these needs in relation to bedroom sharing?
7. No child (whether siblings or unrelated children) over the age of 8 can share a bedroom with a child of the opposite gender.

8. Where children of the same gender share a bedroom, up to the age of 10, there should be no more than a 3 year age gap between the children. After the age of 10 there should be no more than a 2 year age gap. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for siblings to share a bedroom where there is a larger age gap between them (as long as they are the same gender). The appropriateness of this will be assessed through discussions with parents and the children's social worker focussing on the children's individual needs.
9. A looked after child should remain in the foster carer's bedroom until they are at least 12 months old (which is in line with health visitor advice). By this age there is an expectation that the majority of babies will be moved into the identified bedroom in the placement but this will depend upon the child's assessed needs. It may be appropriate for some babies (such as those born prematurely or with health problems) to remain in their foster carer's bedroom longer.
10. Foster carers approved prior to 1st October 2013 should take note that it is not appropriate for a baby to share a bedroom with a foster carer's own children or another looked after child unless the foster carer's child or looked after child is under the age of 4
11. From 1st November 2014 if a foster carer decides to adopt or permanently foster a child in placement with them, and this child is in the only bedroom available for fostering, then the foster carer will not be able to continue fostering as they will no longer have a room available for fostering.