

Babysitters, Day Care and Overnight Stays

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards:

- [Standard 9 - Promoting and supporting contact.](#)
- [Standard 7 - Leisure activities.](#)

Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care:

- [Standard 1 - Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people.](#)
- [Standard 2 - Understand your role as a foster carer.](#)

Agreements regarding permission for babysitting and overnight stays will be reached between the child's social worker, parents, and foster carers, and documented in the Placement Plan and as part of your Delegated Authority.

Babysitting for Foster Carers

Parents and foster carers need breaks and may require babysitting or childcare from relatives or babysitters. This can be planned or unplanned in an emergency.

It is advisable to identify potential babysitters as part of your Form F assessment as these are most likely people who are frequent visitors to your home and form part of your close family network. This will allow the child to be babysat by someone who is known to them.

Babysitters must be at least 18years old.

Overnight Stays

Foster carers should strive to provide children in their care with the same opportunities as other children of their age. This includes sleepovers unless there are valid reasons for restrictions.

As part of the placement plan sleepovers with the child's friends should be discussed and it should be established if there are any persons who are not deemed suitable for the child to stay with overnight.

As part of the delegated authority, it will be agreed who can give permissions for overnight stays. Most likely this is the child's social worker and the foster carers.

Permission for sleepovers should be based on factors such as the child's background, concerns about the people or activities involved, the age and understanding of the child, the purpose of the stay, and the familiarity of the friend or family member.

BFFC's IFA expects their foster carers to gather information about the people the child wishes to visit or stay with, including meeting the adults, obtaining address and contact details, and ensuring to the best of their knowledge that the child will be safe. Foster carers

also need to have a clear understanding of transportation arrangements, sleeping arrangements, and the return plan for the child.

The child should have the foster carer's contact details, knowledge of the return plan, and instructions on what to do if they wish to come home early.

Where possible, overnight stays should be planned as children in care have often experienced instability and unpredictability and therefore, respond well to being given advance notice.

Depending on the child's needs, foster carers may discuss with them what information they can share with the people they will be visiting, while ensuring that sensitive information is shared on a "need to know" basis and documented in the child's daily record.

Even if it has been agreed that the child's social worker does not need to be consulted, foster carers should still inform them as soon as possible (within 1 working day).

If overnight stays are part of contact arrangements with family members, the child's social worker will handle the necessary arrangements.