



# Breakaway

## Monitoring and Surveillance policy

<b>Policy Owner:</b>	<b>Ranbir Sidhu</b> (Registered Manager)
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### **Policy Summary:**

Regulations 24, Monitoring and Surveillance of The Children's Homes Regulations 2015 & Quality Standards

**Introduction:**

The children's home should provide a positive environment where children can flourish, with staff who work positively and confidently with children, and who find the least intrusive way to support and empower children and keep them safe.

**Purpose and Aim:**

The Children's Homes (England) Regulations (2015) regulation 24 states:

The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if:

- The monitoring and surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;
- The placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance;
- So far as is reasonably practicable, and in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance;
- The monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than is necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy.
- This regulation is subject to any monitoring or surveillance requirements by a court.

At Breakaway, children and young people are treated as individuals with individual needs. We recognise that each young person will have differing levels of need; to ensure we can respond to these needs by individually tailored Care Plans.

Care Plans must be balanced and reflective of the child's views, wishes, and incorporate the level of risk at the time of writing. Plans must be kept under regular review to ensure they continue to meet the child's needs. Information relating to monitoring and surveillance is recorded on the child's Individual Risk Assessments, which are reviewed regularly where possible within a multi-agency setting to adapt to personal development, age and understanding.

**Principles:**

- The use of monitoring and surveillance in children's homes is only permissible when necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or other children or at the direction of a court;
- Details of any monitoring and surveillance systems should be outlined in the Home's Statement of Purpose and Children's Guide;
- Parents, children (if possible) and social workers should give consent to the use of surveillance and be informed how to make a complaint about its use;
- Monitoring and surveillance must be justified at the time of its use and be assessed as a fair and proportionate measure;
- Any kind of surveillance and monitoring must meet the needs of the individual child;
- The use of surveillance and monitoring devices should be for the protection and safety of children only and not staff.
- The use of surveillance as a 'default approach' to monitoring children's behaviour is not acceptable, nor is it acceptable as a solution to staffing issues;
- Groups of children should not be subject to 'indiscriminate monitoring'
- The impact of the surveillance or monitoring devices on individuals and their privacy should be considered.
- Regular reviews should take place to ensure that its use remains justified;

**Types of Surveillance:**

At Breakaway, the safety of the children is paramount. To keep them protected at all times we have two different electronic listening devices.

- A) **Bedroom Door Alarms:** Door alarms are fitted on all bedroom door with a central alarm control system from Quantec located outside manager's office. These can monitor exit and entry from a room via a pager system when activated. These door alarms are activated (only if child chooses to close the door and his care plan and risk assessments states so) at night time only. The door alarms are only activated at night and to promote the health, well-being and safety of the Children.

If a child decides he likes his door closed, the waking night staff will set the door alarm which is operated from outside the door once the child is settled.

Many children like their doors open at night this is recorded in their This Is Me. Door alarms won't be used in this case. Some children do not like being checked throughout the night or may prefer to be more independent and in these cases the parent/carers are asked to sign the night time check form giving permission for staff only to check their child at agreed times. The use of bedroom door alarms is not to be viewed simply as a monitoring system or to be used as a behaviour management tool but is to be deemed an additional support mechanism for the children/young people overnight, should they require it.

Bedroom door alarms are not to be set until the child/young person has settled to bed for the night. Door alarms are only to be set with the consent of the child's social worker or person with Parental Responsibility and where it is in line with the individual Care Plan or individual Risk Assessment in place. All staff are to be aware of the risk assessments for each child/young person.

All staff are trained and aware of how to operate the door alarms. All staff are to be aware of the risk assessment in place regarding the use of door alarms.

Should the door alarm be activated, staff should respond in line with the Care Plan and take the appropriate action in response to the door alarms being activated. Once the child/young person has settled back into the bedroom, then the alarm should be re-set. Staff should ensure the child/young person has returned to their own bedroom before re-setting the alarms.

Door alarms should always be responded to as quickly as possible so that the child/young person can be reassured and guided as appropriate.

- B) **Use of Listening Devices:** Listening (Audio) systems are used where a risk related to health or emotional well-being has been identified. These devices will only be set with the consent of the child's social worker or person with Parental Responsibility and where it is in line with the individual Risk Assessment in place. All staff are to be aware of the risk assessments for each child/young person. Baby monitors (audio only) are mainly used at night in bedrooms for children who have been diagnosed by a medical professional as having Epilepsy. Parents/carers and Social Workers are informed of the use of Baby monitors and door alarms during the early stages of introduction to the unit. Baby monitors will only be used once a Surveillance form has been completed and signed by the parent/carer and are kept on the Child's file. This information is also on the children's Risk assessment. A copy of all the children's Night Time routines (including those who have seizures) are kept in the Waking night handover file. Staff will be aware of why the device is necessary and how this promotes the child/young person's health and well-being. Listening devices can be set during the day or night if a risk or concern has been identified and the child/young person are in their room.

### **Breakaway DO Not Use any visual recording surveillance devices**

#### **Promoting the Welfare and privacy of Children/Young People**

Any use of monitoring or surveillance in our home will only be used when deemed necessary to further safeguard the young people by enabling appropriate levels of supervision to minimise the risks of bullying or harm. It will only be used to support and improve children and young people's safety and reduce any restrictions that may otherwise be necessary. The listening devices are in place to minimise and further safeguard young people's health and well-being, they should be deemed necessary, proportionate and beneficial to the improving a child's safety and emotional wellbeing.

Children and young people will be informed on arrival at the home during induction about these systems and alarms. The use of door alarms and listening devices is recorded in the Statement of Purpose which the social worker and any significant others will receive a copy of prior to placement.

Usual practices in ensuring the legitimate privacy of the child/young person i.e. when using the toilet, bathrooms etc. will be observed.

The listening devices are only used where a child/young person has an identified health care need for example epilepsy, gastro or where an emotional well-being risk has been highlighted and the staff supporting need to be able to listen to the young person to support their safety and care. The listening devices will enable staff to support a child/young person's health and well-being without having to be in the room with them, thereby promoting dignity and privacy. Where a child young person has epilepsy and the listening device is necessary, staff can respond as necessary to the identified risk or concern without having to interrupt sleep.

### **How Children/Young People will be Protected from Potential Abuse of Such Measures**

The use of door alarms within the home will be monitored and will be used in line with individual Risk Assessments. Staff are to ensure they discuss and agree who is responsible for setting/re-setting the alarms at night.

The Registered Manager is responsible for monitoring the use of door alarms and listening devices within the home and any issues or concerns should be addressed.

### **Surveillance and risk management:**

This policy along with care plans will be reviewed on an annual basis or sooner if practitioners identify any risk to the child.

### **Breakaway also has other relevant policies including:**

- Security of the home policy.
- Mobile Phones and gadgets policy.
- Monitoring of visitors.
- Epilepsy Management Policy

### **Complaints/Enquires:**

Any Complaints or enquiries regarding the monitoring of Baby alarms or Door alarms used in Breakaway should be directed to Breakaway manager Ranbir Sidhu in the first instance.

***Note: CCTV is installed in the car park overlooking the garden area. Not operational at present, is a mere deterrent.***