



Slough Children First SAFER CARING POLICY 2021

Fostering Regulation Requirements

Fostering regulations require that each Fostering household in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales produces a Safer Caring Policy. The National Minimum Standards for fostering services requires safer caring guidelines to be provided based on a written policy, for each foster home, in consultation with everyone else in the household. The guidelines must be clear with each child's social worker and be explained clearly and appropriately to the child.

Introduction

This safer caring policy provides a guide and ways in which Foster Carers can provide care, protect children and young people, manage the unknown triggers and support children in a safe way. This policy helps to raise their awareness to the possibilities of abusive situations arising within the foster home and to set out the arrangements within the foster home for reducing such possibilities. The policy will equip foster carers with the relevant tools and guidance that will enable them to not only safeguard the child or young person in their care but also themselves and their family. Since, this is a guide only, decisions about risk and safety are more complicated for fostered children than for those who are not in foster care. Careful consideration should therefore be adopted by the foster carer in discussions with the Local Authority to ensure that the child or young person's safety is paramount.

A Family and Child safer caring plan will be completed by the foster carers and the supervising social worker for each individual child in placement. This form will be signed by the foster carer, supervising social worker and will be reviewed annually or in line with a fostering family or child's changing needs. The plan can be complemented by a risk assessment and safety plan in line with the specific needs of a child.

Providing a secure base:

It is important that foster carers are able to build and maintain an attachment with the child or young person within the placement. A healthy attachment will:

- Act as a protective factor for the child/ young person
- Can aid in meeting all or most needs in a timely way
- Will show the child or young person that you want to look after them.
- Promote children responding to foster carers in a safe way

Bedrooms/bed:

- All foster children above the age of three should have their own room. Sibling groups may share a room up to a certain age, which should be discussed and agreed during the placement planning and bedroom risk assessment must be completed before the placement.
- No looked after child should share a room with children or young people that are not looked after or unrelated.
- All children or young people should have their own bed. Allowing children to share the foster carer's bed is an unsafe practice as it may give the wrong message or trigger memories of past abuse. It is not recommended for children of any age. Children aged 0-2 are allowed to sleep in a cot in the foster carers' bedroom.
- Foster carers, children or young people should enter bedrooms by invitation, and should be encouraged to knock on bedroom doors before entering.
- If children or young people are using bedrooms as a play area, it is good practice to leave the bedroom doors open.
- Consideration and care should be taken where bedtime supervision is needed.
- It is safer to provide a child with a period of warmth and affection before bedtime, for example reading a bedtime story or having a chat over a hot drink.

Clothing and dress:

- Appropriate dress, such as pyjamas and/or dressing gowns should be worn at all times.
- It is vital that all members of the household are appropriately dressed and/or covered to prevent vulnerable children or young people being confronted with adults or other children in states of undress.

Bath time:

- Children who are old enough and able to take a bath or shower themselves should have privacy in the bathroom
- If a child still needs bath time supervision, it is preferable for a female carer to do this, if she is the main carer. It may be wise to leave the bathroom door unlocked and slightly ajar for foster carers to explain what is happening and why and to encourage children or young people to be as independent as their

age, development or disability allows. It is safer to teach young children to wash their private areas themselves by using a doll to show them how or talking them through it.

- Children should be encouraged to have a bath or shower at least once a day to teach them about hygiene and personal cleanliness.
- Some children or young people feel unsafe or vulnerable at bath time, which may have been caused by their past experiences or simply because they are of an age where they feel uneasy being exposed to unfamiliar adults. This could result in what appears on the surface as unreasonable fear or anxiety about this activity. Therefore:
 - It is the responsibility of the foster carer to try and find out information on previous bath time routines and the child or young person's reaction to this. This will inform the foster carer about how best to tackle this task safely within their own home.
 - Carers will need to be very sensitive in dealing with this by providing the child with reassurances and clear messages that this is a safe activity. It should also be logged or recorded in the foster carer's recordings if there are concerns about bath times; this should also be shared with the supervising social worker.

Playing:

- It is advisable to discourage play fighting or boisterous play for children or young people who are less able to regulate their own behaviour and emotions. As they may be more at risk of losing control or becoming angry and/or upset.
- Additionally, play fighting may lead to a child or young person making an allegation due to the uncontrollable nature of touching that is involved.
- However, the type of boisterous play is dependent on who is involved, how long the child/ young person has been in placement and how closely supervised the play is.

Physical Affection and Touch

- **Touch and physical affection** can convey warmth, it can divert aggression, and can provide reassurance, care and comfort. Close contact and appropriate touch are important parts of establishing human relationships and help children feel secured where this is done in a safe way.
- For Looked After children, their previous experiences can result in the meaning of touch and affection becoming distorted. Many may have experienced inappropriate touch and sexual abuse that social workers may or may not be aware of. For some children, physical affection may have previously been linked to sexual activity. It is important, therefore, that foster carers are aware of the potential risk that some demonstrations of physical affection could be

misunderstood by children. Understanding the possible meaning and interpretation of touch in this context can help identify risk and protect both children and carers.

- To deprive children of physical contact in order to minimise risk could be damaging in itself, and cause the child to seek reassuring contact in the possibly inappropriate manner they have been used to.
- **As a general rule, foster carers are encouraged and expected to show children affection.** It is acknowledged that carers may be anxious about allegations of inappropriate physical contact with children. However, there is a need to balance the need for protection with the need to establish a positive caring environment. Some carers make a point of asking a child or a young person whether they would like a hug or a cuddle before actually doing so. It is wise to avoid games that involve wrestling or tickling that could be misinterpreted by some children. Carers should the following strategy:

1. Plan

- Information should be obtained prior to the child's placement so that issues can be identified and strategies put in place to manage possible incidents or difficulties around contact and touch. This minimises risks and enables foster carers to care safely for the child.
- **Carers must discuss appropriate ways of showing a child affection with their supervising social worker and record this in their safer caring agreement. This will be different for each child.**
- The foster carers should discuss situations that might place them, their family, household members or the child in the placement at risk in terms of physical contact. This should be discussed with their supervising social worker and recorded in the safer caring agreement.

2. Consent

- All members of the family must be aware of and adhere to acceptable behaviour in relation to hugs, kisses and touches. It is safer to agree that no one in the household touches another person's body without that person's permission.
- Children should always be asked if they want a hug or kiss and they need to be taught that it is perfectly acceptable to say no. Kisses are safer on the forehead and the cheeks.
- A fleeting or clumsy touch may confuse a child, or they may feel uncomfortable or even cause distress. Carers should touch with confidence, and should verbalise their affection, reassurance and acceptance; by touching and making positive comments. For example, by touching a child's arm and also saying "Well Done" if the touch was to convey praise and validation.
- Where children indicate that a touch is unwelcome, carers should immediately stop and apologise for this.

3. Location

- All physical contact must take place in open locations where the contact can be observed or monitored intermittently by people located nearby and who are aware of the interaction.
- Doors to rooms should be kept open if one to one contact is occurring that could involve physical touch (as long as this maintains individual dignity)

4. Context and boundaries to consider

- When thinking about who is an appropriate person to touch a child, it is vital to consider what the adult represents to the particular child. Personal likes and dislikes will play a part in any relationship;
- Many factors influence the power relationship between adult and child, including gender, race, disability, age, sexual identity, role and status;
- The background, history and previous experience of the child will also influence any decision about who represents a 'safe' adult in the eyes of the child;
- Children from ethnic minority backgrounds may be used to different types of touch as part of the culture;
- Children who have been subject to physical or Sexual Abuse may be suspicious or fearful of touch. This is not to say that children who have experienced abuse should not be touched, it may be beneficial for the child to know different, safer and more reliable adults who will not use touch as a form of abuse. The type of touch in this case will have to be agreed with the supervising social worker and the child's social worker; this should inform the safer caring agreement;
- For each child, what constitutes an intimate part of the body will vary; but generally speaking it is acceptable to touch children's hands, arms, shoulders and ruffle their hair. Once again, this is different for each child.
- The parts of the body classed as 'private' are not appropriate to touch;
- Therefore, it may be appropriate to touch a child's back, ears or stroke their hair or knees, if the child indicates such touch is acceptable. To go beyond this would be unacceptable, even if the child appeared to accept it.
- In any case, no part of the body should be touched if it were likely to generate sexualised feelings on the part of the adult or child
- Also, no part of the body should be touched in a way that appears to be patronising or intrusive

Therefore, the context in which touch takes place is usually a decisive factor in determining the emotional and physical safety for both parties.

Carers have to think of what message is being communicated to the child. If the intention is to positively and safely communicate affection, warmth, acceptance and

reassurance and it is done in a safe way that is previously discussed and agreed, then it is likely to be acceptable.

It **may** be appropriate to hug or cuddle children, or carry or give them 'piggy backs'. Sitting alongside a child to offer emotional support may be more appropriate for carers looking after young people.

Tickling:

- This should be properly assessed and reviewed by the foster carer in discussion with their supervising social worker and dependent on the child or young person within the placement.
- This may be appropriate and liked by some children but not others and may trigger memory of abuse, this is therefore not encouraged. .
- Foster carers should consider the risk of inadvertent sexual contact before tickling.

Behaviour, discipline and sanctions:

- It is vital that foster carers feel supported when managing challenging behaviour within a foster placement.
- Foster carers should consult the child's social worker or their supervising social worker for guidance on how to manage the child or young person with their placement, as early as possible.
- Foster carers should adopt house rules for behavioural management and have a behavioural management plan of deem appropriate.
- Foster carer and supervising social worker in consultation with the child's social worker must complete a risk assessment that incorporates a behavioural safety plan for behaviours that puts children and carers at risk of harm including self harming and challenging behavioural needs.
- Training is available to ALL foster carers and they should contact their supervising social worker for more details.
- Discipline should be age appropriate, incident appropriate, positive, no corporal punishment (this includes smacking, slapping, shaking and all other humiliating forms of treatment or punishment) and no withholding of food as punishment. Careful consideration is needed before the use of sending a child to their room as a sanction for some children this will trigger memories of prior abuse.
- The use of behaviour modification tools, for example star charts, should only be used in a positive manner, stressing positive reinforcement, and only after receiving consent for the use thereof from the child's social worker and the supervising social worker. It is advised that another person is present, if at all possible, when exercising discipline. (Refer to Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy)

Digital and Internet Technologies:

- Internet access is so important to children and young people for both their social and education needs and development.
- It is therefore important to agree with the child or young person, their social worker, the supervising social worker and their parents if appropriate what internet access they will have on mobile phones, laptops, gaming device and general access to social networking sites.
- Foster carer should ensure that mobile phones, laptops, Ipads and computer has installed internet security and parental controls.
- Children's use of laptops and Ipads should be monitored including checking web history of the user. It is advisable that this is discussed with children and young people to ensure they are aware that carers will be regularly monitoring their online activity including their use of social media platform.
- Children should be spoken to about the dangers of cyberbullying and online grooming.

Furthermore, the carers should:

- Actively show an interest in what the child is doing on the computer, phone or any device.
- Agree a maximum amount of time per day allowed on the computer/device, which could be more at weekends.
- Add password protection within the operating system so that unknown sites cannot be accessed accidentally.
- Review the internet and computer history files.
- Use firewalls, security, and anti-virus protection, and understand the use of privacy settings so they know how much strangers can access.
- Block any inappropriate websites that the may have accessed.
- Ensure that children understand that 'stranger danger' applies to the internet. Advise the child never to give personal or identifying details, without special permission from their carer, and never arrange to meet anyone from a chat room, unless their carer is with them.
- Advise children never to respond to nasty or suggestive messages and to tell them about it.

Social networking - Foster carers should not accept or initiate contact in a personal capacity with a child or young person who is a client of the local authority via a social networking site e.g. by becoming their 'friend'. Foster carers are also expected to block their own profiles on any social networking sites, so that personal details about themselves or their family or friends do not become available - both currently and in the future - to the children/young people they care for. Foster carers are also not permitted to place any photographs or information about a child or young person in

care in their own profiles on these sites. Foster carers are to ensure computers are in communal areas and should monitor and support children with what is appropriate or inappropriate to post online; as well as the pros and cons of social networking.

Overnight stays, play dates and going out with friends:

The circumstances in which these situations may arise include the following:

- Sleepovers with friends
- Invitations to go out for the day with a friend's family where the family are unlikely to be back until late
- Invitations to join a friend's family who are going away for a weekend
- The foster carer's own children going to a relative or friend for up to 4 days and the child wishing to go as well
- A relative or friend of the foster family occasionally acting as baby-sitter where the usual arrangements have broken down or are not available
- School trips of up to 4 days away
- A child's authorised day visit with a friend or family being extended if the child cannot return due to bad weather or a car breaking down where there are no known restrictions to an overnight stay taking place.

In order to facilitate such arrangements, it is important that the social worker and, preferably the child's parents, reach agreement at the time of the child's placement as to the circumstances in which carers can authorise short stays; and that this is set out in the Placement Plan and Delegated Authority agreement.

Although checks should not normally be required as a precondition of a child staying overnight with friends, in circumstances where it is considered necessary as a result of specific risks identified in the risk assessment, or where the child is to stay with adults regularly or frequently or for a prolonged period, checks on members of the relevant household should be made through the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Children's Services and Probation records for the relevant area.

Overnight stays assessment decision

Decision on overnight stays, play dates or going out with friends should be decided upon guidance and the foster carer's own risk assessment. This should be discussed beforehand with child social worker and supervising social worker and agreed as part of delegated authority.

The more usual arrangement will be that the carer can arrange overnight and short stays without consulting the social worker or parent on each individual occasion.

1. Carers considering a request from a child to stay overnight with a friend should base their decision on the following factors:

- Are there any relevant restrictions in the child's Placement Plan?
- Are there any factors in the child's past experiences or behaviour to preclude overnight stays?
- Are there any grounds for concern that the child may be at significant risk in the household concerned or from the activities proposed?
- Is the child staying with another child or children, rather than staying solely with an adult?
- The age and level of understanding of the child;
- What is the purpose and length of the overnight stay?
- Whose idea was the overnight stay?
- How well is the friend or family known to the child?

Where the carer proposes to agree to the child's stays away, before allowing them to go ahead, certain enquiries must be made by the carer; for example the name of the adult who will be responsible for the child, the means of contacting the adult and the child during the visit/stay and the arrangements for the child's return. There should be clarity about the sleeping arrangements, and what the arrangements are.

2. Prior to the child's stay away, the carer should arrange to meet the adult who will have responsibility for the child unless he or she is already known in which case the prior arrangements can be made over the telephone.

3. The arrangements for supervising or caring for the child must not compromise the safety of the child or of anyone else; and the following considerations should apply:

- Have the arrangements been confirmed with the parent of the friend or the adult who will have responsibility during the visit?
- What are the arrangements for the child returning home?
- Is there a contact number for the household in which the child will stay?
- Is the child aware of what to do if he or she wants to return home earlier than planned?
- Does the child have a contact number for the carers where they can be reached at any time?
- Does the child have access to a mobile phone?

In all cases, discussions should be held with the child, dependent on his or her age, as to what, if any, information should be shared with other adults to enable them to look after the child appropriately.

This might include:

- Any specific health care needs of the child;
- Any established routines for the child;

- Any behaviour management problems which, if the adult is unaware of, could lead to difficulties during the visit, for example the child may be over familiar with adults or over assertive with younger children.
- Any decision to share information should be on a 'need to know' basis and recorded.

If the child refuses to allow appropriate information to be shared, then he or she needs to be made aware that this could affect the decision to allow the child to stay away from home.

If satisfied that it is appropriate to allow the child's stay away, a decision to allow it to go ahead may be made. If not, it may not be allowed.

The decision and the arrangements agreed should be recorded in full in the foster carer logs.

Even if it has been agreed that the social worker does not have to be consulted in making these arrangements, s/he must still be informed as soon as practicable afterwards (within 1 working day) and the social worker should inform the parents as appropriate.

With older teenagers, there is greater risk to their safety and wellbeing as they explore and test greater levels of independence. Any contact arrangements, which are agreed as a result of new friendships formed during the child's placement, should be included in the Care Plan, when it is reviewed.

The reasons for any change in the contact arrangements must be clearly recorded.

These activities should be recorded in the foster carer's log book.

Baby sitters:

- Regular baby sitters or back up carers should have an up to date DBS check conducted by the Slough Children First.
- Overnight stay should be agreed with the child or young person's allocated social worker and the foster carer's supervising social worker.
- A period of more than six days/nights needs to be agreed in advance with both the child's social worker and the foster carers supervising social worker to allow a suitable assessment and approval.
- All overnight stays and babysitting should be documented in the foster carer's log.
- The use of baby-sitters should be clarified with the supervising social worker beforehand. Baby-sitters need to be adults and be DBS checked as they will have caring responsibility for the children. These should be the foster carers nominated support carer.

- Although checks should not normally be required as a precondition of a child staying overnight with friends, in circumstances where it is considered necessary as a result of specific risks identified in the risk assessment, or where the child is to stay with adults regularly or frequently or for a prolonged period, checks on members of the relevant household should be made through the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Children's Services and Probation records for the relevant area. This will need to be discussed and agreed.
- SCST SCF can undertake DBS checks in some circumstances to approve relatives or friends who undertake caring responsibilities like regular babysitting.
- Some children who have been sexually abused are particularly vulnerable to repeated abuse. Foster carers must ensure that they are especially careful about the adults they introduce to these children.
- Foster carers need to agree with their supervising social worker and the child's social worker what would be considered to be satisfactory arrangements for the care of foster children when they go out without them.
- Reciprocal planned arrangements with other foster carers are encouraged.
- It is generally not advisable for teenage children to have this responsibility.

Supervision and Health & Safety.

Foster carers are to ensure children are supervised at all times when in the home, when in the company of other children and when out in the community. They also need to ensure the home meets the department's health and safety expectations. When out in the community, foster carers also need to consider health and safety as part of an ongoing assessment of risk.

Car journeys:

Foster carers should ensure that all legislation on car safety and compliance is followed, in that:

- Children travelling should use appropriate car or booster seats
- All children must wear a seat belt
- It is good practice to have looked after children seated in the back of the car.
- Carers cars must have comprehensive car insurance
- Children who have been sexually abused may feel unsafe alone with a male adult in a car. Carers may, therefore, avoid situations where the male carer would travel alone with a child. Where this cannot be avoided, carers may have a general rule that children always travel in the rear passenger seats.
- Never leave a child or children alone in a car even if this is for a few seconds for children's safety and reassurance.

- All cars should have child safety locks

Photographs

Foster carers should not take photographs of children naked, when taking a shower or having a bath, or without clothing in paddling/swimming pools etc photographs of children taken should not be shared in any social media platform.

Holidays:

- Prior to booking the holiday foster carers need to consult, inform and get the agreement from the child's social worker who may need to request consent from the parents. This should be done in consultation with the supervising social worker. Holiday details to be shared, discussed and agreed.
- Foster carers are discouraged from making travel arrangements during court proceedings and term time. Therefore, carers should discuss holiday arrangements way in advance with the child social worker and supervising social worker to ensure proper planning and coordination on both sides.
- Prior to travelling a holiday risk assessment needs to be completed to set out details of the holiday and how the carer will mitigate any risk that may arise while on holiday. It is the duty of the supervising social worker to complete the holiday risk assessment with contributions from the carer.
- Foster carers or other children are not allowed to share a bedroom with the child or young person in the placement as a safer caring guideline. Where this is agreed following discussions with the fostering practice managers, supervising social workers and the child social workers; a bedroom risk assessment needs to be completed as part of the holiday risk assessment.
- Sibling groups are able to share holiday accommodation only if this mirrors the placement sleeping arrangements, if not, this needs to be discussed and agreed.

Daily logs:

- It is vital that all foster carers keep a daily log of events that take place when a child or young person goes into their care.
- This not only builds a picture of the child or young person's routine, development and experiences but also safeguards both the child and foster carer whilst in the placement.
- Foster carers should record all incidents such as inappropriate behaviour or speech, worrying phone calls, internet use and anything that makes a carer feel uncomfortable or in anyway concerned. Supervising social workers should be checking the foster carer's recording and providing support and supervision e.g. following up concerns and also recording fully on the system.
- Foster carers should refer to and read the recording policy for this purpose.

Working with professionals, other agencies and services:

- A transparent working relationship with social workers is vital when a child or young person is in placement.
- This ensures that the child or young person's needs are not only met but remain paramount.
- It is important to have an awareness of the roles and responsibilities, in addition to maintaining a good working relationship with other agencies that are involved in the care of the child or young person in the placement. For example schools, police and key workers.

Communication with the department

- In general, all behaviours that are of a safeguarding concern should be reported to the department immediately.
- It is important that foster carers make a child's social worker aware of any sexualised behaviour observed in a child, or other signs and symptoms that a child may have been abused.
- Social workers will be able to provide more detailed advice about handling such behaviours, and can arrange more specialised help where this is needed.
- If foster carers are ever in any doubt that a particular behaviour is 'sexualised', they should seek guidance from the social worker. Foster carers should listen to what their birth children share with them too if a foster child's behaviour is making them feel uncomfortable.

Significant and Monitoring events

The following significant events require immediate notification to the supervising social worker:

- Any illness or accident suffered by the child;
 - Any outbreak in the foster home of any infectious disease;
 - Any allegation that the child has committed an offence;
 - Any use of physical restraint against the child;
 - The involvement or suspected involvement of the child in prostitution;
 - Any incident relating to the child necessitating calling the police to the foster home;
 - Any absence of the child from the placement without permission;
 - Any failure of the child to attend school;
 - Any incidents of bullying suffered by the child;
 - Any changes to the people being members of the household;
 - Any changes to the structure of the home, i.e. for example extensions.
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- Any medication administered and admissions to hospital

The foster carers should contact their supervising social worker if they are in any doubt about a situation which could affect their ability to provide safe caring or put the child of themselves at risk of allegations.

The foster carers should ensure that their home continues to offer an environment that is safe, stimulating and supportive of a child's growth and developmental needs.

Foster carers must complete an Accident/Incident/Illness Report Form for all the significant and monitoring events above. This should be sent to the supervising social worker and the child social worker. Where the supervising social worker is on leave or out of office, the foster carer must notify the fostering practice manager and duty social worker

New people or visitors in the foster home – If another young person enters the foster home, make them feel safe and explain routines and house rules. Introduce support carers and other important visitors to the young person slowly. When friends visit, they will not be left unsupervised with the fostered young person.

Supervision in the community – Younger children should be closely supervised at all times in the community; however, in respect of older children there will be times when they will be outside the home not under the direct supervision of the foster carer, e.g. going to and from school, short trips to the local shops and visiting friends. Carers will need to make a judgement with the social workers as to when the young person is ready to be unsupervised for short periods and any agreement in this regard must be clearly recorded in the safer care plan. Agreement will need to be reached with the young person about where they are going, who they will be with and when they will return. In the event that a young person does not return as expected, the foster carer should follow the 'Missing from Care' procedure.

Use and storage of alcohol - Foster Carers are responsible for ensuring children and young people are not at risk from any alcohol kept in their home. Foster carers must ensure alcohol is stored safely and securely, in either a locked cupboard or, at the very least, out of children and young people's reach. Foster carers have a critical role to play in setting a positive example to children and young people about how to drink responsibly. Children and young people should not witness drunkenness or binge drinking within their foster placement. The use of alcohol in fostering households must be clearly discussed and apparent in all safe care policies. Any changes in relation to consumption must be discussed openly and honestly with supervising social workers and children's social workers.

Medication – Should be stored safely and securely out of reach from children. Any medication given either over-the-counter or via prescription should be clearly recorded and given as per instructions. Medication logs must be completed and shared with the supervising social worker

Family pet – A pet risk assessment should be completed each time the family acquires a new pet, this information must be shared with the supervising social workers prior to or immediately the pet is acquired. Explain to children coming into placement how the animals are cared for and supervise the child until the carer has risk assessed how they deal with the animal.

Language – Remember to use appropriate language in the home. Have a no swearing rule and consider the words that you use and their potential meaning for foster children

Driving – Ensure the car meets all safety requirements. Children should always wear a seatbelt or be in properly fitting car seats. If the child is alone with the driver, the child must sit in the backseat of the car.

Education about sex and relationships- It is important to talk to young people about sex and relationships in a way that is sensitive to their cultural and/or religious backgrounds. It is important young people are taught about safe sex and how to respond to oppressive or abusive behaviour from others.

Foster carer's own children – Ensure they are aware of the house rules and that they do not walk around the home with little/no clothes, and that they do not enter the fostered young person's bedroom without permission from that young person.

Children and Young People from other countries

Children and young people from other countries can be additionally vulnerable in that they have less knowledge of organisations that offer support, and they may be isolated from support networks. Legal status impacts on refugees, asylum seekers and victims of trafficking. Trauma may be created by experience of previous living in conflict zones, intimidation and lack of family contact; they may be more vulnerable to abuse due to isolation. A safe care policy should take these factors into account.

Delegated Authority

Delegated Authority is the process that enables foster carers to make common sense of every day decisions such as allowing the child or young person they care for to go to a friend's house, go on school trips or have their hair cut. Delegated authority should be discussed within the initial placement planning meeting and clarification sought on what a foster carer can, or cannot agree to.

Reviewed June 2021