



Bedroom Sharing Guidance

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Policy Summary:

This policy aims to provide guidance around the sharing of bedrooms for foster children.



A hands-on approach to help children in Slough be

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Bedroom Sharing Guidance

Based on legislation and minimum standards in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales the requirement is to provide foster homes that reflect the child's assessed need for privacy and space. It is recommended that only applicants with a bedroom available for fostering and general living space large enough to accommodate all who live there, proceed to assessment. Every child should be offered space where homework and other activities can be undertaken. The bedroom available for fostering and the general living space should be inspected and assessed for suitability at the stage of the initial visit (refer also to Accommodation Guidance and separate Guidance for Parent and Child Placements).

In the foster home each child over the age of three should have their own bedroom. If this is not possible the sharing of a bedroom should be agreed by each child's responsible local authority and each should have their own area within the bedroom.

Before seeking agreement for the sharing of a bedroom the operational team should take into account any potential for bullying, any history of abuse or abusive behaviour, the wishes of the children concerned and all other pertinent facts. The discussions, the decision-making process, the details and outcomes of the bedroom sharing assessment should be recorded in written records and a **Bedroom Sharing Risk Template** must be completed.

It is crucial foster carers be informed and regularly re-informed that should there be changes to sleeping arrangements and all aspects of accommodation they must inform their Supervising Social Workers and /or their managers. It is the responsibility of the allocated Supervising Social Worker to re-assess the new arrangements, record them in writing, inform their Line Managers and where appropriate the child's responsible local authority.

General Living Space

The general living space must be large enough to comfortably accommodate the needs of all who live there. Appropriate space for children and young people to complete homework, free from distractions. Assess suitability of layout of the foster carer's home. The standard of the looked after child's accommodation must be comparable to the standard of the birth children's accommodation.

Sibling Groups

Sibling groups or where all children are under the age of 3 years, may be assessed for sharing a bedroom together. In addition to the assessment, an authorised risk assessment should be completed.

After the age of 3 years old only same sex sibling or close relatives may be risk assessed for sharing a bedroom.

Age and Bedrooms

- A child should not share a foster carer's bed in any circumstances.
- A child under the age of 2 years can share the foster carer's bedroom if respective local authority permits.
- For younger children, satisfactory space and storage for toys is required.
- The bedroom of younger children should be on the same floor as the foster carer's.
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All children must have their own bed and the accommodation must allow for any assessed need for privacy for individual children. Bedrooms should be large enough to accommodate the bed and sufficient storage for the child's personal possessions. Needs will be shaped by the child for example a teenager or a child with a disability will have different needs to toddlers.

Bunk beds are not recommended for children under 5 years or over 14 years. Foster carers should check and ensure that bunk beds are clear from hazards.

There are various styles of beds e.g., study beds: safety is always the priority. The health and safety assessment should also assess the safety of a design of a bed; however, this does not deflect from the foster carers responsibility to keep the bed free from hazards.