**Introduction:**

There may be occasions where foster children may be sharing bedrooms and where this takes place the bedroom sharing risk assessment MUST be completed and agreed prior to the arrangement taking place. It is the responsibility of the fostering social worker to complete the risk assessment form in liaison with the child’s social worker.

The bedroom sharing risk assessment is to be completed to ensure that any risks or hazards associated with the bedroom sharing arrangement are identified and reduced/managed. This is the same where foster children share a bedroom both in foster homes and whilst on holidays including in hotels and camping or second homes etc.

**Safe Care Policy:**

All Foster Carers registered by Dudley Council will have their own household Safe Care Policy (please see DMBC fostering service Safer Caring Policy). The household Safe Care Policy will have been developed by the carers in conjunction with all household members and the Foster Carer's assessing Social Worker or Supervising Social Worker from the Fostering Service.

The household safe care policy should be a working document, and this should be updated by foster carers in conjunction with the fostering social worker at regular intervals, at least annually, or when changes in circumstances arise for example where new children are placed.

In order for a bedroom sharing risk assessment to be agreed this should be accompanied by an updated household safer caring policy which considers the risks identified within the risk assessment form and clearly outlines how these risks will be manged within the fostering household.

**Bedroom Sharing:**

No bedroom shares between any children or young people will be agreed by the relevant Fostering Team Manager or equivalent grade, unless a Risk Assessment and household safer caring has been completed.

**Connected Persons:**

For placements with Connected persons, the Bedroom Sharing Risk Assessment proforma must be completed for emergency placements under Regulation 24 Care Planning, placement and Case review (England) Regulations 2010 where bedroom sharing is identified.

**Unplanned/ Emergency Placements**

No bedroom shares for unplanned or emergency placements will be agreed by the Fostering Team Manager or equivalent grade member of staff.

The only exceptions are for the unplanned or emergency placement of siblings together or when placements are made with Connected Persons under Regulation 24 of the Care Planning Regulations 2010. In these circumstances, the existing relationships between the children and/or the prospective carers will be considered an agreement for the children to share a bedroom will be required from their social worker / Team Manager.

**Children with a History of ‘Risky’ Behaviours**

Where it is known that a child/young person has abused or significantly harmed another child/young person or where the risk assessment identifies that a child/young person’s behavioural presentations are likely to be harmful to other children/young people, then a bedroom share will not be agreed.

**Regulatory Framework**

Fostering Services National Minimum Standards (England) 2011

NMS 10.6

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 is agreed by each child’s responsible authority and each child has their own area within the bedroom. Before seeking agreement for the sharing of a bedroom, the fostering service provider takes into account any potential for bullying, any history of abusive behaviour, the wishes of the children concerned and all other pertinent facts. The decision-making process and outcome of the assessment are recorded in writing where bedroom sharing is agreed.

NMS 4.1

Children’s safety and welfare is promoted in all fostering placements. Children are protected from abuse and other forms of significant harm (e.g. sexual or labour exploitation)

NMS 4.6

refers to Foster Carers being trained in appropriate safe care practice, including skills to care for children who have been abused.

NMS 3.9

Each Foster Carer is aware of all the necessary information available to the Fostering Service about a child’s circumstances, including any significant recent events, to help the Foster Carer understand and predict the child’s needs and behaviours and support the child within their household. The Fostering Service follows up with the responsible authority where all such necessary information has not been provided by the authority.

NMS 11.2

Children are carefully matched to a foster placement. Foster Carers have full information about the child as set out above.

NMS 15.2

 …The Fostering Service follows up with the responsible authority any gaps in the information provided to them on the child or the child’s family, which may hinder the Foster Carer in providing a safe caring environment that meets the needs of the child and enables them to keep the child, other children in the fostering household and the Foster Carer safe.

**Bedroom Sharing Risk Assessment proforma**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Names of children sharing** | **Dates of Birth** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Reason for sharing** |  |
| **What is the view of the Children’s respective SW or TM/s** |  |
| **What is the view of the Childrens respective IRO/s** |  |
| **What alternative arrangements have been considered?** |  |
| **View of the children / young people** |  |
| **Do the children have sufficient individual space in the bedroom including their own suitable bed** | **Yes** |  | **No** |  |
| **Is there a clear personalised side for each child / young person**  | **Yes** |  | **No** |  |
| **What are the risks associated with this arrangement** | **Bullying** |
|  |
| **History of Abuse**  |
|  |
| **Abusive behaviour** |
|  |
| **Age and stage of development of children** |
|  |
| **Any other risks associated with this arrangement** |
|  |
| **What measures are in place to reduce risks?** |  |
| **What are the rules regarding the use of bedrooms (regarding playing, sleeping routines, bedroom doors, undressing, dress code)?** |  |
| **Has the household safer care been updated**  | **Yes** |  | **Date updated** |  | **No** |  |
| **Date completed** |  |
| **Review date** (must be reviewed at least annually or as circumstances regarding the arrangement change) |  |
| **Name of social worker completing form** |  |
| **Name of foster carer/s** |  |
| **Name of Fostering Team Manager**  |  |

**Once completed by the SSW this risk assessment should be added to both the carers and children’s LCS records under documents with a case note added.**

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| Policy date: 16.06.22 |
| Reviewed by Fostering Managers: 16.06.22 |
| Approved by SMT: 27.06.22 |
| Policy Review Date: 27.06.23 |