**Policy on Storing Young People’s Belongings**

Version 1 June 2023

1. **Why do we need this policy?**

Gloucestershire County Council may at times need to store personal and sentimental possessions belonging to young people in our care for a period. This can be due to several reasons, unexpected placement moves, emergency situations such as going into Custody, or a young person going missing. In these circumstances we would support with the storage of belongings and this policy gives guidance on how we will store the belongings, what processes will need to be followed to ensure confidentiality and safety of the belongings, along with an accurate logging and tracking process. This robust policy will also avoid the risk of any unnecessary claims being submitted to GCC for replacement of missing items.

1. **What does this policy cover?**

This policy will ensure that any young person’s valued belongings when stored at any Gloucestershire County Council premises will be done so in a safe and confidential manner, the belongings will be logged and tracked and regularly reviewed by the case holding team to ensure the belongings are returned to the YP or their family as soon as is possible.

The policy is focused on storing small, personal belonging for a young person. This policy does not cover the storage of furniture or large bulky household items. It is not suitable to store these on GCC premises and would require a bespoke arrangement with a storage company if this decision was made. See also **Appendix A** for a list of prohibited items that we will not store.

1. **How will we store belongings?**

***Boxing & Labelling***

All belongings that are stored should be placed into cardboard boxes provided by the service. These boxes should be sealed for confidentiality and then labelled using the standard label in **Appendix C**.

For small bulky items i.e., televisions please attach a label to the individual item. All electrical items must also be **tested beforehand** to ensure they are in a working condition.

***Inventory***

All items stored will be recorded on an inventory sheet (**Appendix B**), it is expected that this will be completed between the young person and their worker where possible. This inventory will outline what items have been stored in each box and the total number of boxes. It will also note any items that it was agreed not to store and the reason for this.

Any damaged items, or items in very poor condition, where it is felt not suitable for storage, worker should inform YP due to condition of item it is not suitable for storage, and worker would inform the young person of our intention to replace the item in the future when belongings are returned to them. (Worker to seek management approval before any action is taken around disposal/replacement). If the above happens, the item should still be noted on the inventory, but marked *Destroyed* - not suitable for storage, GCC will replace the item when belongings are removed from storage and returned to young person.

The inventory should be signed by the young person and their worker to confirm it is accurate. If the young person is not available due to circumstances relating to why we are storing the items, then a second staff member should sign to witness the inventory.

A copy of the inventory will be provided to the young person (when possible) and a copy will be uploaded to the young person’s record on Liquid Logic.

1. **How will we track belongings?**

Business Support will store the inventory sheets locally in a specified folder for reference and will update a Team Storage Tracker (**Appendix D**) using relevant tab, showing:

* Young person’s name/LL Number/ Workers name/Team
* Total number of boxes – count single smaller items i.e., TV, individually as a box also
* Date placed into storage and storage location.
* Date of review of items stored – this to be agreed with Team Manager, maximum 6 months from date of items stored originally.

Business Support staff would then add a Case Note on young person’s LL record stating date belongings placed into storage and total number of boxes and agreed storage review date.

1. **How long will we store belongings?**

When belongings are initially received for storage, this date will be noted, and a review date will be set, this date to be agreed between worker and Team Manager – this will ensure regular reviews of any young person’s belongings stored are taking place, and we would hope to ensure return of any belongings as soon as is possible. Maximum date to be 6 months before a review takes place.

1. **Return of Belongings**

If belongings are then returned to young person in full or partially returned due to their circumstances, Business Support to be made aware so that the Tracker can be amended. Additional Case Note added to Liquid Logic record noting return of any property.

1. **Ongoing Monitoring**

Business Support teams should review the Tracker every quarter and contact the worker and Team Manager to understand if there is still a requirement for any logged belongings to continue to be stored.

1. **Reviewing this policy**

Policy on storing Young People’s belongings to be reviewed annually – next review May 2024.

***Appendix A***

**Prohibited Items**

**Young People’s storage items we would not store on Gloucestershire County Council premises**

* Any food items including canned/dried etc.
* Lighters/Lighter fuel/flammable items
* Soiled/dirty bedding
* Soiled/dirty Clothing
* Empty or partially full toiletries bottles
* Weapons
* Illegal Substances or items

**PLEASE Consider** – any damaged items, or items in very poor condition, that it is felt is not suitable for storage, worker should inform YP due to condition of item we cannot store and would inform the YP of our intention to replace the item in the future when belongings are returned to them. (Worker to seek Management approval before any action is taken around disposal/replacement)

* If the above happens, the item should still be noted on the inventory, but marked **Destroyed - not suitable for storage, GCC will replace the item when belongings are removed from storage and returned to YP**

All inventories must be uploaded to LL - YP’s Record – so the inventory is available as a reference document

* Consideration for sourcing storage outside of GCC premises may be considered for full property contents, including white goods, large Furniture items etc. Possible use of Advanced Removals for storage on a monthly invoice basis – to be discussed with Team Manager before any agreement is made.

***Appendix B***

**Inventory List**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Young Person |  | Name of Worker |  |
| Total No. boxes / cases / holdalls |  | Date placed in storage |  |
| Location stored in |  | Expected return date to YP / review date of storage |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Item Description | Was this item stored or destroyed with agreement to be replaced by GCC | Box reference number item stored in | Date returned to Young Person (if done as individual item) |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Signed by Young Person |  | Date |  |
| Witnessed by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  | Date |  |

**Appendix C**

**Storage Label – Young People’s Belongings**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **STORAGE REFERENCE NUMBER** | **BOX \_\_\_ OF \_\_\_\_\_** |
| **YP’s LL NUMBER** |  |
| **CASEHOLDING TEAM** |  |
| **WORKERS NAME**  **(Please print)** |  |
| **DATE PLACED INTO STORAGE** |  |
| **ITEM NUMBER OF BOXES/HOLDALLS/SUITCASES**  **i.e., 1 of 10 etc.** |  |
| **INVENTORY COMPLETED WITH TEAMS BUSINESS SUPPORT OFFICE (Logged on central tracker)** | **MANDATORY** |
| **STORAGE REVIEW DATE** |  |

**----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **STORAGE REFERENCE NUMBER** |  |
| **YP’s LL NUMBER** |  |
| **CASEHOLDING TEAM** |  |
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| **DATE PLACED INTO STORAGE** |  |
| **ITEM NUMBER OF BOXES/HOLDALLS/SUITCASES**  **i.e., 1 of 10 etc.** |  |
| **INVENTORY COMPLETED**  **WITH TEAM’s BUSINESS SUPPORT OFFICE (logged on central tracker)** | **MANDATORY** |
| **STORAGE REVIEW DATE** |  |

**Appendix D**

**Storage Tracker**

Example storage tracker as excel document below:

