STANDARD 10 - Providing a suitable physical environment for the foster- child

Underpinning Legislation: 26 – Assessment of prospective foster parents

Schedule 3 – Information as to prospective foster parent and other members of their household and family

Outcome:

Children live in foster homes which provide adequate space, to a suitable standard. The child enjoys access to a range of activities which promote his or her development.

10.1) The foster home can comfortably accommodate all who live there including where appropriate any suitable aids and adaptations provided and fitted by suitably trained staff when caring for a disabled child.

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 abuse or 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.

The following considerations must be understood as to the suitability of the arrangement for children in care to be able to share a bedroom with their sibling:

* Non - sibling children over three are not permitted to share a fostering bedroom.
* Where a bedroom sharing risk assessment is in place, this must be kept under review at every Child in Care (CIC) Review as a minimum.
* Where it is agreed that siblings can share a bedroom, the following must be considered:
* Chronological and emotional age of both children.
* Considerations of risk arising from previous known behaviours such as physical or sexual aggression.
* The physical presentation of the bedroom, i.e., Is there plenty of floor space for both children to play/ study? Is there adequate storage space for both children’s belongings (clothes, toys, personal effects, etc.,)?
* Windows and doors cannot be obscured by beds or other furniture in order for two children to be able to share a bedroom.
* Safer caring considerations around dressing and undressing need to be understood as part of this bedroom sharing risk assessment.
* Where bunk beds are in use, a risk assessment needs to be completed as part of each child’s individual safe care plan and, in line with RoSPA guidance, be kept under regular review. RoSPA recommends that children under the age of six years do not use the upper bunk. Foster carers should also consider very carefully whether allowing a child younger than six to sleep on the bottom bunk is safe for them, toddlers can get trapped. Babies should always have their own cots. N.B: Most accidents involving bunk beds occur when children are playing on them. Children should be encouraged not to play on bunk beds. (BS EN 747 British Standard Specification for Bunk Beds, British Standards Institution 1988).
* Children under 11 years of age must have a bedroom on the same floor as the foster carer. Where children over the age of 11 have a bedroom on a separate floor to the carer, a detailed individual risk assessment and safe care plan must be in place.

Non- related babies sharing a room

Non-related babies can share a room but only in specific circumstances and only after the below bedroom sharing risk assessment has been completed in full.

The decision-making process and the outcome of the assessment must be recorded in writing where bedroom sharing is agreed. Each bedroom sharing risk assessment must be completed and signed by the relevant children’s social workers, the foster carers, the SSW and the Registered Manager or above before any bedroom sharing occurs.

There will need to be an agreed plan in place for when and how each baby can be moved into their own room and this will need to be included in the assessment and this must be kept under review at every Child in Care (CIC) Review as a minimum.

Children under the age of three years old being placed in foster carer’s bedrooms:

The Fostering Service is not usually able to consider that foster carers’ bedrooms can be considered for emergency placements for babies and young children under the age of three years old unless there is a further bedroom available to the fostering task, as it is not possible to anticipate how long such emergency foster placements may be required for at the point of the emergency foster placement being initially sought.

Therefore any bedroom sharing arrangement for babies in their foster carer’s bedroom when they are over the age of six months old can only be considered in specific circumstances and only for a limited time.

There will need to be a plan in place for the baby to move into a new room and such considerations can only be made with the express authorisation of the Registered Manager.

Given that the NHS safe sleeping guidance is that babies under the age of six months should be sleeping in with their parents/ carers, foster carers who are already approved to care for a child under respite or emergency considerations in their bedroom remain able to offer planned respite foster placements only to babies under the age of six months old.

This will be subject to the agreement of the allocated children’s social workers for any children already in placement as well as the named social worker for the child requiring respite, with the authorisation of the Registered Manager.

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| Foster Carer/s (Name) |  |
| CareFirst ID: |  |
| Date Risk Assessment Completed: |  |
| Foster Child Name: |  |
| DOB: |  |
| CareFirst ID: |  |

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| How many bedrooms are available to the fostering task within the home: |
|  |
| Is the baby sharing a bedroom with a non-related baby - Include age and gender as well as the sleeping arrangements ( cot/ moses basket) and storage space : |
|  |
| What are the plans for the babies to move into their own rooms or rooms with an older sibling at a later stage pending risk assessment ?  |
|  |
| Is the child sharing a bedroom with their own sibling (Include age and gender as well as the bedroom sharing arrangement (i.e., bunk beds, two single beds, a cot and a single bed, etc.,), storage space, play/study space: |
|   |
| Is the child sharing a bedroom with Foster Carer(s) (Include the detail of the cot, ‘next to me crib’ Moses’ basket, etc., that the child will be sleeping in. Is the carer fully conversant with safe sleeping guidance and that babies are not to sleep in the same bed as their care giver?): |
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| What are the plans for the child to move into their own room or to move into a room that they will share with a sibling (pending risk assessment) ?  |
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| Supervising Social worker’s analysis of known behaviour or risk, to include any update required to household safe care plan, child’s individual safe care plan and child’s individual risk assessment: |
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| Foster carer to confirm that they have read the following guidance in relation to safe sleeping guidance for babies and children and they are adhering to this.  |
| [Helping your baby to sleep - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/helping-your-baby-to-sleep/)[Home safety - RoSPA](https://www.rospa.com/home-safety) - [RoSPA's Child Home Safety Advice and Information](https://www.rospa.com/Home-Safety/Advice/Child-Safety.aspx). |

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| --- | --- |
| Foster Carer’s name |  |
| Foster Carer’s signature |  |
| Date |  |
|  |
| Child social worker name |  |
| Child social worker signature  |  |
| Date  |  |
|  |
| Child social workers name  |  |
| Child social worker signature  |  |
| Date  |  |
|  |
| SSW’s name |  |
| SSW’s signature |  |
| Date |  |

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| --- | --- |
| Fostering Service Registered Manager’s name |  |
| Fostering Service Registered Manager’s signature |  |

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| Date of review: |
| Date of review: |
| Date of review: |
| Date of review: |

References:

[Fostering Guidance - MASTER (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/192705/NMS_Fostering_Services.pdf)

[Helping your baby to sleep - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/helping-your-baby-to-sleep/)

[Home safety - RoSPA](https://www.rospa.com/home-safety) - [RoSPA's Child Home Safety Advice and Information](https://www.rospa.com/Home-Safety/Advice/Child-Safety.aspx).