

Children's Homes: National Minimum Standards

CONTENTS CHILDREN'S HOMES NMS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION	4
Legal status of the standards	5
Structure and approach to inspection	5
The wider context	6
Application to short breaks	6
References to 'child'	7
CHILD FOCUSED STANDARDS.....	8
STANDARD 1 – The child's wishes and feelings and the views of those significant to them	9
STANDARD 2 – Promoting diversity, a positive identity and potential through individualised care.....	10
STANDARD 3 – Promoting positive behaviour and relationships.....	11
STANDARD 4 – Safeguarding children	13
STANDARD 5 – Children missing from care	14
STANDARD 6 – Promoting good health and wellbeing.....	16
STANDARD 7 – Leisure activities	18
STANDARD 8 – Promoting educational achievement.....	19
STANDARD 9 – Promoting and supporting contact	21
STANDARD 10 – Providing a suitable physical environment for the child	22
STANDARD 11 – Preparation for a placement.....	24
STANDARD 12 – Promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care	25
STANDARD 13 – Statement of Purpose and children's guide	27
STANDARD 14 – Fitness to provide or manage the administration of a children's home	28
STANDARD 15 – Financial viability and changes affecting business continuity	30
STANDARD 16 – Suitability to work with children.....	31
STANDARD 17 – Sufficient staffing of the home.....	33
STANDARD 18 – Training, development and qualification of staff.....	35
STANDARD 19 – Staff support and supervision	36

STANDARD 20 – Handling allegations and suspicions of harm.....	37
STANDARD 21 – Managing effectively and efficiently and monitoring the home	39
STANDARD 22 - Records	41
STANDARD 23 – Secure accommodation and refuges	42
STANDARD 24 – Notification of significant events.....	44
STANDARD 25 – Placement Plan & Review.....	45

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This document contains the National Minimum Standards (NMS) applicable to providers of children's homes. The NMS together with the regulations such as the Children Homes Regulations 2001 as amended form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 (CSA) for the conduct of children's home providers.

The values statement below explains the important principles which underpin these standards:

Values

- The child's welfare, safety and needs should be at the centre of their care.
- Children should have an enjoyable childhood, and benefit from excellent parenting and education, enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills leading to a successful adult life.
- Children are entitled to grow up in a loving environment that can meet their developmental needs.
- Every child should have his or her wishes and feelings listened to and taken into account.
- Each child should be valued as an individual and given personalised support in line with their individual needs and background in order to develop their identity, self-confidence and self-worth.
- The particular needs of disabled children and children with complex needs will be fully recognised and taken into account.
- Looked after children should wherever possible maintain relationships with birth parents and their wider family.
- Children in residential care should be given the opportunity for as full an experience of a supportive homely environment as possible.
- Carers will be recognised as a core member of the team around the child with an important contribution to make in planning and decision making about the child.
- It is essential that staff receive relevant development opportunities in order to provide the best care for children.

- A genuine partnership between all those involved in children's homes is essential for the NMS to deliver the best outcomes for children: this includes the Government, local government and other statutory agencies.

Legal status of the standards

The National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes are issued by the Secretary of State under section 23 of the Care Standards Act 2000. The Secretary of State will keep the standards under review and may publish amended standards as appropriate.

Minimum standards do not mean standardisation of provision. The standards are designed to be applicable to the wide variety of different types of children's homes. They aim to enable, rather than prevent, individual providers to develop their own particular ethos and approach based on evidence that this is the most appropriate way to meet the child's needs. Many providers will aspire to exceed these standards and develop their service in order to achieve excellence.

The standards are issued for use by Ofsted, who take them into account in regulating children's homes. They will also be important in other ways. The standards may be used by providers and staff in self-assessment of their services; they provide a basis for the induction and training of staff; they can be used by parents, children and young people as a guide to what they should expect as a minimum a provider to do, and they can provide guidance on what is required when setting up a children's home.

Structure and approach to inspection¹

The National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes focus on delivering achievable outcomes for children. Each standard is preceded by a statement of the outcome to be achieved by the children's home provider. The standards are intended to be qualitative, in that they provide a tool for judging the quality of life experienced by children and young people who are looked after, but they are also designed to be measurable. Providers will normally show that they are meeting the headline statement of the outcome by following the standards below. However, these do not have to be followed exactly if the provider can demonstrate, and Ofsted is satisfied, that the outcomes are being met in a different way. The exception is a requirement set out in regulations in which case the regulation must be met. The standards outline in the legislation box what the regulatory requirement is which underpins the standards.

Across all its work, Ofsted has three core statutory responsibilities under section 117 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006: to ensure that inspection supports improvement in the services Ofsted inspects and regulates; that it is centred on the needs of users; and that it promotes the effective use of

¹ Ofsted's new framework for inspection of children's homes: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Framework-for-the-inspection-of-children-s-homes>

resources.

There are four elements to Ofsted's function as a regulator: registration; inspection; compliance; and enforcement. The purpose of Ofsted's inspection of social care is to assess the quality of care being provided for children, young people, and where appropriate their families. Inspection focuses on the outcomes which they are being supported to achieve. It tests compliance with the relevant regulations, and takes into account the NMS.

Following inspection, inspectors will make a number of judgements, including a judgment on the overall effectiveness of the service inspected. They will make recommendations for improvement, including any action required to ensure that provisions fully meet the NMS. For children's homes, Ofsted will set requirements to be fulfilled in order to remedy any identified failure to meet the relevant regulations. Any identified failure in meeting the requirements of regulations may lead to consideration of enforcement action. Conditions of registration may be imposed.

The wider context

The NMS are underpinned by the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 as amended. Statutory guidance for children's homes sets out the wider context for local authorities, as providers and commissioners of children's homes. This is not an exhaustive list, and other legislation and guidance may also be relevant, for example, legislation covering such matters as health and safety, fire or planning requirements.

It is intended that the standards will be used, both by providers, and by Ofsted, to focus on securing positive welfare, health and education outcomes for children, and reducing risks to their welfare and safety. All providers and staff of children's homes should aim to provide the best care possible for the children for whom they are responsible, and observing the standards is an essential part, but only a part, of the overall responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of each individual child.

Application to Short Breaks

Both the Children's Homes Regulations and the NMS are modified in relation to short breaks. This is in recognition that where the child receives short breaks the parents have primary responsibility for planning for their child.

Regulation 42A defines short break care and sets out the modifications, which are that the following regulations do not apply in relation to the child where the child is on a short break: regulations 15(1)(a), 18(1) and 20(2)(a) and (d).

The following NMS do not apply in relation to short break care; standards 2.5, 2.7 and all of standard 9 and 12.

In addition there is not a requirement for a separate placement plan for children looked after in a series of short breaks (Care Planning, Placement and Case

Review (England) Regulations (2010), regulation 48 (3)). For such children the short break care plan includes key elements of the placement plan. Where the NMS state 'placement plan' this will be the short break care plan in relation to children on short breaks.

References to 'child'

Throughout the NMS for children's homes, we use the term 'child' or 'children'. We have done this for ease to make the Standards easier to read and more comprehensible. However, any references to the term 'child' or 'children' in the NMS are to be read to include any person who is living or is accommodated at a children's home (other than staff/volunteers and/or providers). This will include, for example, a young person who was placed at the home as a looked after child, and has continued to remain at the home after their 18th birthday while they are completing their studies at school. Children's homes may accommodate adults provided that the home remains 'wholly or mainly for children' as required by section 1 of the Care Standards Act 2000. Providers must ensure that they meet the standards equally for any adult, as well as any child, accommodated at their home.

CHILD FOCUSED STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 – The child’s wishes and feelings and the views of those significant to them

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 11. Promotion of welfare. 15. Contact and access to communications. 34. Review of quality of care.

Outcome:

- Children know that their views, wishes and feelings are taken into account in all aspects of their care; are helped to understand why it may not be possible to act upon their wishes in all circumstances; and know how to obtain support and make a complaint.
- The views of others with an important relationship to the child are gathered and taken into account.

- 1.1. Children’s views, wishes and feelings are acted upon, in the day to day running of the home and important decisions or changes in the child’s life, unless this is contrary to their interests.
- 1.2. Children understand how their views have been taken into account, and where significant wishes or concerns are not acted upon, they are helped to understand why.
- 1.3. All children communicate their views on all aspects of their care and support.
- 1.4. The views of the child, the child’s family, social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) are sought regularly on the child’s care, (unless in individual cases this is not appropriate).
- 1.5. Children have access to independent advice and support from adults who they can contact directly and in private about problems or concerns, which is appropriate to their age and understanding. Children know their rights to advocacy and how to access an advocate, and how to contact the Children’s Rights Director.
- 1.6. Children can take up issues in the most appropriate way with support and without fear that this will result in any adverse consequences. Children receive prompt feedback on any concerns or complaints raised and are kept informed of progress.
- 1.7. The views, wishes and feelings of children and those significant to them are taken into account in monitoring staff and in developing the home.

STANDARD 2 – Promoting diversity, a positive identity and potential through individualised care.

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 11. Promotion of welfare 20. Health needs of children.

Outcome:

- Children develop a positive self view, emotional resilience and knowledge and understanding of their background.

- 2.1. Children receive personalised care that promotes all aspects of their individual identity and are each treated as an individual rather than a member of a group.
- 2.2. Staff support children's social and emotional development and enable children to develop emotional resilience and self-esteem.
- 2.3. Staff meet children's individual needs as set out in the child's placement plan taking into account where appropriate their relationship with the wider group of children.
- 2.4. Children exercise choice in the food that they eat and are able to prepare their own meals and snacks, within the limits that a reasonable parent would set.
- 2.5. Children exercise choice and independence in the clothes and personal requisites that they buy and have these needs met, within the limits that a reasonable parent would set. **This sub-standard is not applicable to short break placements.**
- 2.6. Children develop skills and emotional resilience that will prepare them for independent living.
- 2.7. Children receive a personal allowance appropriate to their age and understanding that is consistent with their placement plan. **This sub-standard is not applicable to short break placements.**

STANDARD 3 – Promoting positive behaviour and relationships

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 17. Behaviour management, discipline and restraint.

Outcome:

- Children enjoy sound relationships, interact positively with others and behave appropriately.

- 3.1. The home has high expectations of all children and staff.
- 3.2. There is an environment and culture, to promote models and support positive behaviour that all staff understand and implement.
- 3.3. The home has a clear written policy on managing behaviour, which includes supporting positive behaviour, de-escalation of conflicts, discipline, control and restraint, that all staff understand and apply at all times.
- 3.4. All staff understand, share and implement the home's ethos, philosophy and approach to caring for children.
- 3.5. Children develop and practice skills to build and maintain positive relationships, be assertive and resolve conflicts positively.
- 3.6. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour, in a way that is appropriate to their age and abilities.
- 3.7. Each home meets children's emotional and behavioural needs, as set out in their care plan. Children's privacy and confidentiality are appropriately protected.
- 3.8. Sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and children.
- 3.9. Staff understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the emotions and behaviours presented by children and understand how past experiences and present emotions are communicated through behaviour.
- 3.10. Staff are supported to manage their responses and feelings arising from working with children, particularly where children display challenging behaviour or have difficult emotional issues. Staff are supported to understand how children's previous experiences can manifest in challenging behaviour.
- 3.11. Children do not identify bullying as a problem at the home. Staff and children understand bullying is unacceptable. Staff working in the home understand their role in helping to prevent and counter bullying by any adult or child living

or working in the home.

- 3.12. Staff in the home are trained to recognise and deal with any indications or incidents of bullying, to act proactively and intervene positively, engaging with those who bully as well as those who are bullied.
- 3.13. Methods to de-escalate confrontations or potentially violent behaviour are used wherever appropriate to avoid the use of physical restraint. Restraint is only used in exceptional circumstances, to prevent injury to any person (including the child who is being restrained) or to prevent serious damage to the property of any person (including the child who is being restrained). In a secure children's home a child may be restrained for the purposes of preventing the child from absconding.
- 3.14. Restraint is not used as a punishment, nor to force compliance with instructions where significant harm or serious damage to property are not otherwise likely. Use of restraint is set out in the home's behaviour management policy and is in line with any relevant government guidance on restraint and approved approaches to the application of physical intervention and restraint.
- 3.15. Where children's homes use restraint, staff are trained in the use of physical restraint techniques and only use the home's agreed techniques. Training is regularly refreshed.
- 3.16. Where there has been physical restraint, children's homes must be able to call on medical assistance as required and children are always given the opportunity to be examined by a registered nurse or medical practitioner.
- 3.17. All children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by, with a relevant adult.
- 3.18. Where any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home.
- 3.19. No children's home restricts the liberty of any child as a matter of routine or provides any form of secure accommodation unless that home is an approved secure children's home.
- 3.20. Each home only carries out searches of a child, their room or their possessions in accordance with the home's guidance.
- 3.21. Each home regularly reviews incidents of challenging behaviour, examines trends or issues emerging from this, to enable staff to reflect and learn to inform future practice.
- 3.22. The home's approach to care minimises the need for police involvement to deal with challenging behaviour and avoids criminalising children unnecessarily. The home follows procedures and guidance on police involvement in the home, which have been agreed with local police.

STANDARD 4 – Safeguarding children

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 16. Arrangements for the protection of children.

Outcome:

- Children feel safe and are safe. Children understand how to protect themselves; and feel protected and are protected from significant harm including neglect, abuse and accident.

- 4.1. Children's safety and welfare is promoted in the home. Children are protected from abuse and other forms of significant harm (including sexual or labour exploitation).
- 4.2. Staff actively promote the welfare of children living in the home.
- 4.3. Staff make positive relationships with children in the home, generate a culture of openness and trust and are aware of and alert to any signs or symptoms that might indicate that a child is at risk of harm.
- 4.4. Staff encourage children to take appropriate risks as a normal part of growing up. Children are helped to understand how to keep themselves safe including outside the home and when using the internet or social media.
- 4.5. The home implements a proportionate approach to any risk assessment.
- 4.6. Staff are trained in appropriate safe-care practice, including skills to care for children who have been abused. For providers who offer placements to disabled children, this includes training specifically on issues affecting disabled children.
- 4.7. The registered person and staff work effectively in partnership with other agencies concerned with child protection e.g. the responsible authority, schools, hospitals, general practitioners, etc.
- 4.8. Unchecked visitors are adequately 'chaperoned' when on the home's premises.

STANDARD 5 – Children missing from care

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 16. Arrangements for the protection of children. 30. Notifiable events. Schedule 5 (events and notifications).

Outcome:

- Children rarely go missing and if they do, they return quickly.
- Children who do go missing are protected as far as possible and responded to positively on their return.

- 5.1. The care and support provided to children minimises the risk that they will go missing and reduces the risk of harm should the child go missing.
- 5.2. Staff working within the home know and implement the local authority and home's policy in relation to children going missing and their role in implementing that policy.
- 5.3. Staff are aware of current legislation and government guidance on the measures they can take to prevent a child leaving without permission and do not exceed these.
- 5.4. Children who are absent from the home without consent but whose whereabouts are known or thought to be known by staff are protected in line with the home's written procedure.
- 5.5. Staff actively search for children who are missing, including working with police where appropriate.
- 5.6. If a child is absent from the home and their whereabouts is not known (i.e. the child is missing), the home's procedures are compatible with and have regard to Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures maintained and managed by the police or by the local authority for the area where the home is located.
- 5.7. Where children placed out of authority go missing, the registered manager of the home follows the local RMFHC protocol and also complies with any other processes required by the placing authority that are specified in the individual child's care plan.
- 5.8. Children are helped to understand the dangers and risks of leaving the home without permission and are made aware of where they can access help if they consider running away.

- 5.9. Where a child goes missing and there is concern for their welfare, or at the request of a child who has been missing, staff arrange a meeting between the child and the responsible authority in private to consider the reasons for the child going missing. The home considers with the responsible authority what action should be taken to prevent the child going missing in future. Any concerns arising about the placement are addressed, as far as possible, in conjunction with the responsible authority.
- 5.10. Written records kept by the home when a child goes missing detail action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for running away from the home, and any action taken in the light of those reasons. This information is shared with the responsible authority and where appropriate, their parents.

STANDARD 6 – Promoting good health and wellbeing

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 20. Health needs of children. 21. Medicines.

Outcome:

- Children live in a healthy environment where their physical, emotional and psychological health is promoted and where they are able to access the services to meet their health needs.

- 6.1. Children's physical and emotional and social development needs are promoted.
- 6.2. Children understand their health needs, how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their own health.
- 6.3. Children are encouraged to participate in a range of positive activities that contribute to their physical and emotional health.
- 6.4. Children have prompt access to doctors and other health professionals, including specialist services, when they need these services.
- 6.5. Children's health is promoted in accordance with their placement plan and staff are clear about what responsibilities and decisions are delegated to them and where consent for medical treatment needs to be obtained.
- 6.6. Children's wishes and feelings are sought and taken into account in their health care, according to their understanding, and staff advocate on behalf of children.
- 6.7. Staff have received sufficient training on health and hygiene issues and first aid with particular emphasis on health promotion and communicable diseases.
- 6.8. Staff receive guidance and training to provide appropriate care if looking after children with complex health needs.
- 6.9. The home has good links with health agencies, including specialist services where appropriate, such as CAMHS and sexual health services. The availability of such services is taken into account when deciding on admissions.
- 6.10. Staff involved in delivering therapeutic interventions have appropriate

training and expertise and access to regular supervision.

6.11. Specific therapies are used only:

- a. where there is a clear and widely accepted theoretical or evidence base underpinning its effectiveness;
- b. with the continuing agreement of the child's responsible authority or a person with parental responsibility and of the child concerned where the child is of sufficient understanding.

6.12. Each child's wishes and feelings are sought and taken into account in their health care, according to their understanding, and each child has someone in the home who can advocate these for them.

6.13. Medicines which are kept in the home are stored safely and are accessible only by those for whom they are intended.

6.14. Prescribed medication is only given to the child for whom it was prescribed, and in accordance with the prescription. Children who are able and wish to keep and take their own medication, can do so safely.

6.15. There is a written record of all medication, treatment and first aid given to children during their placement.

6.16. The home has any physical adaptations or equipment needed to provide appropriate care for children.

STANDARD 7 – Leisure activities

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 18. Education, employment and leisure activity.

Outcome:

- Children are able to enjoy their interests, develop confidence in their skills and are supported and encouraged by staff to engage in leisure activities.
- Children are able to make a positive contribution to their home and their wider community.

- 7.1. Children develop their emotional, intellectual, social creative and physical skills through the accessible and stimulating environment created by the home. Children are supported to take part in school based and out of school activities.
- 7.2. Children pursue individual interests and hobbies. This includes taking part in a range of activities, including leisure activities and trips.
- 7.3. Staff understand what is in the child's placement plan and have clarity about decisions they can make about the day to day arrangements for the child, including such matters as education, leisure activities, overnight stays, holidays, and personal issues such as hair cuts.
- 7.4. Staff are supported to make reasonable and appropriate decisions within the authority delegated to them, without having to seek consent unnecessarily.
- 7.5. Children take part in age appropriate peer activities as agreed by the home's staff in a way similar to how a reasonable parent might reach agreement with their children, taking into account the framework of the placement plan decision-making and any assessment of risk to the child.
- 7.6. Children are encouraged and enabled to make and sustain friendships with children outside the home, which may involve friends visiting the home and reciprocal arrangements to visit friends' homes.
- 7.7. Children can stay overnight with friends if staff consider it appropriate and subject to the requirements of care or placement plans, without a requirement that friends' parents should be police or CRB checked.

STANDARD 8 – Promoting educational achievement

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 18. Education, employment and leisure activity.

Outcome:

- The education and achievement of children is actively promoted as valuable in itself and as part of their preparation for adulthood. Children are supported to achieve their educational potential.

- 8.1. Children, including pre-school and older children have a home which promotes a learning environment and supports their development.
- 8.2. Children have access to a range of educational resources to support their learning and have opportunities beyond the school day to engage in activities which promote learning.
- 8.3. Children are supported to attend school, college or alternative provision regularly.
- 8.4. Children are helped by staff to achieve their educational or training goals. This includes providing support, facilities and opportunities as needed. Staff work with a child's education provider to maximise each child's achievement and to minimise any underachievement.
- 8.5. Each home has and is fully implementing, a written education policy that promotes and values children's education.
- 8.6. The home maintains regular contact with each child's school, college, and other education settings, with staff attending all parents' meetings as appropriate in line with the placement plan. Staff advocate for the child where appropriate.
- 8.7. Staff engage and work with schools, colleges, other organisations, and the placing local authority to support children's education including advocating to help overcome any problems the child may be experiencing in their educational setting. Staff have up-to-date information about each child's educational progress and school attendance record.
- 8.8. Children who have been excluded from school have access to appropriate education and training, so that they are supported and enabled to resume full time education.
- 8.9. Where children no longer receive compulsory full time education, where

appropriate the home supports them to participate in further education, training or employment.

STANDARD 9 – Promoting and supporting contact

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 15. Contact and access to communications.

Outcome:

- Children have, where appropriate, constructive contact with their parents, grandparents, siblings, half-siblings, families, friends and other people who play a significant role in their lives.
- 9.1. Children are supported and encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships, subject to any limitations or provisions set out in their care plan, placement plan and any court order. Appropriate forms of contact are promoted and facilitated for each child, including where appropriate visits to the child in the home, visits by the child to relatives or friends, meetings with relatives or friends, letters, exchange of photographs and electronic forms of contact.
 - 9.2. Staff have appropriate training, supervision and support if they are required to supervise and facilitate contact.
 - 9.3. Emergency restrictions on contact are only made to protect the child from significant risk to their safety or welfare and are communicated to the responsible authority within 24 hours of being imposed.
 - 9.4. Ongoing restriction on communication by the child is agreed by the child's responsible authority, takes the child's wishes and feelings into account and is regularly reviewed in collaboration with the responsible authority.
 - 9.5. The home feeds back to the responsible authority any significant reactions a child has to contact arrangements or visits with any person.
 - 9.6. When deciding whether to offer a placement, the registered person works with the responsible authority to give consideration to how the child's contact with family and significant others will be supported, particularly where a child is placed at a distance from home.
 - 9.7. Staff understand what decisions about contact are delegated to them, in line with the child's care and placement plans, and to make those decisions in the child's best interests.

The above standards are not required for short breaks. For children in short breaks the responsible person must know how to contact parents if necessary and maintain such contact as has been agreed in the short break care plan.

STANDARD 10 – Providing a suitable physical environment for the child

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 31. Fitness of premises.

Outcome:

- Children live in well designed, safe and pleasant homes with adequate space in a suitable location where there is access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which will promote their development.

- 10.1. Each home is situated in a location that supports its aims and objectives and proposed models of care for children and young people. This includes children being able to access external services, recreational activities and to maintain and develop relationships with family and friends.
- 10.2. The home's location and design promotes children's health, safety and wellbeing and avoids factors such as excessive isolation and areas that present significant risks to children.
- 10.3. The home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. Avoidable hazards are removed as is consistent with a domestic setting. Risk reduction does not lead to an institutional feel.
- 10.4. Physical restrictions on normal movement within or from the home are not used unless this is necessary to safeguard children and promote their welfare and development. Such measures are only used where agreed with the responsible authority and, if appropriate, the parents. Such restrictions for one child do not impose similar restrictions on other children.
- 10.5. For children's homes that are not secure children's homes, where specific measures, including electronic devices, are used to monitor children, there is a written policy that sets out how they should be used, how they promote the welfare of children, how children will be informed of their use, how legitimate privacy of children will be protected and how children will be protected from potential abuse of such measures.
- 10.6. Secure children's homes have emergency call systems that are effective in summoning staff assistance when needed.
- 10.7. Staff preparation and training cover health and safety issues. Staff are provided with written guidelines on their health and safety

responsibilities. Where homes offer placements for disabled children, the accommodation provided must be suitable to the particular needs of the disabled children living in the home which may include suitable aids, adaptations and other suitable equipment.

- 10.8. Risk assessments of the whole children's home environment are carried out, to identify any potential sources of harm to the children are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed.
- 10.9. There is an emergency escape plan that all staff and children are familiar with and have practiced so they know what to do in an emergency.
- 10.10. Each child has their own bedroom. If this is not possible, no more than two children share a room in a home that is not a school. In those homes that are schools, there are no more than four children of a similar age or stage per bedroom, and each child has a personal area.
- 10.11. Bedrooms are not shared unless each child freely agrees to the arrangement, and are not shared by children of different genders, or children of significantly different ages (other than siblings where this is appropriate). The choice of whether a child has a separate room or shares is made only after careful consideration of all available facts including the risk of bullying or abuse.
- 10.12. A request by a child to change bedrooms is given urgent consideration and agreed if feasible.
- 10.13. Children accommodated in emergency provision (subject to a home's Statement of Purpose allowing such a placement) are not placed in a shared bedroom (other than with siblings) until an assessment has been carried out to ascertain their views and the views of those who already sleep in the bedroom.
- 10.14. Bedrooms are not shared between children and staff or adult visitors.

STANDARD 11 – Preparation for a placement

Underpinning Legislation:

Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (2010).

Outcome:

- Children are welcomed into the home and leave the home in a planned and appropriate manner which makes them feel valued.

- 11.1. Each home has and implements clear procedures for introducing children to the home, the staff and the other children living there, which covers planned and where permitted, emergency/immediate placements. They help children understand what to expect from living in the home.
- 11.2. The children's home only provides admission to children whose assessed needs they can reasonably expect to meet.
- 11.3. Unless an emergency placement makes it impossible, children are given information before arrival about the home and any other information they need or reasonably request about the placement, in a format appropriate to their age and understanding, including photographs where appropriate. Wherever possible, children are able to visit the home prior to a placement decision being made. Children can bring their favourite possessions into the home.
- 11.4. The home does not operate in a way which increases the risk of separation of siblings.
- 11.5. Each child can remain in the home until moving on is in their best interests (taking their wishes and feelings into account) unless this is impracticable or is against the welfare of others.
- 11.6. A review must take place before a child is moved to another placement, except in an emergency. If a placement move occurs in an emergency, the responsible authority is informed within one working day.
- 11.7. The registered person does not admit children in an emergency unless explicitly included as a function of the home and the home is at the time of admission able to provide a bedroom and appropriate facilities. A review is initiated no more than 72 hours after any emergency admission to consider whether the child should remain at the home, or it is in that child's interests to move to a different placement.
- 11.8. Where children are leaving the home, they are helped to understand the reasons why they are leaving. Children are supported during the transition to their new placement, to independent living or to their parental home.

STANDARD 12 – Promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 11. Promotion of welfare.
Children Act 1989 – Sections 22, 61 & 64.

Outcome:

- Children receive care which helps them to prepare for and supports them into adulthood, so that they can reach their potential and achieve economic wellbeing.

12.1. Children are supported to:

- a. establish positive and appropriate social and sexual relationships;
- b. develop positive self-esteem;
- c. prepare for the world of work and/or further or higher education;
- d. prepare for moving into their own accommodation;
- e. develop practical skills, including shopping, buying, cooking and keeping food, washing clothes, personal self-care, and understanding and taking responsibility for personal healthcare;
- f. develop financial capability, knowledge and skills;
- g. know about entitlements to financial and other support after leaving care, including benefits and support from social care services.

12.2. The home contributes to the development of each child's care plan, including the pathway plan for "eligible" care leavers and works collaboratively with the young person's social worker or personal adviser in implementing the plan.

12.3. The home liaises with the child's responsible authority and their IRO where applicable, about the progress of the child's readiness to move to any future accommodation where they would expect to take on greater responsibility and personal independence.

12.4. Homes support the young person's transition to adult services, when required by the care plan.

The above standards are not required for short breaks.

STANDARDS OF THE CHILDRENS HOME PROVIDER

STANDARD 13 – Statement of Purpose and children’s guide

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 4. Statement of Purpose and children’s guide. 5. Review of Statement of Purpose and children’s guide.

Outcome:

- Children, staff and the placing authority are clear about the aim’s and objectives of the home and what services and facilities it provides.
- The provider meets the aims and objectives in the Statement of Purpose.

- 13.1. The children’s home has a clear Statement of Purpose which is available to and understood by staff and children and reflected in any policies, procedures and guidance. It is available to the responsible authority and any parent or person with parental responsibility.
- 13.2. The aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose are child focused and show how the service will meet outcomes for children.
- 13.3. The registered person approves the Statement of Purpose and the children’s guide and reviews them at least annually.
- 13.4. Subject to the child’s age and understanding, the children’s home ensures the child receives the children’s guide at the point of placement and that the contents of the children’s guide is explained to the child in a way that is accessible.
- 13.5. The guide includes a summary of what the home sets out to do for children, how they can find out their rights, how a child can contact their IRO, the Children’s Rights Director, Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate.
- 13.6. Where a child requires it the guide is available when appropriate through suitable alternative methods of communication, e.g. Makaton, pictures, tape recording, translation into another language.

STANDARD 14 – Fitness to provide or manage the administration of a children’s home

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 6. Fitness of registered provider. 7. Appointment of manager. 8. Fitness of manager. 9. Registered person – general requirements. 36. Financial position.

Outcome:

- The home is provided and managed by those who are suitable to work with children and have the appropriate skills, experience and qualifications to deliver an efficient and effective service.

14.1. The registered provider and registered manager of the home:

- a. have good knowledge and experience of law and practice relating to looked after children;
- b. have business and management skills to manage the work efficiently and effectively; and
- c. have financial expertise to ensure the home is run on a sound financial basis including long-term financial viability of the home.

14.2. The registered manager (or registered person, where the registered person is an individual and there is no registered manager) has:

- a. a recognised social work qualification or a professional qualification relevant to working with children at least at level 4;
- b. a qualification in management at least at level 4²;
- c. at least two years experience relevant to residential care within the last five years; and
- d. at least one years experience supervising and managing professional staff.

14.3. Appointees to the role of registered manager who do not have the management qualification (above) must enrol on a management training course within six months, and obtain a relevant management qualification within three years, of their appointment.

14.4. The responsibilities and duties of the registered manager and the person to whom they are accountable are clear and understood by both parties.

² With respect to standard 14.2 (a) and (b), for persons undertaking a qualification after January 2011, the relevant qualification will be the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People’s Services. Managers who already hold a Level 4 Leadership and Management for Care Service and Health and Social Care will not need to undertake this qualification at level 5.

The registered manager is notified in writing when the person to whom they are accountable changes.

- 14.5. The registered manager exercises effective leadership of the home's staff and operation, such that the home is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers sound, good quality care that meets the individual needs of each child at the home.

STANDARD 15 – Financial viability and changes affecting business continuity

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 36. Financial position. 39. Appointment of liquidators.

Outcome:

- The provider is financially sound.
- Where a service is to close or substantially change, there is proper planning to make the transition for children, carers and staff as smooth as possible.

- 15.1. A qualified accountant certifies the annual accounts demonstrate that the home is financially viable and likely to have sufficient funding to continue to fulfil its Statement of Purpose for at least the next 12 months.
- 15.2. The registered person has a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home, either identifying any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service, or confirming the continuation of the home's current operation and resource.
- 15.3. Where the home, for financial, staffing or other reasons, cannot adequately and consistently maintain provision which complies with Regulations or NMS, an effective plan must be established and implemented either to rectify the situation or to close down the service.
- 15.4. The registered person must notify Ofsted, all current responsible authorities and the area authority if closure of the home or substantial change to the home significantly affecting the care, welfare or placement of children, is likely or is actively being considered. The registered person should work with the responsible authority and area authority to ensure as smooth a transition for children and staff as possible.
- 15.5. Confidential records of a home that closes must be passed to a statutory authority or organisation for safe keeping and for future access by children in accordance with legal requirements.
- 15.6. Any person or organisation temporarily responsible for a home in administration or receivership, or in the process of closure or substantial change, must operate the service in the best interests of the placed children under the circumstances that apply, in accordance with the applicable standards.

STANDARD 16 – Suitability to work with children

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 16. Arrangements for the protection of children. 26. Fitness of workers. 27. Employment of staff.

Outcome:

- There is careful selection and vetting of staff and volunteers working with children in the home, and monitoring of such people to help prevent unsuitable people from having the opportunity to harm children.

- 16.1. All people working in or for the children's home are interviewed as part of the selection process and have references checked to assess suitability before taking on responsibilities. Telephone enquiries are made as well as obtaining written references³.
- 16.2. The registered person can demonstrate, including from written and electronic records, that it consistently follows good recruitment practice, and all applicable current statutory requirements and guidance, in staff recruitment and carers selection. This includes Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks⁴. All personnel responsible for recruitment and selection of staff are trained in, understand and operate these good practices.
- 16.3. The children's home has a record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been carried out on those working (including as volunteers) for the children's home which includes:
 - a. identity checks;
 - b. CRB Disclosures, including the level of the Disclosure, the unique reference number, and the outcome of the check including whether the individual is barred (in line with eligibility to obtain such checks);
 - c. checks to confirm qualifications which are a requirement and those that are considered by the children's home to be relevant;
 - d. at least two references, preferably one from a current employer and, where possible, a statement from each referee as to their opinion of the person's suitability to work with children;
 - e. checks to confirm the right to work in the UK; and
 - f. where the person has lived outside of the UK, further checks as are considered appropriate where obtaining a CRB Disclosure is not sufficient to establish suitability to work with children.

³ These requirements are the responsibility of Ofsted with respect to those seeking to carry on or manage a children's home.

⁴ Please note that the Government is currently reviewing the criminal records system and vetting and barring scheme and therefore references in both the Regulations and Standards may be subject to change

- 16.4. The record must show the date on which each check was completed and who carried out the check. The CRB Disclosure information must be kept in secure conditions and be destroyed by secure means as soon as it is no longer needed. Before the Disclosure is destroyed, records need to be kept as described above.
- 16.5. The registered person's system for recruiting staff and others includes an effective system for reaching decisions as to who is to be appointed and the circumstances in which an application should be refused in the light of any criminal convictions or other concerns about suitability that are declared or discovered through the recruitment process.
- 16.6. Staff members and others subject to the above checks do not normally start work at the home until all the checks required in the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 are completed.
- 16.7. There is a whistle-blowing policy which is made known to all staff and volunteers. This makes it a clear duty for such people to report to an appropriate authority any circumstances within the home which they consider likely to significantly harm the safety, rights or welfare of any child at the home.
- 16.8. Where practicable, children are involved in the recruitment of staff in the home.

STANDARD 17 – Sufficient staffing of the home

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 25. Staffing of children's homes.

Outcome:

- Staff have sufficient numbers, qualifications and experience to meet the needs of the children.

- 17.1. The overall number, competence and deployment of staff, both as a staff group and on individual shifts, can fulfil the home's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all children resident in the home.
- 17.2. Records of staff working in the home demonstrate the staffing level.
- 17.3. Contingency plans are in place in the event of a shortfall in staffing levels.
- 17.4. There are clear arrangements for staff to deputise in the registered person's absence. The deputy of the registered person of the home (or the person designated to deputise for the registered person in his/her absence) has at least one year's relevant supervisory experience.
- 17.5. Staff members who are placed in charge of the home and other staff at particular times (e.g. as leaders of staff shifts) have substantial relevant experience of working in the home and have successfully completed their induction and probationary periods.
- 17.6. Staff rotas have time scheduled to ensure handovers are held and that they include the planning of spending time with individual children.
- 17.7. The registered person has in place a staff disciplinary procedure which is clear. The procedure clearly separates staff disciplinary processes from child protection enquiries and criminal proceedings, and is known by staff.
- 17.8. The registered person makes every effort to achieve continuity of staffing so that children's attachments are not overly disrupted. No more than half the staff on duty at any one time, by day or night, at the home are to be from an external agency, and no member of staff from an external agency is to be alone on duty at night in the home.
- 17.9. Where only one member of staff is on duty at any time, a risk assessment has been carried out and recorded in writing, identifying any likely risks to children, staff and members of the public.

- 17.10. The staff group who are in day-to-day contact with children includes staff of both genders whenever possible. Where the home's Statement of Purpose makes it explicit that the home uses staff of one gender only, clear guidance is provided and implemented on how children are enabled to maintain relationships with members of the opposite gender to the staff group. Staffing arrangements also take into consideration children's ethnic and cultural backgrounds and any disabilities they may have.
- 17.11. All care staff are at least 18 years old, and staff who are given sole responsibility for children or a management role are at least 21 years old. Within this requirement no person works in a children's home unless they are at least four years older than the oldest child accommodated.
- 17.12. Staff and residents know who is sleeping in the home each night.

STANDARD 18 – Training, development and qualification of staff

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 25. Staffing of children's homes. 27. Employment of staff.

Outcome:

- Children are looked after by staff who are trained and competent to meet their needs.
- Staff receive high quality training to enhance their individual skills and to keep them up-to-date with professional and legal developments.

- 18.1. There is a good quality learning and development programme which staff and volunteers are supported to undertake. It includes induction, post-qualifying and in-service training to enhance individual skills and to keep staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments. Staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and purpose of the setting, and training keeps them up-to-date with professional, legal and practice developments and reflects the policies, legal obligations and business needs of the home.
- 18.2. The learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and if necessary is updated.
- 18.3. New staff undertake the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards, commencing within 7 working days of starting their employment and being completed within 6 months.
- 18.4. All social workers and other specialist professionals (e.g. medical, legal, educationalists, psychologists, therapists) are professionally qualified and, where applicable, registered by the appropriate professional body. They are appropriately trained to work with children and their families, and have a good understanding of residential child care and the policies and purpose of the home.
- 18.5. All existing care staff have attained a minimum level 3 qualification⁵. All new staff engaged from the commencement of the NMS (in April 2011) are to hold the level 3 Children & Young Peoples Workforce Diploma which must include mandatory social care units; or be working towards the Diploma within 6 months of confirmation of employment.

⁵ Previously NVQ caring for children & young people or NVQ health & social care. From September 2010 Children & Young Peoples Workforce Diploma.

STANDARD 19 – Staff support and supervision

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 27. Employment of staff.

Outcome:

- Staff and volunteers are supported and guided to fulfil their roles and provide a high quality service to children.

- 19.1. The employer is fair and competent, and operates sound employment practices and good support for its staff and volunteers.
- 19.2. All staff, volunteers and the registered person, are properly managed, supported and understand to whom they are accountable.
- 19.3. Suitable arrangements exist for professional supervision of the registered person of the agency.
- 19.4. Staff have access to support and advice, and are provided with regular supervision by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.
- 19.5. A written or electronic record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff, including the registered person. The record is signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision.
- 19.6. All staff have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually and this appraisal takes into account any views of children the service is providing for.
- 19.7. Staff and volunteers are easily able to access the advice needed to provide a comprehensive service for children and young people.

STANDARD 20 – Handling allegations and suspicions of harm

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 16. Arrangements for the protection of children.

Outcome:

- Investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are handled fairly, quickly, and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for children, the person making the allegation, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

20.1. All staff and volunteers understand what they must do if they receive an allegation or have suspicions that a person may have:

- a. behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child;
- b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- or
- c. behaved towards a child in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children.

The children's home ensures that the required actions are taken, or have been taken, in any relevant situation of which it is aware.

20.2. The children's home procedure is in line with Government guidance and requirements including the duty to refer information to statutory bodies⁶. It is known to staff, volunteers and children.

20.3. The home's protection procedures and how staff will be supported should there be an allegation are made available to staff and volunteers. The provider takes any comments on these procedures into account.

20.4. The provider's child protection procedures are submitted for consideration and comment to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Child Protection⁷ (or other senior officers responsible for child protection matters in that department) and are consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the LSCB relevant to the geographical area of the home. Any conflicts between locally agreed procedures and those of other responsible authorities are discussed and resolved as far as possible.

⁶ Since October 2009, the duties to refer concerns regarding individuals under List 99 and the Protection of Children Act 1999 have been replaced by with a duty to provide information to the Independent Safeguarding Authority. Please see the referrals page of www.isa-gov.org.uk for information on the legal requirements for making referrals.

⁷ Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)

- 20.5. The children's home has a designated person, who is a senior manager, responsible for managing allegations. This designated person has responsibility for liaising with the LADO and for keeping the subject of the allegation informed of progress during and after the investigation.
- 20.6. Allegations against people that work with children are reported by the designated person to the LADO. This includes allegations that on the face of it may appear relatively insignificant or that have also been reported directly to the police or Children and Family Services.
- 20.7. A clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made against a particular member of staff, including details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a record of any action taken and the decisions reached, is kept on the person's confidential file and a copy is provided to the person as soon as the investigation is concluded. The information is retained on the confidential file, even after someone leaves the organisation, until the person reaches normal retirement age, or for ten years if this is longer.
- 20.8. Investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are handled fairly, quickly, and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. Providers follow the framework for managing cases of allegations of abuse against people who work with children as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised in March 2010).

STANDARD 21 – Managing effectively and efficiently and monitoring the home

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 34. Review of quality of care. 33. Visits by the registered provider. 37. Notice of absence. 38. Notice of changes.

Outcome:

- The children's home is managed ethically, effectively and efficiently, delivering a service which meets the needs of its users.
- The registered person monitors the welfare of the children the service provides for including consultation with children about their welfare.

- 21.1. There are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the home. This includes the financial viability of the home, any serious incidents, allegations, complaints about the provision, and the quality of the provision. Children in the home are regularly involved in contributing to monitoring the operation of the home, and their views and any concerns are seriously taken into account.
- 21.2. The manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the home's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring.
- 21.3. Management of the home ensures all staff's work is consistent with these Regulations and NMS, the home's policies and procedures.
- 21.4. Managers and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The level of delegation and responsibility of the manager and staff, and the lines of accountability, are clearly defined.
- 21.5. Clear arrangements are in place to ensure appropriate management of the home when the registered manager is absent.
- 21.6. The registered person ensures copies of inspection reports by Ofsted are available to all members of staff, children living in the home, and the children's parents/carers and on request to responsible authorities of children living in the home or those considering placing a child in the home.
- 21.7. Visits of the home carried out under Regulation 33 include relevant checks set out in regulations and guidance and checks of any disciplinary measures and use of restraint and records of missing person's reports.

- 21.8. The registered provider's written report of a visit carried out under Regulation 33 is lodged in the home for the manager and staff to read and to respond.
- 21.9. The registered person takes action to address any issues of concern that they identify or which is raised with them.
- 21.10. The registered person has provided the home with a written procedure for considering complaints and responding to representations and complaints in accordance with legal requirements and relevant statutory guidance.

STANDARD 22 - Records

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 28. Children's case records. 29. Other records.

Outcome:

- Records are clear, up to date and stored securely, and contribute to an understanding of the child's life.

- 22.1. The home has and implements a written policy that clarifies the purpose, format and content of information to be kept on the registered person's files and information to be kept on the child's files. Records may be kept in electronic form, provided the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in a legible form. Staff understand the nature of records maintained and follow the home's policy for the keeping and retention of files, managing confidential information, and access to files (including files removed from the premises). There is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed.
- 22.2. Children and their parents understand the nature of records maintained and how to access them.
- 22.3. Information about individual children is kept confidential and only shared with those who have a legitimate need to know the information.
- 22.4. Entries in records are legible, clearly expressed, non-stigmatising and distinguish as far as possible between fact, opinion and third party information.
- 22.5. Information about the child is recorded clearly and in a way which will be helpful to the child when they access their files now or in the future. Children are actively encouraged to read their files, other than confidential or third party information and to correct errors and add personal statements.
- 22.6. Staff support and encourage the child to reflect on and understand their history, according to their age and understanding, and to keep appropriate memorabilia of their time in the placement. Staff record and help children make a record of (subject to age and understanding), significant life events.
- 22.7. The registered person works with the responsible authority to ensure effective sharing of information held in the home's records about the child and information held in the responsible authorities records. The registered person provides copies of the records and documents in relation to children placed by the responsible authority immediately, on receipt of a written or electronic request.

STANDARD 23 – Secure accommodation and refuges

Underpinning Legislation:

Refuges: Section 51 of the Children Act.
Secure Children's Homes: The Children (Secure Accommodation) Regulations 1991.

Outcome:

- Children living in a secure children's home or refuges experience positive support with their problems as well as security or refuge, and receive the same measures to safeguard and promote their rights and welfare as they should in other children's homes.

- 23.1. Apart from the measures essential to the home's status as a secure children's home or refuge, children resident in secure units or approved refuges receive the same care services, rights and protections as they should in other children's homes.
- 23.2. Staff are trained in resettlement issues in order to prepare young people effectively for leaving the secure children's home or refuge. Staff in secure children's homes notify placing authorities whenever young people are not visited at the agreed intervals (which must be no less than the prescribed statutory minimum); or whenever timely arrangements for discharge and resettlement have not been put in place.
- 23.3. The secure children's home has clear and appropriate policies and practice, agreed with the LSCB, which effectively safeguard children from harm. (For example policies may include provision for regular security searches of communal areas, to reduce the likely availability of potentially dangerous items). Such policies are reviewed in light of any serious incidents.
- 23.4. Secure children's homes have explicit policies and procedures that effectively identify and counter risks of self-harm and suicide. Staff understand their responsibilities under these policies so that children are safeguarded.
- 23.5. Surveillance in secure children's homes is no more restrictive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy.
- 23.6. CCTV is used in communal areas of secure children's homes to contribute to the protection of young people from bullying, abuse or malicious allegations. The home has a written policy on the use of CCTV including how it will be used to safeguard children and protect staff.
- 23.7. In secure children's homes any CCTV records of any use of restraint, episode of bullying, or incident leading to a significant allegation by a young person against another young person or member of staff are

reviewed by representatives of the authority responsible for the establishment and appropriate action is taken.

- 23.8. Any secure transportation arrangements made by the secure children's home are appropriate for the secure transportation of vulnerable children.
- 23.9. The HMCI (Chief Inspector) and the responsible authority are notified promptly if a young person goes missing from a secure children's home or from an appointment or journey outside the establishment.
- 23.10. Young people in secure children's homes only exceptionally wear special clothing to protect them against self-harm following a risk assessment. Any special clothing preserves the child's privacy and dignity.
- 23.11. Children are provided with appropriate education while in the home.
- 23.12. Observation of young people in secure children's homes does not remove reasonable privacy, and allows reasonable personal privacy during dressing, washing and using the toilet. A record is kept of all observations in bedrooms.
- 23.13. Young people in secure units are only placed in single separation when necessary to prevent injury to any person (including the child who is being restrained) or to prevent serious damage to the property of any person (including the child who is being restrained). A record is made and kept of all uses of single separation in secure children's homes. Young people are offered the opportunity to read and add a permanent comment to the record of their separation.
- 23.14. There is an appropriate means for sending complaints or representations directly and unopened to a designated complaints officer outside the establishment or to an advocate for the child.
- 23.15. The premises are fit for the purposes of providing effective care, protecting young people from harm, maintaining adequate security and are consistent with any Government guidance on this matter.
- 23.16. All staff working in secure children's homes are trained and competent to provide care in a secure environment.
- 23.17. Sentenced young people in secure children's homes are supported by appropriately trained and experienced staff to confront and stop offending behaviour. Staff take specific measures to help to divert children and young people from future involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 23.18. Management of each secure unit is effective in, defines clear accountabilities for, and regularly and frequently monitors the unit's care, safety, security, education, and preparation for discharge and subsequent living in an open community.

STANDARD 24 – Notification of significant events

Underpinning Legislation:

Regulations: 30 Notifiable events. Schedule 5.

Outcome:

- All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the home are notified by the registered person of the home to the appropriate authorities and appropriate action is taken following the incident.

24.1. The registered person has a system in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30. The system includes what to do where a notifiable event arises at weekends.

24.2. A written record is kept which includes details of the action taken, and the outcome of any action or investigation, following a notifiable event.

24.3. The registered person has a system for notification to responsible authorities of any serious concerns about the emotional or mental health of a child such that a mental health assessment would be requested under the Mental Health Act 1983.

24.4. Following an incident notifiable under Regulation 30, the home contacts the responsible authority to discuss any further action that may need to be taken.

STANDARD 25 – Placement Plan & Review

Underpinning Legislation:

Care Planning Regulations 2010.

Outcome:

- Children are cared for in line with their individual Placement Plan/Short Break Care Plan.
- The home takes action to chase up outstanding reviews or visits from the responsible authority, contributes to those reviews and assists the child to contribute to their reviews.

- 25.1. Children understand, within their level of understanding, the purpose and content of their plan and the reasoning behind any decisions about their care.
- 25.2. Each child's Placement Plan is monitored by a key worker within the home who ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of that child.
- 25.3. The home contributes effectively to each child's Placement Plan review and statutory review of the child's care plan. For children in a series of short breaks it will be the short break care plan which is reviewed.
- 25.4. The home assists the child to put forward their views, wishes and feelings in each review process, and helps to ensure that these are fully taken into account.
- 25.5. The home contacts placing authorities to request statutory reviews or visits if overdue for any child, if a change in the care plan is needed, if there has been a significant change in arrangements for the child's care, or if a major action (e.g. a change of placement) not in the care plan appears likely, if the placing authority has not arranged the review.
- 25.6. The home ensures that if a child is not visited by their social worker at the frequency expected by Regulations, or within a reasonable time following a request for a visit originated by the child, this is raised at the child's next review.
- 25.7. Children are assisted to obtain the support of an independent advocate to help them in providing their views, wishes and feelings to statutory reviews.

25.8. The result of all statutory reviews and reviews of Placement Plans are recorded on the child's file, and individuals responsible for pursuing actions at the home arising from reviews are clearly identified.

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