



## **Repairs and Maintenance**

### **Introduction**

This chapter informs staff within the residential settings of their responsibility for ensuring repairs and maintenance.

### **Children's Needs**

Ensuring that broken things are mended immediately is essential not only for the physical well-being of the children and their sense of being valuable, but also symbolically. Through experiencing that things are fixable, and that the staff team and maintenance team have the resources and patience to keep mending them, children will gradually come to believe that their internal 'broken bits' are fixable and matter and are worth mending too.

The standard and maintenance of the physical environment gives an immediate message of the degree to which we prioritise the physical needs of the child. It is vital that we constantly convey, through our actions, our belief that they are more than deserving of our care.

Children who have experienced severe physical deprivation will initially find it hard to accept an environment which is so alien to their historical experience. Do not be surprised at their attempt to damage the homely items which you have put in place. It can be very frightening to accept from others what family has been unable to provide. It can also inspire strong feelings of guilt to accept more than appears to be provided for siblings placed elsewhere.

Unattended damage gives rise to further damage and it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the order of this physical environment remains one of our foremost priorities.

### **All communities**

Good maintenance of the environment is regarded as a priority and it is the responsibility of the staff team as a whole to keep this standard. The Estates Maintenance team has a particular responsibility to carry out general repairs and make improvements. If the problem falls outside their competence, external contractors will be brought in. A maintenance book is kept for the purpose of drawing attention to the community director any breakages, minor or serious for his attention. This is read each weekday and the workload prioritised. If there is an emergency outside normal working hours the matter should be brought to the Senior on duty's attention. He/she should then make an assessment as to whether it is necessary to call the maintenance team. If a child has broken an item it should be

considered whether it can be fixed and whether the child can be involved in repairing it.

The maintenance team should always establish that there is available budget to cover the cost of maintenance. Monthly management accounts are sent to key personnel in order to provide information in this regard. If the cost is not believed to be covered by the budget, this should be brought to the Community Director who should consult with the Finance Director to authorise the expenditure.

### **Key Legislation**

- None

*Reviewed March 2020*