**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**Bedrooms**

* Children in residential care live in a group environment, and so it is important that they can spend time away from others. Each child will have their own personal space which will usually be their bedroom.
* Children will have their own bedroom and will be fully involved about how their personal space is decorated. This will include purchasing items together with staff (i.e. bedding, soft furnishings) and therefore developing positive relationships from when they first move in.
* Children should be provided with appropriate furniture, including a lockable cabinet or drawers to securely store personal items, including any personal information.
* A child’s bedroom should not generally be entered without their permission, though it may be necessary to establish routines to allow for rooms to be cleaned regularly.
* Usually, rooms should only be checked if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. Immediate searching may be necessary where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child’s or another person’s safety or well-being.
* Furniture and fittings in bedrooms are designed and fitted taking account of the health and safety needs of the child being accommodated. All bedrooms are furnished as a minimum with:
* A suitable bed and bedding;
* Curtains or blinds;
* A mirror (unless contra-indicated by risk assessment);
* Overhead and bedside or wall lighting;
* A chair;
* Drawers and built-in shelving;
* An enclosed space for hanging clothes;
* Table top or desk space;
* A lockable storage space
* Homes will take into account the personal preferences of children with regards to the contents of their bedrooms, and ensure that any requests to remove or decline to have items are honoured where possible.
* Blinds are fitted with safe design cord fitments (such as wands) to open and close blinds.
* The positioning and number of television aerial points, light switches and electrical outlet sockets is suitable for the needs of children and children and takes account of possible future information technology requirements.
* Each bedroom will have a television supplied unless this presents a risk to the child. Internet access may be supervised and subject to content restriction and controls where necessary.
* Doors are fitted with appropriate master key locks, with an easy opening (thumb-turn) device fitted to the inside of the door. Children will be given a key to their own room, unless risk assessment indicates otherwise.
* All bedrooms are designed and equipped for single occupancy unless there is a specific other purpose, which is identified in the home’s statement of purpose.
* Children and children can control within safe limits, or can influence, the levels of heating in their bedrooms for their own comfort.
* The positioning and number of electrical outlet sockets and light switches is suitable for the needs of children and children
* Under no circumstances should children be permitted to smoke in their bedrooms or have sources of ignition freely accessible.

**Links to related resources:**

Room checks

Premises Risk Assessment

Smoking and Alcohol

Staying in touch, safe use of the internet, social media and taking photographs