

*NATIONAL STANDARDS*

*FOR*

*RESIDENTIAL SERVICES*

*FOR CHILDREN*

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# National Standards for Residential Services for Children

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## **Preface**

**Residential care for children will always be an indispensable part of the range of services that will be required for children who come into public care. As corporate parent, government will need to provide residential care for those children who cannot be brought up by their birth families and for whom foster care or adoption is not a viable option. Residential care may also be required for children who are in need of a secure and structured environment or intense therapy, and for children who are refugees from other countries.**

**It is customary for residential homes run by government to be administered by the Department of Social Services, as this is usually the agency that has responsibility for providing services for children and families. This department will need to monitor the implementation of policies, guidance and procedures within the home. It is recommended that a separate body be established to inspect the homes and to check whether the standards are being met.**

**Recommendation has already been made for the establishment of a National Child Protection Committee to oversee all child protection work - (*National Standards for Child Protection, standard 1.18*). The role of this committee in relation to children residential services is referred to in Standards 18.2 and 18.7 of this document**

**Government will need to enact appropriate legislation and develop policies and guidelines for residential services for children if these are not already in place. A practice manual directing the day to day running of the home must be closely linked to these.**

**These standards also apply to residential homes that are run by voluntary or other non-governmental organisations.**

**Maureen Headley Gay  
Consultant**

# **1. Service Provision**

## **Providing a High Standard Residential Services for Children**

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### **Standard**

**All children who are in need of residential services are provided with suitable accommodation which is properly furnished and maintained to a high standard and which is equipped with adequate facilities to meet the needs of each child, including those with disabilities.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 1.1 Government makes provision for the establishment of residential homes to provide accommodation for children, including those with disabilities, who are in need of such services.
- 1.2 The home is situated in a location that has easy access to transportation and health facilities.
- 1.3 Appropriate legal framework, including regulations, is in place to regulate the establishment and functioning of the home.
- 1.4 There is a written Statement of Purpose (Mission Statement), that is easily understood and that accurately outlines the aims and objectives of the home.
- 1.5 Written policy is in place that accurately reflects the statement of purpose.
- 1.5 There are clear written procedures that are based on best practice and that take into account the best interest of the children.
- 1.7 The home is adequately staffed with trained personnel at all levels.
- 1.8 Systems are in place to ensure the proper management of the home.

1.9 Appropriate systems are in place to ensure that all staff receive adequate supervision and support in carrying out their day-to-day duties.



## **2. The Design Of The Home**

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### **Standard**

**The home is sufficient spacious to comfortably accommodate the number of children placed and provide adequate facilities for contact visits with family and friends.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 2.1 Rooms and furniture are arranged in such a way that each child's privacy is ensured.
- 2.2 Particular attention is paid to providing suitable aids and any special furniture and equipment that is required for the use of any children with disabilities that the home might accommodate.
- 2.3 Lifts and stairs are adapted and are made safe for all users.
- 2.4 Safe and adequate storage is provided for wheelchairs and other equipment.
- 2.5 All fire and environmental health regulations are met and adhered to.
- 2.6 Arrangements are in place that ensure the regular maintenance of all equipment used in the home and by the children.
- 2.7 The home is kept in a good state of structural repair and arrangements are in place to ensure that this is maintained and any damage to the property promptly repaired.

### **3. Layout Of The Home**

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#### **Standard:**

**The interior of the home is designed and furnished to an appropriate standard and in a way that serves the needs of the children it accommodates, and provides an environment that is supportive to each child's development.**

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### *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 3.1 The home is decorated and furnished to a standard that creates a pleasant domestic environment for all the children who are accommodated.
- 3.2 There is a clear distinction between private and community shared areas as well as those areas that are assigned for administrative use.
- 3.3 The domestic facilities are of good quality, are consistent with the purpose and function of the home, and are maintained in good order throughout.
- 3.4 Each child has a single bedroom, or his or her own area in a larger room of suitable size.
- 3.5 Each child has his or her own bed with adequate linen and other suitable bedding.
- 3.6 Each child has adequate storage for clothes and lockable or otherwise safe storage for personal possessions.
- 3.7 Bunk beds are not used for children over the age of twelve (12) years of age, and where bunk beds are used; the floor space is comparable to that of a room with two (2) separate beds.

- 3.8 Adequate facilities are provided for children to study, these facilities are appropriately furnished and lit and has sufficient space for books and other study materials.
- 3.9 Children are encouraged to have a say in the general décor and furnishings of the home and are allowed to personalize their own individual space.
- 3.10 Facilities are provided where children and their visitors can meet in privacy.
- 3.11 Facilities are provided where children can participate in play and recreational activities without affecting the routine activities of the home.
- 3.12 There is at least one toilet with washbasin for every six (6) children in the home.
- 3.13 Sufficient bathrooms and shower facilities are provided to comfortably serve the number of children accommodated by the home.
- 3.14 Toilet and bathroom facilities are easily accessible to children with disabilities.
- 3.15 Separate toilet and bathroom facilities are provided for staff within the home.

3.16 Bathrooms, showers and toilets are situated and designed to take into account the children's need for privacy, dignity, safety and any disability, and are readily accessible from sleeping and recreational areas.

## **4. Safety and Security**

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### **Standard:**

**Children, staff and visitors to the home are safe from risk from fire and other hazards.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 4.1 Systems are in place to ensure the safety of children, staff and visitors to the home from risk of harm from fire and other safety hazards.
- 4.2 The home contains the appropriate number of emergency exits that are required by fire and safety regulations, and these are kept clear at all times.
- 4.3 Smoke and fire alarms, fire extinguishers and other fire fighting equipment are regularly tested.
- 4.4 Systems are in place to ensure the implementation of the action to be taken to remedy any deficiencies that are identified as a result of these checks.
- 4.5 All children in the home, and staff are familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures for the home.
- 4.6 Systems are in place to ensure that fire drills, including the evacuation of children with disabilities, are carried out in accordance with standard fire regulations.
- 4.7 Risk assessments of the complete premises are carried out at regular intervals to identify any hazards, assess the level of risk and recommend the action that should be taken. Findings are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed.



- 4.8 Arrangements are in place to ensure regular inspection of all gas installations and electrical equipment, and also for the inspection of food storage, food preparation and water storage facilities and garbage disposal areas by Environmental Health and other relevant professionals.
- 4.9 All recommendations in relation to the above are implemented within the timescale advised.

## **5. Staffing The Home**

### **Recruitment**

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#### **Standard:**

**The staffing of the home is in keeping with the aims, objectives and functioning of the home and there is written policy and procedures for recruiting staff at all levels, including volunteers, to work with children in the home.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 5.1 Written guidance is in place that clearly defines the criteria used when deciding whether to employ or not to employ any staff or other persons, including volunteers who are likely to have regular contact with children in the home.
- 5.2 Systems are in place to ensure that statutory checks are carried out to determine the suitability of all staff prior to them commencing employment; these checks include police and medical checks and personal references.
- 5.3 Evidence of the checks having been made, and their outcomes are placed on the individual's file.
- 5.4 Systems are in place to ensure that any person who commences employment prior to their checks being cleared is directly supervised at all times at a level that prevents them having unsupervised contact with children in the home, and that their continued employment in such circumstances is subject to the satisfactory outcomes from the checks.
- 5.6 Each staff member receives a copy of the Home's Statement of Purpose.
- 5.7 All new staff members participate in a well-structured induction programme that is geared to familiarise them with all aspects of the

overall running of the home, but with specific emphasis on the area of work for which they were employed.

- 5.8 All staff members, including those who are temporarily employed, contracted or seconded, as well as volunteers and ancillary staff, have a clear understanding to whom they are accountable.
  
- 5.9 Each member of staff is given adequate support and receives regular one-to-one supervision from a senior member of staff.

## **6. Staffing The Home**

### **Staffing Requirements**

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#### **Standard**

**The home is staffed at all times during the day and at night, at or above the minimum level specified in local Government Regulations.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

6.1 There is policy in place that ensures that staffing is adequate to meet the home's Statement of Purpose and sufficient in practice to meet the needs of the children accommodated. This policy clearly outlines:

- The number of care staff required to be on duty by day (taking into consideration varying numbers which may be required to accommodate different circumstances).
- The number of care staff required to be on duty by night, and whether they are required to be waking or sleeping in
- The number of ancillary staff required to be on duty in addition to care staff at specific times during the day or at night
- The minimum number of staff to be present in the building during the day and at night
- The agreed starting and finishing times for night staffing
- The arrangements that are made for the management of staff on duty both during the day and at night
- The arrangements for calling for senior staff support if required

- 6.2 Continuity of staffing is maintained at such a level that children's attachments are not overly disrupted.
- 6.3 The number of staff is increased above the minimum number required by policy, where children's needs, the number of children, or other circumstances require this in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of each individual child.
- 6.4 There is always a member of staff responsible for children, and all children know who that member of staff is and how to contact them.
- 6.5 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, and this risk assessment has demonstrated that there is no unacceptable level of risk from such an arrangement.
- 6.6 There is at least one member of staff responsible for each identifiable group of children, within or outside the home, with the means to call for immediate back-up from at least one other member of staff if necessary.
- 6.7 Staff on duty know which children and which adults are sleeping in the home each night.
- 6.8 Staffing policy is maintained regardless of illnesses or other absences.

## **7. Staffing The Home**

### **Staff Support**

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#### **Standard**

**The home ensures that all staff receives adequate support and supervision and have access to personal counselling services when necessary.**

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### ***Criteria required to meet standard***

- 7.1 Staff who are employed infrequently to cover staff absences receive one to one supervision after each 8 hour shift worked in the home.
- 7.2 There is written record in the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision session held for each member of staff, including the Head of home. The record is signed by the member of staff and by the supervisor at the end of each supervision session.
- 7.3 All staff, including the Head of home have a written job description that clearly states their responsibilities, the duties currently expected of them and their line of accountability.
- 7.4 All job descriptions are periodically reviewed.
- 7.5 Staff have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually by their line manager, and a record of the appraisal showing the level of performance achieved, the targets set for the coming year, and the agreed training needs to be met within that period, as part of their Personal Development Plan is contained on the individual's personnel file.
- 7.6 Staff have access to sources of advice and counselling and are provided with written guidance on the home's procedures and practice which is kept up to date and accessible.

- 7.7 Staff meetings are structured and take place at least once monthly, meetings include discussions on both the home's work in caring for individual children and the overall management of the current child group, together with a review of the home's practice. Meetings have an agenda and are minuted.
- 7.8 Staff who deputise in the absence of the Head of home and the deputy has at least one year's supervisory experience.
- 7.9 Staff members who are placed in charge of the home and other staff at particular times have substantial relevant experience of working in the home, are not themselves temporary staff and have successfully completed their induction and probationary period.
- 7.10 Staff should be at least 21 years of age. No person works in the home unless they are at least 4 years older than the oldest child accommodated.
- 7.11 Staff rotas have time scheduled to ensure that the hand over sessions, spending time with individual children, completion of records, planning and carrying out care programmes occur without compromising overall care of children.
- 7.12 Children are not given responsibility over other children in the home, nor given responsibility to compensate for any lack of staff in the home. Children who are given responsibility for specific tasks in the home are sufficiently supervised by staff to ensure that they fulfil their roles appropriately.

7.13 There are staff disciplinary procedures in place that is clear that a member of staff may be sent home, as a neutral act, pending consideration of, or completion of an investigation of any suspicion or allegation of abuse or serious concern relating to the safety or welfare of children. The procedure clearly separates staff disciplinary processes from child protection enquiries and criminal proceedings and is known by all staff.

## **8. Children In The Home**

### **Placement Plans, Reviews and Revisions**

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#### **Standard:**

**Children have their needs effectively and comprehensively assessed, and written placement plans outline how these needs will be met and implemented. All children in the home are appropriately placed there.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 8.1 A placement plan is in place that sets out in particular, how, on a day-to-day basis, the child will be cared for, how his or her welfare will be safeguarded and promoted by the home, the contribution to be made by the staff of the home and how the effectiveness of the placement is to be assessed in relation to each element of the plan.
- 8.2 The placement plan is developed in conjunction with the child's social worker and includes the arrangements that are made for the child's health care, educational, physical and emotional needs, as well as his or her cultural, religious and linguistic needs
- 8.3 Arrangements for contact with parents, extended family members and friends are detailed in the plan.
- 8.4 The placement plan is consistent with the child's Care Plan and takes into consideration any recommendations that are made in relation to safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare.
- 8.5 Having regard to his or her age and understanding, the child's wishes and feelings are sought and taken into consideration when drawing up the plan.

- 8.6 Each child is assigned a key worker within the home.
- 8.7 The key worker provides individual advice, guidance and support for the child, closely monitors the child's placement plan, and ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in his or her day- to-day care.
- 8.8 Policy is in place to ensure that statutory reviews of each placement plan are carried out and also that all placement plans are revised as necessary.
- 8.9 The home ensures that the agreed outcome of the review is reflected in the day-to-day care of the child within the home.
- 8.10 The home encourages each child to express his or her views and wishes and to be involved as far as is practicable in the review process.
- 8.11 Senior home staff, and the child's key worker contribute effectively to all reviews and report on the progress and also any difficulties with the child in the home.
- 8.12 The results of all reviews are recorded on the child's file and the individuals responsible for carrying out the actions recommended are clearly identified.
- 8.13 Clear and realistic timeframes for the completion of each recommended task are outlined in writing.

- 8.14 Written copies of the review report are made available to the child and he or she is helped to understand its content.
- 8.15 Where necessary, reviews are translated or communicated in a form best suited to the child's understanding.
- 8.16 Children's needs, development and progresses are recorded to reflect their individuality.
- 8.17 Children have a permanent private and secure record of their history and progress, which can, in compliance with legal requirements, be seen by the child and by the child's parents as appropriate.
- 8.18 Children are made aware that they may read their files, with the exception of confidential or third party information, and are actively encouraged to do so and to correct errors and add personal statements.

## **9. Contact arrangements**

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### **Standard:**

**The home promotes contact between children and their parents, family and friends in accordance with the arrangements that are set out in each child's placement plan.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 9.1 Suitable facilities are provided within the home where children can meet privately with parents, relatives, friends and other authorised visitors.
- 9.2 At all reasonable times, children in the home have access to the use of a telephone and to facilities to send and receive mail and where possible, access to electronic mail.
- 9.3 Children with disabilities have access to the necessary aids and equipment they may require as a result of their disability, in order to facilitate their communication with others.
- 9.4 Where it is necessary to restrict contact for the protection of the child, the reasons for this are clearly understood and properly implemented.
- 9.5 Written guidance is in place that clarifies for staff:
- The rights of children, parents, and others to maintain contact
  - Where visits should be supervised in order to safeguard the child and other children in the home
  - When and how to encourage parents, relatives and friends to participate in the activities of the home.

9.6 All contact made with the child is fully recorded on his or her case file and a copy made available to the child's social worker.

## **10. Admissions and Discharges**

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### **Standard:**

**Admissions and discharges to and from the home are carried out in a planned and sensitive manner.**

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### ***Criteria required to meet standards***

- 10.1        There are written procedures that outline how children are introduced to the home, the staff and to other children living in the home.
  
- 10.2        These procedures cover both planned and emergency admissions and departures of children and to and from the home.
  
- 10.3        The rules and expectations of the home as they relate to the child, are clearly explained to children prior to or as soon after their admission as possible.
  
- 10.4        Written and verbal information provided for children is designed in a way that is interesting and understandable and provides facts that they need and wish to have.
  
- 10.5**        There is a specific plan for young persons preparing to leave care that specifies the support and assistance they will need to enable them to make a successful transition into adulthood.

## **11. Preparation For Leaving Care**

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### **Standard**

**Young People preparing to leave care and to move into independent or semi-independent living, have a Leaving Care Plan which specifies the support and assistance they will need to receive in order to facilitate a successful transition into adulthood.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

11.1 The home, in agreement with the Social Services department or the agency administering the home, implements the leaving care plan. The Leaving Care Plan outlines the arrangements for:

- Education, training and employment
- Support necessary for disabled young people
- Financial assistance to enable the young person to set up and maintain independent accommodation if applicable
- Claiming welfare benefits where this is identified as a need and where they qualify
- General and specialised health education and health care, and other specialist services such as counselling
- Maintaining existing important networks as defined by the young person, which may include the children's home
- Creating new networks of advice and support if this is applicable
- Appropriate leisure pursuits
- Seeking assistance should problems arise.

11.2 Particular attention is paid to assisting young persons preparing to leave care to:

- Develop and maintain relationship with others
- Understand their sexuality and establish positive, caring social and sexual relationships
- Develop self-esteem
- Prepare for the world of work and/or further or higher education
- Develop practical, daily life knowledge and skills.

11.3 Leaving Care plans take into account the religious, racial, linguistic and cultural background of the young person.

11.4 Leaving Care plans are written with the agreement with the young person, who is given a copy of the completed plan.

## **12. Behaviour Management Within the Home**

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### **Standard**

**Acceptable behaviour is responded to in a positive manner and unacceptable behaviour responded to by constructive, acceptable and known disciplinary measures, approved by the Social Services department or the agency administering the home.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 12.1 There is clear written policy, procedures and guidance for staff, based on a code of conduct that outlines the control, disciplinary and restraint measures permitted and emphasising the need to reinforce positive messages to children for the achievement of acceptable behaviour.
- 12.2 Staff and children clearly understand the consequences of unacceptable behaviour, and any measures applied are relevant to the incident reasonable and carried out as sensitively as possible.
- 12.3 Any measures taken as a response to unacceptable behaviour are appropriate to the age, understanding and needs of the child.
- 12.4 Staff take into account the fact that unacceptable or challenging behaviour may be the result of illness, certain disabilities such as autism, or communication difficulties or negative experiences such as abuse or bullying.
- 12.5 There is policy and procedures on the use and techniques of physical restraint and other forms of physical intervention, and the circumstances in which they may be used. These are in line with any relevant government guidance on approved methods of restraint and physical intervention.

12.6 Parents and persons with parental responsible are made aware of the measures of control, discipline and restraint employed by the home.

12.7 Physical restraint is used only when it is necessary to prevent injury to the child, to others or serious damage to property; restraint is not used as a punishment, as a means of enforcing a child to comply with instructions, or in response to challenging behaviour.

12.8 The home maintains a written record of the use of all restraint used on children; the record includes the following:

- The name of the child
- The date, time and location that restraint was used
- Details of the behaviour that necessitated the use of restraint
- The nature of the restraint used
- The duration of the restraint
- The name of the staff member(s) using the restraint
- The names of any other staff, children or other persons present
- The effectiveness and any consequences of the restraint

- Any injuries caused to or reported by the child or any other person, and
- The signature of the head of the home or the person authorised by the Social Services department or agency administering the home.

12.9 A copy of all entries is given to the Social Services department or agency administering the home.

12.10 The Social Services department or agency administering the home regularly monitors the records to ensure compliance with policy, procedures and guidance, and to identify any patterns in incidents that necessitate disciplinary or restraint action.

12.11 Comments on the appropriateness of individual uses of sanctions or use of restraint, together with any subsequent action taken are recorded, and each entry is signed against to confirm that monitoring has taken place.

12.12 The implications for the care of individual children and current care practice are carefully considered and addressed.

## **13. Privacy and Confidentially**

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### **Standard**

**The home and staff respect a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the child.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 13.1 Staff know how to deal with and share information which is given in confidence for child protection purposes.
- 13.2 Staff are sensitive to gender issues especially when dealing with children of the opposite sex.
- 13.3** Written policy and guidelines on privacy and confidentiality are in place that cover:
- access to case records by staff and others
  - passing on information with child protection implications
  - The disclosure of illegal activities
  - Details about the way children's rooms are entered.
  - emergency entry or interruptions without permission, where children are considered to be at risk
- 13.4 Written guidance is in place that outlines for both staff and children, when it may be necessary to conduct searches of children's rooms or possessions, and searches are carried out only in accordance with this guidance.

13.5 All staff working with children who require staff assistance with intimate care or bodily functions or with lifting and handling, receive the necessary training and are provided with appropriate clear written guidance on how to provide such assistance.

## **14. The Child's Health Plan**

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### **Standard:**

**The physical, emotional and health needs of each child are identified and appropriate action is taken to secure the medical, dental, psychological and other health services needed to meet them. Children are provided with guidance, advice and support on health and personal care issues that are appropriate to their needs and wishes.**

---

## *Criteria required to meet standard*

14.1 There is a clear written health plan for each child (within their placement plan) that outlines:

- The child's medical history
- Any specific medical or other health intervention that the child may require
- Any necessary preventive measures to be taken
- Any allergies or known adverse reactions to medication the child may have
- The child's dental health needs
- Any hearing needs the child may have
- Any optical needs the child may have
- Records of any developmental checks
- Details of specific treatment therapies or remedial programmes needed in relation to the child's physical, emotional or mental health
- The nature and level of health monitoring required by staff



- The involvement of the child's parents or significant others in his or her health issues.

14.2 There is policy and written guidance on promoting the health of children in the home including:

- Immunisation and screening
- Nutrition and diet
- Exercise and rest
- Personal hygiene
- Sexual health
- The effects of alcohol, smoking and other substances also,
- HIV and AIDS and other blood borne diseases.

14.3 A written record is kept of all significant illnesses, accidents or injuries involving children during their placement at the home.

14.4 Each child is provided with guidance, advice and support in relation to health and social issues, including the use of:

- Alcohol
- Solvents
- Illegal substances
- Smoking
- Sex and relationships education
- Hepatitis
- HIV infection
- Sexually transmitted diseases, and
- Protecting oneself from prejudice, both within and outside the home.

This guidance, advice and support is appropriate to the child's age, needs, culture and wishes.

14.5 Children are actively discouraged from smoking, using alcohol, solvents and other illegal substances, also from participating in under-age sexual activity. Children are given opportunities and are encouraged to discuss these issues openly and honestly with staff and with their peers where appropriate.

14.6 Children, subject to their age and understanding, are able to choose whether or not a member of staff accompanies them when being seen by a doctor, nurse or dentist, and as far as is practicable, to choose whether they are seen by a male or female practitioner.

## **15. Health Treatment Within The Home**

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### **Standard:**

**Children's health needs are met and their welfare is safeguarded and promoted by the home's policies and procedures for administering medicines and providing treatment within the home.**

---

### ***Criteria required to meet standard***

- 15.1 First Aid, minor illness treatment and administration of medication given at the home, (other than by a registered nurse, doctor or dentist) are given only by competent designated staff.
- 15.2 Staff are trained in the use of first aid and well equipped first aid cabinets are provided and made easily accessible within the home.
- 15.3 The Home keeps a written record of all medication, treatment and first aid administered to children, this record includes the name of the child, the date and time the medication/treatment was administered, (including the dosage), and the reason for administration (if not prescribed).
- 15.4 The record is signed by the member of staff responsible for administering the medication/treatment and is regularly monitored by an appropriate designated senior member of staff.
- 15.5 Children are given medication as prescribed; any refusal to take medication is recorded and, if frequent, reported to the prescribing practitioner.
- 15.6 The Home has on file, prior written permission for the administration of first aid and appropriate non-prescription medication, from the person who has parental responsibility for each child.

15.7 Children who are allowed to keep and to administer their own medication are assessed by staff as being sufficiently responsible to do so, and provision is made for the safe keeping of this medication.

15.8 All medication is kept securely locked in a cabinet whose key is not accessible to children, and there is a policy with written guidance for storing and disposing of medication.

## **16. The Education Of Children In The Home**

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### **Standard:**

**The Home actively promotes the education of children as a valuable asset in itself and as part of their preparation for adulthood.**

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### *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 16.1 There is an education policy in place that shows how the home intends to promote and support the educational attainment of children throughout the time they are accommodated there.
- 16.2 Staff are familiar with the educational histories and needs of each child in the home and a record of this history along with the child's educational achievements, needs and aspirations are kept in his or her individual file.
- 16.3 Children are encouraged and supported in attending school daily and in participating in appropriate after-school activities.
- 16.4 Children are actively encouraged and supported in doing homework and are provided with appropriate facilities and the necessary equipment for doing so, this includes the provision of books, computers where possible, and library membership.
- 16.5 Each child is given full access to educational facilities at all stages during their education, this includes tertiary education wherever feasible and in line with the child's aptitude, interests and potential.
- 16.6 In the absence of parents, staff at the home has responsibility to undertake such parental duties as attending parents' meetings and participating in other school activities that are normally attended by a child's parents.

## **17. Support To Individual Children**

### **Quality of care**

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#### **Standard**

**Children are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes and children identified as having particular needs receive help, guidance and support when needed or requested.**

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### ***Criteria required to meet standard***

- 17.1 Support is provided for children for whom English is not their first language (or who use alternative methods of communications), to enable them to communicate their needs, wishes and concerns, and to communicate with staff and other children within the home.
- 17.2 Systems are in place to ensure that professional services are provided where necessary to help children develop their individual identity in relation to their gender, disability, religious, racial, cultural or linguistic background or sexual orientation.
- 17.3 Support and advice is provided to any child in the home who is or has been involved in abuse or prostitution, whether as a victim of abuse or in abusing others, and the child is involved in the planning of any such programme of support.
- 17.4 Children are able to keep their clothing and personal requisites and toiletries for their own exclusive use, subject to risk assessments on particular items (e.g. aerosols, razors etc).
- 17.5 There is policy in place on personal allowances and children are familiar with this. The policy makes clear the purpose of different allowances, the arrangements for children receiving them, reasons why they may be withheld, the monitoring of their use and how requests for special allowances are made and decided upon.

## **18. Child Protection Procedures and Training**

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### **Standard**

**The welfare of children is safeguarded and promoted, children are protected from abuse and any allegation or suspicion of abuse is responded to promptly and appropriately.**

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### ***Criteria required to meet standard***

- 18.1 Systems are in place that promotes the safety and the welfare of children in the home and that ensure their protection from abuse.
- 18.2 Each member of staff reads, understands and is knowledgeable about the National Child Protection Committee (NCPC) procedures, and a copy of this is kept in the home.
- 18.3** There are regulations and clear written procedures in place for responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse, either by staff, other children in the home or by others. These include:
- 18.4 Instructions for staff on the action to be taken if an allegation or suspicion of abuse become known to them, even if this involves the head of the home or any person working within the home.
- 18.5 The requirement that staff or others working at the home who receive an allegation of abuse, or who suspect abuse, avoid asking leading questions or giving inappropriate guarantees of confidentiality as the information may need to be passed on.

- 18.6 The requirement to report any of the following to the police:
- evidence of children becoming involved in prostitution
  - any unauthorised persons picking children up
  - any unauthorised person contacting children in the home without permission, or observed trying to make contact with children outside the home.
- 18.7 The child protection procedures are consistent with the local child protection policies and procedures agreed by the National Child Protection Committee (NCPC) and have been submitted to the Committee for its consideration and comment, and any comments taken into account.
- 18.8 There is written guidance for staff that outlines the ways in which the home will ensure that members of staff subject to allegations against them will have access to information and support whilst an investigation is being conducted.
- 18.9 There is written procedures and guidance for staff that clearly outlines the systems required in order to protect children and minimise the risk of abuse whilst the child is living in the home. This includes guidance on:
- Making full assessments of children's histories and any experience of abuse.

- Observing contacts between children
- Supervising children
- Supervising and supporting staff
- Recognising the possible involvement of children in prostitution
- Confidentiality
- Physical contact between staff and children
- One to one time alone between a staff member and a child
- Intimate care and invasive procedures
- Administering medication.

18.10 The home ensures that all staff members, including ancillary staff and volunteers, are trained in child protection procedures, the prevention of abuse, the recognition of abuse, and dealing with disclosures or suspicion of abuse. This training is included in induction programmes for new staff, including temporary staff, and is ongoing for the staff group as a whole.

18.11 Routine links are maintained with other agencies concerned with child protection, including the Social Services department, hospitals and schools.

## **19. Bullying**

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### **Standard**

**The ill treatment of children through any means, including bullying by other children or adults, is not tolerated.**

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### *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 19.1 The home recognises and affirms the right of each child and young person to live and learn in a safe and secure environment.
- 19.2 Staff have the necessary skills and understanding to help prevent bullying and when bullying occurs to deal with it in a sensitive manner.
- 19.3 There is policy on countering bullying that is effective in practice and staff and children are familiar with this policy. This includes:
- A definition of bullying by staff and by children
  - Bullying that may occur outside of the home
  - Different types of bullying, whether on the grounds of race, colour, gender, disability, sexual preferences or name-calling.
- 19.4 The policy is periodically reviewed with staff and children
- 19.5 Help is provided for children who are being bullied as well as those who do the bullying.
- 19.6 The Department of Social Services or the agency responsible for regulating the home carries out regular risk assessments of the times,

places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest, and take action where feasible to reduce or counteract the risk of bullying. All assessments are recorded.



## **20. Absence Of A Child From The Home Without Authority**

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### **Standard**

**Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return.**

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## *Criteria required to meet standard*

20.1 Written procedures are in place that identifies the action to be taken when a child is absent from the home without authority, this covers the following areas:

- Searching for any child who is missing or believed to have run away from the home
- Reporting missing children to the police and to others, including parents, subject to consultation with the Social Services department, (this will include a risk assessment of the likely danger to the child)
- The action to be taken to obtain information about the whereabouts of a missing child, and to try to ensure the safety and welfare of that child
- The collection and return of missing children when found
- The action to be taken on the child's return

20.2 Written records are made of the circumstances of all incidents of absconding, all action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reason given by the child for absconding, and any action taken in the light of those reasons.

- 20.3 Guidance is in place to inform staff of the measures they can take to prevent a child leaving without permission.
- 20.4 There are agreed procedures in place to monitor any child who is considered likely to go missing, and to specify how the child may be prevented from leaving the home. Procedures may include physical modification to the premises, behavioural and/or therapeutic approaches to change the child's behaviour, or agreed physical restraint.

## **21. Complaints**

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### **Standard**

**Children, and where appropriate their families, significant others and independent visitors are provided with information on how to complain, including how they can secure access to an advocate.**

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*Criteria required to meet standard*

- 21.1 Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the home.
- 21.2 Children, and where appropriate their families and other significant persons in their lives, are provided with information on how to complain, including how they can secure access to an advocate.
- 21.3 All complaints are seriously addressed without delay and the complainant is kept informed of progress.
- 21.4 A written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response to the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.
- 21.5 The home has written complaint procedures that:
- Enables children, staff, family members and other persons outside the home who are involved with children accommodated in the home, to make minor and major complaints.
  - Expressly forbids any reprisals against children or others who make complaints.
  - Includes provision for informal attempts, such as negotiation, arbitration and mediation, at resolving the complaint, and also for the child or any complainant to have

the matter pursued further if not satisfied with the proposed informal resolution.

- Provides appropriate measures for handling any complaints that are made against the manager or Head of the home.
- Requires a record to be made and kept of the name and position of the person making the complaint, the date and nature of the complaint, the action taken and the outcome of the complaint.
- Provides for the matter to be referred to the Social Services department or the agency responsible for child protection issues.
- Is accessible to children with disabilities in a form appropriate to them.
- Enables people other than the child to make complaints on behalf of the child, with the child's consent.
- Provides for the complainant to be kept informed of the progress of their complaints and to be provided with details of the outcome in an accessible format at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Provides for the handling external complaints, e.g. those from persons in the neighbourhood, the police etc.

21.6 All staff receive training in the complaints procedures covering the following areas:

- What constitutes a complaint
- The procedures for dealing with an informal complaint in the home and how this is recorded
- The procedure to be followed should a complaint not be resolved promptly by informal means, including who should be notified and the keeping of records.
- How the child can be assisted in making a complaint, including situations where the child has communication impairment.

21.7 The Social Services department or the agency responsible for the administration of the home, regularly reviews the records of complaints by children or concerning the welfare of children, to check whether the complaints procedures are operating effectively and to identify both patterns of complaints and action taken on individual complaints.

21.8 The department takes any appropriate action from such a review in relation to the home's policies and practices, and ensures that any necessary further follow-up action is taken in relation to individual cases.

## **22. Secure Accommodation and Refuges**

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### **Standard**

**Children living in secure units or refuges receive the same measures to safeguard and promote their welfare, as they do in other children's homes.**

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### *Criteria required to meet standard*

- 22.1        Apart from the measures necessary to the home's status as a secure unit or refuge, children resident in secure units or refuges receive the same care services, as they do in other children's homes.
- 22.2        Children in homes which are refuges approved under the relevant legislation, are looked after in the same way as children in other children's home, and in accordance with these national minimum standards.

## **References:**

The (British) Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations *Volume 4*,  
Residential Care

The (British) Department of Health - Children in the Public Care, *A Review of  
Residential Child Care*

British National Minimum Standards for Residential Care