

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 121593  
Date            21 December 2015

### ***Section 16 Health & Safety of Foster Carers Terms and Conditions 2008***

**Request:**

I would like to request the following information under the freedom of information act please

Section 16 Health and Safety of foster carers terms and conditions 2008

Questions are based on section 16 R&R terms and conditions for foster carers 2008 and I would like to be clear I refer to Health and Safety and NOT food safety

1. Does the councils health and safety policy make specific reference to foster carers and there role in the organising section of that policy. If not why not if they are to comply with that policy?  
[No, the health & safety policy is general and does not cover the 'specific' role of foster carers.](#)
2. 16.1 makes reference to any health and safety regulations and codes of practice in force at the time. Can I have a list of specific health and safety regulations what the council refer to as relevant to a foster carer?  
[All foster carer's sign a contract with Wolverhampton City Council when becoming carers, this contract covers all aspects of health & safety including their own insurance provision, undertaking health & safety training and complying with council home safety checks \(at least annually\) carried out by a member of the social work team \(See Attached\) and completing an annual 56 point health and safety questionnaire \(this includes gas checks, the storage of medication etc.\) \(See Attached\).](#)
3. What training is available to carers to ensure they are up to date with health and safety regulations and codes of practice that you mention in 16.1 other than the handbook section 9?  
[Foster carers are able to access the health and safety training available on the council's intranet page. They also have access to internal 'face to face' training including 'health and hygiene' and 'fire safety' training etc. Delivered by a training officer within social services.](#)
4. How does the Council monitor health and safety in the foster home?  
[Foster carers complete the 56 point health and safety questionnaire annually](#)

and social workers undertake 'unannounced' health and safety visits at least once per year by visiting their homes.

5. What training is given to social workers for them to undertake health and safety inspections and that they have an understanding of Health and Safety?  
The social work team receive 'in-house' health and safety training either 'face to face' from within their department via the training officer, such as 'health and hygiene' and 'fire safety' and by accessing the council's health and safety courses in the Learning Hub.

6. How many accidents were there in Foster care placements including agency placements that happened in 2013, 2014 2015

Minor-

Major- required hospital treatment

In response to your request, we can confirm that following careful consideration, the Council regrets to inform you that it has decided not to disclose this information.

Information you have requested has been withheld from disclosure. The exemption engaged is Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI).

Section 12 of the FOI exempts Public Authorities from providing information where the estimated cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. Any estimate must be undertaken in accordance with the limits set in fees regulations made under Section 12 (5) of the FOI.

These Fees Regulations (SI 2004/3244 Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations) allow for a refusal where the cost of compliance, for local authorities such as the Council, would exceed £450. As a guide, staff time to identify and extract this information is charged at a rate of £25 per hour.

In summary, we cannot easily gather this information via a report as it is not held centrally. In order to determine the information you have requested, we would need to manually interrogate various systems and have this validated by various service areas. This would be a manual exercise and as such we believe the aggregated time it would take to collate the information would be in excess of 18 hours (equivalent to a notional cost of £450).

If you can narrow down your request the Council will look into the matter again and may be able to provide the information free of charge because it would cost less than the appropriate limit to do so. Any reformulated request the department receives from you will be treated as a fresh FOI request.

## HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

Name:
Address:
Type of Premises:
Date of Visit:
Supervising Social Worker:

	<b>CHECKLIST <u>GENERAL</u></b>	Y/N	COMMENTS
1.	<p>Are gas appliances and heaters checked and serviced regularly?</p> <p>Annual Service Documents: Date: <b>(must be seen)</b></p>		(please note date when documents will be seen)
2.	<p>Has there been a Fire service home Survey? Date: (This is a free service by the fire department)</p>		(when will safety check be carried out)
3.	<p>Is there at least one smoke detector fitted in a suitable location and tested regularly (once a month)? Test and record result. (SSW to test at time of H&amp;S check)</p>		
4.	<p>Are glass doors and low windows (below 80cm) fitted with safety glass or film? (Check glass/film for British Standard Kite Mark)</p> <p>Are window locks or restraints used to restrict or prevent opening of windows where there is a risk of climbing out and falling? Describe how? (is a risk assessment required, attach to this H&amp;S doc)</p> <p>Do windows open sufficiently to provide an escape route in case of fire?</p> <p>Are the keys to locks accessible? Does the family have an escape plan in the event of fire?</p>		

5.	Is access to the internet supervised and screened? How is this implemented?		
6.	Do the electrical systems appear safe? Consider the following:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are sockets overloaded?</li> <li>• Are sockets in good condition? – check for cracks/burns or discolouration.</li> <li>• Are socket protectors used?</li> <li>• Are there any trailing flexes?</li> </ul> <b>(Note any discrepancies and timescales for these to be addressed)</b>		(this is a visual check, not a tick exercise, please comment)
7.	Is there a well equipped first aid kit available? (As recommended by St Johns Ambulance)		
8.	Medicines, including any pet treatments or substances, must be stored out of reach of children and Young people in a locked cabinet. Where are medicines kept?  <b>If medicines are administered this needs to be clearly logged in carer recordings.</b>		(State where these are stored)
9.	Are the floors free of tripping hazards such as worn carpets, trailing cables, loose rugs, uneven floors and protectors on sharp corners on furniture toys, or other items? <b>(Note any discrepancies and timescales for these to be addressed)</b>		
10.	Have there been any structural changes in the past 12 months or do the carers have any planned.  Please give details.		
11.	Is there sufficient space for children to pursue their homework or enjoy quiet activities as well as play boisterously?  Is there space for young children/babies away from others?		

12.	<p>Are all exits secure and clear?</p> <p>Is there direct access to the road? What safety precautions are in place? <b>(Risk assessment may need to be completed &amp; management strategy to be included in H&amp;S document)</b></p> <p>Are the keys to door/car kept secure? (Where?)</p>		
13.	<p>Are there blinds at the windows? <b>(Risk of strangulation of hanging cords)</b> If yes please ensure cords are out of reach of children. (comment on how the blind cords are stored i.e. wrapped around a cleat out of the child's reach)</p>		
	<p><b>CHECKLIST</b> <b>Porch,</b> <b>Hall Stairs and Landing.</b></p>	Y/N	COMMENTS
14.	<p>Are stairs and banisters safe, minimum gap of 4" between rails?</p> <p>Is the stairway open access? <b>(If so risk assessment and management strategy to be included with H&amp;S document)</b></p>		
15.	<p>Are stair gates present?</p> <p>If Stair gates are in use are they securely fitted and in the right place?</p>		
16.	<p>Does the furniture appear safe and sound?</p> <p>E.g. no exposed springs or insecure doors.</p>		
17.	<p>Do any members of the household smoke? When and where, record details.</p> <p>Are cigarettes and lighters kept out of reach? Where are they stored?</p>		(ensure all carers have a copy of Wolverhampton City Council Smoking Policy)
18.	<p>Is alcohol kept in the foster home? If so, where? Is it stored appropriately?</p>		
	<p><b>Please Complete if Foster Home is approved for 0 – 5 category</b></p>		
19.	<p>Is glassware stored out of reach?</p>		
20.	<p>Are child proof catches in use?</p>		
21.	<p>Is there a chest freezer? (This should be locked or inaccessible, a small child could climb inside)</p>		

22.	Is there a fixed fire guard in place? <b>(If fire is in use, if not used needs to be noted in safer caring statement)</b>		
	<b>CHECKLIST Vehicle details</b>	Y/N	<b>COMMENTS</b>
23.	Is the MOT and car insurance up to date? List dates these expire. Driving Licence, TAX		(Include renewal date if within 6 weeks of H&S check. Carer to inform car insurance)
24.	Are all children and young people secured when travelling in cars?  Are cars fitted with appropriate seat belts/restraints and car seats? <b>Has carer been shown how to fit seat properly?</b>		(if no how will this be addressed)
	<b>CHECKLIST KITCHEN</b>  <b>.. 37% of all burns and scalds happen to children under 5</b>	Y/N	
25.	Are children kept out of the kitchen during cooking?		
26.	Are pan handles turned in and well clear of hotplates/gas rings?		
27.	Are sharp knives and scissors kept out of reach and stored safely? <b>(No knife blocks or magnetic knife holders should be on view)</b>		
28.	Is there a fire blanket?  Has this been included with the fire safety check?  Record location.		
29.	Is the ironing done when children are around? Are children kept away from the iron whilst it is in use? Is the iron left to cool in a safe place?  <b>(Ironing should not be done around under 10's, appropriate supervision for independence support)</b>		
30.	Are polythene bags kept out of reach? (Age appropriate)		

31.	Are household chemicals – detergents, bleach, aerosols, solvents, paints – stored in a secure area? Where and How?  Childproof cupboard catches used?		(age appropriate stage age of placement)
32.	Is the kitchen safe and hygienic? Take account of food hygiene regulations.  Has the carer undertaken a food safety course? Date:		
33.	Are the leads to kitchen appliances and flexes e.g. kettles etc, kept out of reach and safe?		
	<b><u>BATHROOM</u></b>	Y/N	
34.	Is the hot water temperature set to prevent scalding? Is there a thermostatic control? If heated towel rail in situ is there raised awareness to risk of burns? <b>(if not what steps are taken, risk assess)</b>		
35.	Are cosmetics, perfumes/aftershaves, disinfectants and cleaning materials stored out of reach?  <b>(cleaning materials should be stored in one location. Cosmetics etc should be stored out of reach not on open shelving, risk of young children ingesting chemicals)</b>		(Where are they stored?)
36.	Is a non-slip mat used in the bath/shower?		
37.	Is the bathroom well ventilated?  Is there condensation/ mould growth on walls or ceiling?		
38.	Are razors and scissors stored out of reach? <b>(to be stored in a locked cupboard)</b>		
39.	Are lights or electric fires in the bathrooms controlled by a pull switch?		
40.	Is there a lock on the bathroom door? Is it out of reach of small children? Can this be opened from the outside?		
	<b><u>BEDROOM</u></b>  <b><i>.. every year 40,000 children accidentally swallow pills and chemicals etc</i></b>	Y/N	

41.	Is furniture kept away from windows?		
42.	Are bunk beds fitted with safety bars and a secure ladder? <b>Bunk beds must not be placed by windows)</b>		
43.	Are beds and furnishings must positioned away from radiant heat sources?		
44.	Will the child/young person have their own bed/cot (Bunk beds are not suitable for 14+, top bunks are not suitable for under 5's).  Is the bed/cot safe?		
45.	Does the household or vicinity present any hazard?		
	<b><u>GARDEN/OUTSIDE</u></b> <b><i>.. 40 children are treated every day for animal bites</i></b>	Y/N	
46.	Is the garden free of dog/cat fouling?		
47.	Are garden chemicals stored in original containers in a safe and secure area that is locked?		
48.	Are all fences and walls structurally safe?  Are they secure to prevent children wandering out of and into the garden?		
49.	Are steps, terraces, rockeries, paths including drain covers in good condition and safe?		
50.	Are garden tools and implements stored safely?		
51.	If a garden has a pond/well is it inaccessible to children/covered and adequately supervised? Check garden ornaments for rain water collecting, consider water butts. <b>(Risk Assess and include in safer caring statement)</b>		
52.	Is garden play equipment in good condition (i.e. no loose bolts) and sited over a soft surface?		
53.	Is the garden free of poisonous plants or berries? Berries to be removed at picking/grabbing height.		



54.	Is there a greenhouse and is the glass protected? Do children have access to greenhouse if so is safety film or fencing suitable? (Supervision plan in place?)		
55.	Are sandpits hygienic and covered when not in use?		
56.	Does anyone in the household take part in dangerous activities or own firearms?  (Please record details, inc. Fire Arms Certificate seen).		

Recommendations:  
(Please include any recommendations and timescales for completion/review)

Date check completed:	.....
Signed (applicant):	.....
Signed Supervising Social Worker	.....



**UNANNOUNCED HOME SAFETY CHECK**

CHECKLIST <b><u>BEDROOMS</u></b>	Yes/No/ N/A	COMMENTS
Indicate bedroom capacity and who is sleeping where?		
BED 1:  Maureen and Ken		Room seen, no concerns.
BED 2:  Tyler		Room seen, no concerns
BED 3:  Soul		Room seen, no concerns
CHECKLIST		COMMENTS
<b><u>BATHROOM</u></b>		
How many?  One bathroom and one separate toilet.		Both seen, no concerns

<b><u>KITCHEN</u></b>		
		Kitchen are seen, no concerns.
Are children kept out of the kitchen during cooking?  What is the carer's supervision strategy whilst carer is cooking? <b>(this to be included in safer caring statement)</b>		N/A Baby placement
Medicines must be stored out of reach of children and Young people in a locked box/cabinet. Where are medicines kept?  <b>If medicines are administered this needs to be clearly logged in carer recordings.</b>		Medication kept in a locked box in the kitchen cupboard, however no medication home currently as still at previous address.
<b><u>GENERAL</u></b>		
Is there at least one smoke detector fitted in a suitable location and tested regularly (once a month)? Test and record result.	Yes	Smoke detector in hallway and kitchen, both are wired to the mains with a battery back-up. CO2 detector in kitchen also.  Fire blanket is kept in the kitchen.
Is there sufficient space for children to pursue their homework or enjoy quiet activities as well as play boisterously?  Is there space for young children/babies away from others?	Yes	
Do any members of the household smoke? When and where, record details.  Are cigarettes and lighters kept out of reach? Where are they stored?	No	
If yes to above, do they understand the risks to children. Carers must smoke away from the children, if they do not already?	N/A	
<b><u>GARDEN/OUTSIDE</u></b>		
Is garden & all equipment safe		Garden is secure by fencing and is safe as all area is paved. Any equipment is stored in a lockable shed.

<b>Date of last Foster Home Review: 05/03/2014</b>		
Home Safety Recommendations outstanding from FHR:		
A new smoke detector to be fitted.		
Medication to be stored in a secure cupboard or box.		
Fire Service home survey to be completed.		
Recommendations: (Please include timescales for completion/review)		
None		