



Department
for Education

Guide to supported accommodation regulations including Quality Standards

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Introduction

As children grow up and become young people, they gradually gain more independence from their parents. The care system seeks to replicate this transition to independence and support children throughout the process. While most children in the care system will be best placed in foster care or a children's home, beginning at 16, a looked after child can leave care (becoming a 'care leaver') or could move to supported accommodation if they are ready for it. This provision can be appropriate for some older children where it is part of a carefully managed transition to independence and aligned with their care and pathway plans, which are the responsibility of the local authority. For young people aged 16 or 17 who are ready for the level of independence it promotes, supported accommodation can be the right option, where it is safe and delivers the right amount of high quality support. The aim of supported accommodation is to support young people to develop their independence and prepare for adult living while keeping them safe in a homely and nurturing environment.

In February 2021, the government laid the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021, which banned the placement of looked after children under the age of 16 in unregulated settings from 9 September 2021.

This Guidance accompanies the Regulations for supported accommodation which constitutes the second part of the Government's reform to this provision, hereon described as supported accommodation. Supported accommodation is accommodation in England in which a child is accommodated pursuant to section 22C(6)(d) or 23B(8)(b) of the Children Act 1989, subject to specified exemptions.

The Regulations include the Quality Standards for supported accommodation for young people aged 16 or 17 as well as detail on the Ofsted-led registration and inspection regime. This Guidance provides further explanation and information for everyone providing supported accommodation for looked-after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17 for whom the local authority has a duty to accommodate or arrange accommodation, who are described as young people throughout this Guidance.

Who is this guidance for?

This Guidance is for all those involved with the provision of accommodation and support to young people, and particularly those who are subject to the Regulations. This includes local authorities, providers of supported accommodation, the children's social care workforce, and relevant national public, private and charitable sector organisations. For more information on the duties of local authorities to looked-after children and care leavers, please refer to statutory guidance on [Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers](#), [The Care Planning Guidance](#), and [The Care Leavers Guidance](#).

The regulatory framework and legal status of this Guidance

This Guidance is a statement published pursuant to section 23 of the Care Standards Act 2000 (“the 2000 Act”). It explains and supplements the Regulations (see section 23(1A) of the 2000 Act). It provides explanations of terms used in the Regulations, what is expected to meet the various requirements of the Regulations and signposts additional relevant statutory and non-statutory guidance.

The Regulations and this accompanying guidance for supported accommodation are applicable to accommodation in England in which a child is accommodated by the local authority pursuant to section 22C(6)(d) (“other arrangements” for looked after children) or 23B(8)(b) (“suitable accommodation” for 16 and 17 year old care leavers) of the Children Act 1989, subject to certain exclusions outlined in the Regulations. “Other arrangements” now means registered supported accommodation (subject to certain exclusions) and is not registered as a children’s home nor a foster care placement in England or Wales. For more information on when placements are made under these powers with respect to supported accommodation, please refer to the [Explanatory Memorandum to The Care Standards Act 2000 \(Extension of the Application of Part 2 to Supported Accommodation\) \(England\) Regulations 2022](#) that sets out how supported accommodation is defined in regulations.

The Quality Standards do not mean standardisation of provision. The standards are designed to be applicable to different types of supported accommodation. 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 young people’s individual needs. Many providers will aspire to exceed these standards and develop their service in order to achieve excellence.

Ofsted take these standards into account in regulating and inspecting supported accommodation. This guidance clarifies what is expected of providers when they register and deliver their supported accommodation service.

The registered provider and registered service manager (see Annex A for definitions of these roles) must have regard to this guidance in interpreting and meeting the Regulations. Ofsted must also have regard to this guidance in regulating supported accommodation for young people.

How this Guidance works

This Guidance is organised thematically into sections by quality standard. The blue boxes reflect how each standard is drafted in the Regulations. The guidance in each section includes advice not only on the objectives and standards for supported accommodation, but also guidance relating to the requirements of registered provider as underpinned in the Regulations.

The Guidance is not a comprehensive and exhaustive set of instructions for those carrying on or managing a supported accommodation service but sets out high level expectations of providers. This is to allow room for provider flexibility and innovation to tailor support according to the specific needs of the young people they accommodate. The presence or absence of a reference to any provision of the Regulations in this Guidance does not have any bearing on the status of the Regulations – the registered provider is required to meet all the Regulations.

Similarly, this Guidance signposts to publications, research and guidance of interest. Such references are not intended to be exhaustive. It remains the responsibility of those running the service to seek out the relevant material to ensure that they comply with the law and provide young people with the best possible service and support.

This Guidance sets out the expectations of providers of a supported accommodation service regarding the support they deliver, including how to work in partnership with others. Where we have used the term “registered person”, this means the registered provider or the registered service manager.

Details of what is required of local authorities in relation to care planning and responsibilities for its looked-after children are set out in [The Care Planning Guidance](#). Details of what is required of local authorities in relation to planning the transition to adulthood for care leavers are set out in [The Care Leavers Guidance](#).

Who is this provision for?

Looked-after children and care leavers are often some of the most vulnerable children and young people in society, and we must work together to do all that we can to ensure that they have access to suitable and nurturing accommodation that can meet their needs and keep them safe. For most children and especially those at greater risk of exploitation, this is best achieved through a placement in foster care or a children’s home, for which there are already robust approaches to approving, registering and quality-assuring provision. However, for some young people aged 16 or 17, living in supported accommodation can be the best option to meet their needs, with the aim of supporting young people to develop their independence ahead of leaving the care system as they approach adulthood.

This type of provision is not automatically the right choice for young people aged 16 and 17. Where young people of this age have needs that would best be met in a children’s home or foster care placement, that is where they should be placed. In discharging their statutory duties, including sufficiency planning, local authorities must make placements that best meet the needs of the individual child and ensure there is sufficient accommodation for their looked-after children and care leavers.

We expect local authorities to continue to consider the individual needs of each child when placing young people in supported accommodation, ensuring every placement is the most appropriate setting to meet the young person’s needs and keep them safe. When considering the placement of a young person, local

authorities have a duty to present young people with complete information on their entitlements so young people can make an informed decision, where they might have a choice as to how they are accommodated by the local authority, to either become looked after and accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 or to have accommodation provided under section 17(6) without becoming looked-after. More information on this is set out in the guidance issued jointly by the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government) on [Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation](#). Details of the local authority's placing practices and responsibilities for its looked-after children are set out in [Children Act 1989: Care planning, placement and case review guidance](#).

Where a child is remanded to local authority accommodation and is not accommodated in a children's home or in a foster placement, the accommodation will be other arrangements accommodation. As it will be in accordance with section 22C(6)(d) Children Act 1989 it will be in scope of the Regulations. Where a young person is known to Youth Offending Teams (YOT), their YOT worker should be consulted when making decisions about the placement of a young person.

Supported accommodation for looked-after children and care leavers caters for older children aged 16 and 17 who have relatively high or increasing levels of independence, who are ready to gain further skills to prepare for adult living, and who do not need the degree of care or type of environment provided in a children's home or foster care. For young people who are ready for it, high quality supported accommodation that provides a nurturing and protective environment can be a place where they can thrive and prepare for greater independence. The introduction of quality standards sets out expectations through a framework to ensure excellence and consistency in providers' services and accommodation, raising the bar for the support young people are entitled to and deserve.

Some supported accommodation settings may also accommodate adults aged 18+ who are not covered by the Regulations. Providers for whom this is the case must ensure that support and accommodation for young people in scope of the statutory scheme meets the quality standards. When assessing a young person's needs, the local authority should consider if a setting that also accommodates adults aged 18+ would be an appropriate match, ensuring that any service that accommodates over 18s must not inadvertently have negative impacts on young people aged 16 and 17 who are also in the service.

While we are clear that 'care', insofar as it describes a service, is delivered in children's homes and 'support' is delivered in supported accommodation, those delivering supported accommodation should *care* about young people and create a *caring* environment. Even though the service provided in supported accommodation is called 'support', this provision remains an important part of the children's social care system. As such, supported accommodation is part of the

continuum of care and support for looked-after children and care leavers as they grow up, become more independent and prepare for adulthood.

A rigid distinction between ‘care’ and ‘support’ would fail to capture the nuance of the varying needs and transitions that are a normal part of a child growing up. When local authorities and providers engage in matching a young person with the right provision, they must consider the young person’s specific needs and level of autonomy so that young people live in a place that delivers a service that safeguards and empowers them as well as facilitates their growth and development.

Where a young person has complex needs and/or requires a greater level of ongoing care and supervision, we do not expect that supported accommodation would be appropriate. However, supported accommodation settings should be flexible enough to accommodate temporary increases in support for young people who would otherwise manage well in this type of provision, enabling placement stability where appropriate.

Reference to “young person”

Throughout this guidance, we use the term ‘young person’ or ‘young people’. We have done this to align with the name of this provision, having sought the views of care experienced young people in consultation. Any references to the term ‘young person’ or ‘young people’ in this guidance means any looked-after child or care leaver aged 16 or 17 who is in scope of the Regulations for supported accommodation. The use of “young person” throughout this guidance does not mean that those living in supported accommodation should be treated as young adults – as per the use of the terms ‘child’ and ‘children’ in the Regulations, it is clear that these young people are still children and must be considered and treated as such.

Principles for supported accommodation

The principles upon which supported accommodation for young people is delivered are important elements that underpin the Regulations and this Guidance. These principles have been collated following engagement with care experienced young people. They platform and promote young people’s rights and entitlements and reflect what they have communicated is important to them. Providers should ensure that all settings deliver a service that realises the principles below:

Supported accommodation – key principles

1. I feel safe and secure where I live and in my wider environment
2. My voice is respected, heard and advocated for, so I can influence the support I receive
3. I have confidence that the adults who support me understand me, are skilled and work effectively together to best meet my needs
4. I have my own space that I feel proud of and live in a comfortable, well-maintained, and stable accommodation
5. I receive high quality, tailored support that sustains my health and wellbeing
6. I have strong, trusting, and meaningful relationships within my support system and can rely on the adults around me
7. I feel empowered to learn and apply skills for independent adult living
8. I feel positive about my future and opportunities as a result of the support I receive

The diversity of supported accommodation settings

There is a diverse range of settings within supported accommodation provision for young people aged 16 and 17. The regulatory framework sets out high ambitions for all young people in this provision, recognising the distinct needs and levels of support offered by wide variety of different settings.

As such, it is a legal duty that all registered providers meet the Regulations having regard to the specific needs of young people placed in their service and the role and aims of the service, as set out in their Statement of Purpose. While one provider type's approach will likely differ from another's due to the purpose of the service and/or the needs of the young people they accommodate and support, all registered providers must ensure compliance with the quality standards.

It is imperative that all supported accommodation settings are safe places where children are protected from harm and where their individual needs are met. As underpinned by the quality standards and the Regulations, supported accommodation should offer stability and consistency, enable continuous access to local services including education and healthcare, and should facilitate the development of strong relationships within the local community. The accommodation provided in this provision should promote positive self-esteem, protect against stigma, and support young people to feel confident about their opportunities. It is not expected that outside exceptional circumstances, mobile or

impermanent settings such as motorised caravans or barges will be able to meet the quality standards and requirements for supported accommodation.

Categories of supported accommodation

In line with Ofsted registration categories, this table outlines the categories of supported accommodation and a broad description of what they provide. Providers will be required to say which category or categories they are applying for at the point of registration. If a provider is applying to run more than one category of supported accommodation, the registered service manager will need to have the skills and experience to oversee the management of each category. Providers will need to inform Ofsted of any new categories and will be subject to Ofsted satisfaction that the registered service manager is equipped to effectively oversee the management of that category.

The diverse nature of supported accommodation means that the level of support for young people will vary across all categories, depending on individual young people's ongoing assessed needs. These descriptions should not hinder innovative and flexible practice to best meet the needs of young people.

| Category | Description |
|--|--|
| 1. Single occupancy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes bedsits under a licence agreement and self-contained flats, which may be at the same location, or within the same building This category does not include provision that is not designed for anything other than solo occupancy |
| 2. Shared accommodation/group living (ring-fenced provision for looked-after children and care leavers) ¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared accommodation Young people have their own bedroom, and may have their own bathroom, and share communal areas (e.g. living room/s, kitchen) Provision may include foyer-type accommodation that combines support with opportunities for education, training and employment |

¹ Bed and breakfast accommodation should not be used for 16 and 17 year olds, even in an emergency - see [Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities](#) (DLUHC, updated June 2022) and [Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation](#), DLUHC and DfE, updated 2018).

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This provision may support care leavers aged 18+ |
| 3. Shared accommodation/group living (non-ring-fenced provision) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See description for 2 above, plus: • In addition to being registered to support looked-after children and care leavers CLs aged 16-17, this provision may also provide accommodation for people aged 18+ and who are not care-experienced |
| 4. Family-based accommodation/supported lodgings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided by private individuals who offer a room in their family home • Provision is typically co-ordinated by a supported lodgings scheme (the registered provider), which recruits and supports a network of supported lodgings ‘hosts’ |

About the Quality Standards

The Regulations set out standards (“the Quality Standards”) that must be met by a supported accommodation service and within its individual settings. The Quality Standards describe outcomes that each young person must be supported to achieve while living in supported accommodation. Each standard contains an over-arching, aspirational, outcome statement with young people at its heart, followed by a set of underpinning, measurable requirements that providers and settings must achieve in meeting each standard.

The Regulations prescribe four Quality Standards which must be met by supported accommodation:

- **The leadership and management standard**
- **The protection standard**
- **The accommodation standard**
- **The support standard**

Collectively these four standards are the Quality Standards. They are referred to individually in this Guidance as “the protection standard”, and so on. There are core themes that feature across the four standards, which constitute important features of the standards in practice. Some of these themes include: the views, wishes and feelings of young people; working together; and building strong and meaningful relationships.

Inspection

Supported accommodation undertakings must register with HM Chief Inspector of Schools, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), who will regulate and inspect the supported accommodation service, inclusive of all the settings the provider operates.

There are four elements to Ofsted's function as a regulator: registration; inspection; compliance; and enforcement. The purpose of Ofsted's inspection of supported accommodation is to assess the quality of support provided to young people, promote improvement and raise standards. Inspection focuses on the experiences and progress of young people in supported accommodation and the effectiveness of the help they receive to achieve good outcomes. It tests compliance with the relevant regulations and takes into account the Quality Standards and this Guidance.

Ofsted are required to register providers (not individual settings) at the level of the service. Ofsted must inspect providers and provide a grading at least every three years. Ofsted will inspect services at provider-level and visit a representative sample of the provider's settings at inspection to inform the overall rating of the provider.

Following an inspection, inspectors will make a number of judgements, including a judgement on the overall progress and experiences of young people accommodated by the service. From Spring 2023, if a provider, once registered, fails to meet a regulation, Ofsted will consider the appropriate enforcement action to take in the circumstances. In determining whether a regulation has been met, Ofsted will take into account how the registered provider is following this Guidance. Any failure to meet the Regulations or quality standards may lead to consideration of enforcement action. Inspectors will also make recommendations for improvement.

The Quality Standards

The leadership and management standard

This standard should enable a young person to have confidence in the organisation providing their accommodation and support, and the people responsible for running it.

(1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the supported accommodation undertaking that—

- (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential;
- (b) enables children to have confidence in the supported accommodation undertaking and its management;
- (c) ensures that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe, and have their individual needs met;
- (d) ensures that children build and develop the skills required to live independently; and
- (e) ensures that all staff promote and prioritise the welfare of children.

(2) In particular the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

- (a) lead and manage the supported accommodation undertaking in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the supported accommodation undertaking's statement of purpose (see regulation [*]);
- (b) ensure that staff work effectively as a team, where appropriate, to meet the needs of children;
- (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;
- (d) ensure that the supported accommodation undertaking has sufficient staff to support and accommodate children safely and effectively;
- (e) implement recruitment practices that ensure staff are suitable to work with children and to keep them safe from harm;
- (f) ensure that arrangements are in place to manage referrals of children to the supported accommodation undertaking and admissions of children to premises used for the purposes of supported accommodation, including, where relevant, emergency referrals and admissions;
- (g) ensure that arrangements are in place for the supervision, training and development of staff;
- (h) ensure that each child is fully aware of their entitlements throughout the duration of their placement in supported accommodation, including—
 - (i) what they can expect from the supported accommodation provision;
 - (ii) their entitlement to education;
 - (iii) where relevant, their entitlements as a looked after child;
 - (iv) where relevant, their entitlements as a care leaver;and, where necessary, support each child to access those entitlements;
- (i) ensure that staff have the skills necessary to support children to identify, access and receive their entitlements in a way that helps them to learn to identify, access and receive those entitlements independently in the future;
- (j) ensure that a workforce plan (see regulation [*]) for the supported accommodation undertaking is in place;
- (k) ensure that a business continuity plan is in place, covering all areas, including staffing,

The leadership and management standard

Explanation of terms in the regulation

“registered person”

The registered person means the registered provider or the registered service manager

“registered service manager”

The registered provider is responsible for appointing one registered service manager who will have operational oversight of all the provider’s settings. The registered service manager’s span of oversight should be determined by the registered provider and should be reasonable, appropriate, and not excessive so that the registered service manager has the capacity and capability to ensure all settings are compliant with the Regulations and Quality Standards.

“staff”

For the purposes of the Regulations and this Guidance, staff are inclusive of hosts of supported lodgings as well as agency staff and volunteers working in the service. The placing/accommodating authority, the registered provider and hosts should agree on clear roles and responsibilities of hosts and any agency staff or volunteers involved in delivering support or accommodation to a young person in the service.

“sufficient staff”

Sufficient staff means a setting having enough suitably trained staff (including effective management arrangements) to meet the assessed needs of all young people in each setting, and that those staff are able to respond to emergency placements, where accepted. The registered person must demonstrate every effort to achieve continuity of staffing so that young people’s relationships are not overly disrupted, including ensuring that the employment of any temporary staff will not prevent young people from receiving the continuity of support that they are entitled to.

“supported accommodation undertaking”

means an undertaking which consists of or includes arranging the provision of supported accommodation.

Guidance

Appointment and fitness of registered persons

There are regulations that set out the fitness requirements for the registered provider and service manager. See the explanation of terms for information on their different roles.

If the registered provider is an organisation, the organisation should nominate a director to be a named point of contact with Ofsted. The director named by the organisation should be of integrity and good character and must be prepared to provide satisfactory information as required to Ofsted. If the registered provider is an individual, this will be the same person as the registered provider.

Any other registered provider involved in the carrying on of a supported accommodation service must satisfy fitness requirements. This is to ensure that young people's safety and welfare are protected. The registered provider is accountable for the provider's supported accommodation service, inclusive of all settings.

The registered provider is responsible for appointing one registered service manager who will supervise the management of all the provider's individual settings. The registered provider must ensure that the registered service manager has relevant and recent experience and qualifications to run and manage supported accommodation settings and interact with young people effectively. If the registered provider runs a service of two or more categories of supported accommodation (see page 9), the registered service manager must be equipped with the skills and experience to run both/all categories. If a provider delivers more than one category of supported accommodation, the provider's statement of purpose must address each category. For some small providers, it is possible that the registered provider will also take on the role of the registered service manager, if they meet the regulatory requirements to be the registered service manager.

The registered service manager oversees the operations of all the provider's settings. The registered service manager should appoint as appropriate leadership staff to manage the day-to-day operations at each setting to ensure compliance throughout the service.

The registered service manager should have an understanding of both effective practice in responding to the needs of looked-after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17 and of local authority statutory duties to both cohorts and how supported accommodation settings are required to support these.

It is recommended that the registered service manager has a management qualification equivalent to Level 5 or should seek to acquire this qualification within 3 years of registration. The registered service manager will be expected to have relevant experience such as having worked for at least one year in a role requiring the supervision and management of staff working in youth services, for example.

Ofsted, as the regulator of supported accommodation, can at any time scrutinise the fitness of a registered provider and a registered service manager at any time. There is a regulation that requires the registered service manager to have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of every setting and the category/ies that the service operates. This includes being able to demonstrate that they have the essential skills needed to develop the leadership and management of settings within their remit such that the settings have the capacity and capability to meet the Quality Standards. There is no formal limit to the number of settings that a registered provider can run, but the registered provider must ensure that the registered service manager can effectively supervise the management of all the settings in the service and will also be accountable if the registered service manager fails to do this. The registered provider must have an appropriate structure in place, including leadership and management arrangements, that considers and reflects the breadth, scope and geographical reach of the service being offered. Some large services that operate nationally may consider registering their services by geography as distinct registered providers to ensure the registered service manager can have effective oversight of all the settings, ensuring compliance with the Regulations and quality standards.

Responsibilities for leadership and management oversight

The overall responsibilities and accountabilities of this standard fall on the registered provider. Some of these responsibilities will be delegated to the registered service manager who will oversee the service's settings and will be accountable for ensuring all staff comply with the Regulations and quality standards and deliver the service to the necessary standard. In practice, just as with the other standards, those responsible for the day-to-day running of settings play a key role in enabling the registered provider to fulfil the requirements of this standard.

Registered providers should have a full business continuity plan that puts young people's interests at the centre. The business continuity plan must cover failure across all areas including staffing, buildings, emergency scenarios, and so on. The registered provider must ensure the right contingency arrangements are in place in the event of that the registered service manager proposed to be absent from the setting for a continuous period of 28 days or more and effectively manage the risks associated with the absence of the registered service manager.

The registered person has a key role in seeking to develop the service's effective working relationships with each young person's placing/accommodating authority and with other relevant persons which may include individuals (including parents), agencies, bodies offering floating support, organisations and establishments that work with young people in the local community.

In addition to strategic multi-agency working, the registered person should ensure staff work effectively together to support young people to stay safe and receive the right support when they need it—for example, with regard to health, wellbeing, education—and feel empowered to reach their full potential.

The registered service manager is responsible for leading a team which delivers high quality support for all young people in the service. They must lead and manage the service in a way that delivers the ethos, outcomes and approach set out in the provider's statement of purpose as well as ensure staff also operate settings accordingly. The registered service manager should also play a key role in shaping the ethos of the settings they oversee through developing a culture of high aspiration for young people which is demonstrated through the support, resources and opportunities offered to the young people.

The registered person is responsible for ensuring that staff communicate clearly to young people their rights as well as what they are entitled to from the service as well as more generally, such as their entitlement to education, as well as entitlements through their status as a looked-after child or care leaver, such as any financial help. This information should be recorded in the young person's guide. Staff should have the skills to support young people to identify, access and receive their entitlements in a manner that helps them learn to do this independently in the future.

Young people must be informed of how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner for advice and assistance about their rights and entitlements. For further information about complaints and advocacy for children and young people see [Get it Sorted \(2004\) Guidance on providing effective advocacy services for children and young people making a complaint under the Children Act 1989](#).

Workforce

The registered person is responsible for recruiting a leadership team and/or staff who are fit to work with young people and who have relevant skills, qualifications and recent experience to fulfil their role within the organisation. In supported lodging settings, hosts will take on certain roles and responsibilities of "staff" as determined by the registered person and may work alongside staff or external agency staff employed by the provider to deliver a package of support to the young people accommodated in their home. Staff must be equipped to meet the needs of the young people in the setting according to their specific characteristics as described in the Statement of Purpose. Where there are gaps in staff training, the registered person should arrange for any essential training to be satisfactorily completed in a timely manner.

All staff should undergo an effective and robust induction. The registered person should ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. As a result of effective recruitment and induction, staff should feel confident they have the skills to keep young people safe and provide them with high quality support.

Staff should understand their role and specific responsibilities, which they can refer to in a job description or agreement provided to them. Staff should understand where they sit in the provider's organisation structure and what arrangements are in place to support their training and professional development.

Staff should understand and feel confident to deliver the service's process for admitting a young person to the setting, including any additional processes where that admission is arranged at short notice.

Workforce plan

(1) The registered person must compile, in relation to the supported accommodation undertaking, a plan ("the workforce plan") which covers the following matters in respect of the recruitment and employment of all staff—

(a) statements confirming that—

(i) the registered service manager meets the fitness requirements for the role, including possessing the skills necessary to ensure effective oversight of the management of the premises used for the purposes of supported accommodation is provided, taking account of the size and scope of those premises;

(ii) staff meet the fitness requirements for the roles they undertake;

(iii) every individual involved in delivering any part of the supported accommodation provision has undertaken an enhanced DBS check where eligible;

(iv) recruitment policies have been developed to ensure the safeguarding of young people;

(b) the management and staffing structure;

(c) the experience and qualifications of staff and managers, and any further training required for those staff and managers;

(d) the processes and timescales for staff to complete induction, probation and core training, including in safeguarding and health and safety;

(e) the process for managing and addressing poor performance;

(f) the process and timescales for supervision and monitoring of practice.

(2) The registered person must—

Workforce Plan

Guidance

The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements outlined in the regulations. The plan should:

- detail the necessary management and staffing structure, (including any staff commissioned to provide floating support), the experience and qualifications of staff currently working within the staffing structure and any

further training required for those staff, to enable the delivery of the service's Statement of Purpose;

- detail the processes and agreed timescales for staff to achieve induction, probation and any core training (such as safeguarding, health and safety and qualifications needed as per the provider's policy);
- detail the process for managing and improving poor performance;
- detail the process and timescales for supervision of practice and keep appropriate records for staff in the service.

The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the setting and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff – including the registered service manager.

Staff should be made familiar with the service's internal procedures for whistleblowing and raising concerns through the induction process.

The registered person is responsible for ensuring that all staff consistently follow the service's policies and procedures for the benefit of the young people accommodated in the setting. Everyone working in the service must understand their roles and responsibilities and what they are authorised to decide on their own initiative. There should be clear lines of accountability. The service must have clear arrangements in place to maintain effective management in each setting when the registered service manager is absent, off duty or on leave.

Employment and supervision of staff

As set out in the regulations, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards young people and minimises potential risks to them. Where reasonable and practical, young people in the service should be involved in the recruitment of staff and have the opportunity to contribute their views. Those with a leadership and/or management role should be visible and accessible to staff and able to discharge their leadership and/or management responsibilities.

The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the setting.

The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the registered service manager, receive supervision of their practice from a suitably skilled and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the young people accommodated in the setting.

A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including leadership team members. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered. It is good practice for a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision

sessions to be kept and to ensure that both the person giving the supervision and staff member have a copy of the record, which may be electronic.

All staff must have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and young people in the setting. As part of the performance management process, poor performance should be addressed by a timely plan to bring about improvement.

Qualifications and professional development of the workforce

The registered person is responsible for setting out the training and qualifications necessary for staff to fulfil their specific roles in delivering the service. Staff should have the knowledge and skills needed to meet the specific needs of the young people in the service, including respecting diversity and culture. The registered person should be able to demonstrate to Ofsted at inspection the impact of training on the quality of provision and the experiences of young people.

Key areas of staff training and qualifications should include, but are not limited to:

- Safeguarding;
- Health and safety;
- Supporting young people (for example, in their education, training or employment, in their independent living skills, promoting their social and emotional needs, including their mental health, and so on);
- Child development and psychologically informed practices (for example, Trauma Informed Approaches, Psychologically Informed Environments, Adverse Childhood Experiences, attachment theory, adolescent behaviours, emotional dysregulation, positive behaviour support and de-escalation, and so on);
- Equalities and diversity; and
- Leadership and management.

Staffing

The registered person should plan staffing levels to ensure that they meet the needs of young people and can respond flexibly to unexpected events or opportunities. Staffing structures should promote continuity of support from the young person's perspective. Due regard should be given if a young person complains or shares a view on how the staffing structure could be improved to promote the best support for them and appropriate action should be taken.

Given the diverse range of settings within supported accommodation, there will be different levels of supervision and staff numbers on site at any one time depending on the setting type and the needs of the young people accommodated in the setting. Where a setting does not have staff on site 24 hours a day, the registered person must have adequate arrangements and sufficient risk mitigations in place to ensure the ongoing safety and support of young people, including access to 24/7 on-call support. The registered person should ensure appropriate

arrangements are in place to keep staff safe at work such as lone working procedures or a manager on-call policy.

The use of external agency staff for different kinds of floating support may play a part in the support package for many providers of supported accommodation and can be a positive choice to complement the skills and experiences of the permanent workforce. The registered provider is accountable for the entirety of the support package and ensuring any external agency staff meet the general fitness requirements of staff have suitable skills and qualifications to deliver a high-quality service that meets the support standard. The use of agency staff should be carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure young people receive continuity of support and can build and maintain strong relationships with the adults who support them.

Contingency plans should be prepared in the event of a shortfall in staffing levels. When considering the number of staff at the setting and shift schedules, the registered person should make an assessment of the implications for young people's support, including any likely risks. This contingency plan should be recorded and available for inspection by Ofsted and placing/accommodating authorities.

For the protection of staff and young people in the service, depending on the type of setting, the registered person may choose to maintain and store records of staff rosters as well as records of actual hours, which may be electronic.

In a supported lodgings service, as a part of the matching process of a host with a young person, discussions should be had between the host, young person, registered person, placing/accommodating authority, local authority area for the accommodation if the accommodation is in a different area to the placing/accommodating authority, and relevant social or support workers to set expectations and agree arrangements for the placement. Hosts should be involved in the development and review of support plans to ensure the young person's needs are met as well as the safeguarding of the young person, the host, and any other residents in the host's home, including any other children. Discussions may include agreeing hours or a schedule for when the host is typically home and available to the young person for the young person's support needs.

Monitoring and review

The registered person should monitor and review the patterns and trends of staff turnover, whether agency or directly employed, and be able understand and address any negative trends.

The registered person should actively scrutinise the settings and make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. The registered person should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns and are

responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice.

The statement of purpose

The Statement of Purpose

(1) The registered person must compile a statement (“the statement of purpose”) which covers the following matters in respect of the supported accommodation undertaking:

- (a) its purpose, including its ethos, core aims and function;
- (b) the category or categories of supported accommodation it offers;
- (c) the services it provides for children it accommodates and supports;
- (d) the characteristics of the children for whom it is intended the supported accommodation undertaking will provide accommodation and support, including the age range, number and sex of the children;
- (e) the facilities it provides to the children it accommodates;
- (f) the accommodation it provides, including how the accommodation meets the accommodation standard (see regulation *), how the accommodation might be adapted to meet the individual needs of children it accommodates and the security arrangements in place;
- (g) the address of the registered provider’s principal office, except where this is the same address as where the children are accommodated;
- (h) the organisational structure, including management structure and staffing arrangements;
- (i) how it ensures that the child’s rights and views are at the centre of the support, service delivery and planning;
- (j) the arrangements in place to ensure a child is fully aware of their entitlements throughout the duration of their placement in supported accommodation;
- (k) the positive outcomes the service seeks to achieve for children and its approach to achieving those outcomes;
- (l) the arrangements in place to support the development of children’s independent living skills, in line with their identified individual needs;
- (m) the arrangements in place to promote children’s involvement and progress in education, training or employment;
- (n) the arrangements for and policies on protecting and promoting the mental and physical health needs of children, including medication handling, recording and safekeeping;
- (o) anti-discriminatory practices in respect of children and their families;
- (p) how it supports the cultural, linguistic and religious needs of children;
- (q) details of who to contact if a person has a complaint and how that person can access the relevant complaints policy;

- (r) details of how a person, body or organisation involved in the support or protection of a child can access the supported accommodation undertaking's child protection policies.
- (2) The registered person must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to the CIECSS and make a copy of it available on request to—
- (a) a person who works for the supported accommodation undertaking;
 - (b) a child, or a child for whom supported accommodation provision by the supported accommodation undertaking is being considered;
 - (c) a parent of a child, or a parent of a child for whom supported accommodation provision by the supported accommodation undertaking is being considered; and
 - (d) a child's accommodating authority.
- (3) The registered person must—
- (a) keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and
 - (b) notify the CIECSS of any revisions and send the CIECSS a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), the registered person must ensure that the supported accommodation undertaking is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose.
- (5) Nothing in paragraph (4) requires or authorises the registered person to contravene or not comply with—
- (a) any other provision of these Regulations; or
 - (b) any conditions in relation to the registration of the registered person under Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000.

Explanation of terms

'relevant plans'

Relevant plans are defined in the interpretation section of the Regulations as: any placement plan; any care plan; any pathway plan; any statement of special educational needs; any education, health and care plan ("EHC plan"); and where the young person is a youth justice child any detention placement plan, or any other plan prepared by that young person's placing/accommodating authority in relation to the remand or sentencing of that child. If a young person has any of the above plans, they will fall within the meaning of 'relevant plans', but a young person may not have all of the plans defined as 'relevant' (for example, there will be young people living in supported accommodation who do not have an EHC plan). Similarly, a young person may have a plan that the Regulations define as 'relevant', but may have no impact on the issue the provider is considering at that point in time, and providers should not feel obliged to make a plan apply where it does not. The essential point is that a young person's plans should form the basis of their support, and providers should work with other relevant authorities as necessary to use their judgement as to what is relevant in each case, taking the

plans listed in the definition in the Regulations as a starting point rather than a complete list or a tick-box exercise.

Guidance

Multi-agency working

Effective placement planning and the arrangement of suitable accommodation depends on strong working relationships between providers and the placing/accommodating authority for the success of placements and arranged accommodation.

For looked-after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17, these planning duties fall to the placing/accommodating authority. The registered person should ensure that they and their staff engage proactively with the placing/accommodating authority to contribute fully to the relevant plans for the young person on an ongoing basis.

There is a wide range of diverse settings within supported accommodation provision, which differ in size, structure, purpose and which offer varying degrees of supervision and support, for young people with varying needs. The registered person should only accept placements for young people where they are satisfied that the setting can respond effectively to the young person's assessed needs as recorded in the young person's relevant plans. When making decisions about a young person's placement, the provider and the placing/accommodating authority should have regard to the Equality Act 2010 and jointly endeavour to ensure the cultural heritage of a young person is respected and that no young person is unfairly or disproportionately stigmatised.

In addition, the registered person should fully consider the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of young people in that setting and vice versa. The registered person should assess if there may be an impact on the young person entering the provision as a result of the needs or personal histories of any young person in the existing group, including adults over 18 years old who are accommodated at the setting. It is the responsibility of both the placing/accommodating authority and providers to assess the previous experiences and any trauma of the young person when determining if a placement is appropriate.

The Statement of Purpose is an important document in the process of planning support as it sets out what the service offers and how it can meet needs of prospective young people who may be accommodated in the setting, which is set up and equipped accordingly.

The registered person should challenge any placing/accommodating authority who asks them to accept a young person in the absence of a complete and current relevant plan, as it would not normally be acceptable to expect that a placement/accommodation arrangement of a young person without the necessary

information would go ahead in circumstances other than an emergency, whereby the relevant plan should be shared with urgency.

It is essential that settings understand what will be required of them before they accept responsibility for accommodating and supporting a young person, including in an emergency, to avoid disruption and instability for the young person and to safeguard the young person.

Welcoming the young person to the accommodation

The registered person must ensure there are procedures in place for welcoming and introducing each young person to the setting, and that they are sensitive to the needs of the young person at the time of arrival, whether they are admitted in a planned way or in an emergency.

An effective introduction to a setting will ensure the young person understands the information given to them in the young person's guide, which must outline important details about the service such as staff rotation and how they can be in touch with staff, and what the young person can expect from the service. The young person's guide should be provided in a format that is easily accessed and understood by each young person, taking into account the particular needs and requirements of the young person, including any disabilities or language barriers. The young person's guide should include information on the location of the setting—including access to local amenities such as shops, transport access and routes, proximity to local colleges, and so on—the facilities of the accommodation, and make reference to how the setting meets the accommodation standard. Information should be included on any processes or rules set out by the service to keep the young people they accommodate safe, such as the use of CCTV in or outside the premise.

The young person's guide should outline the young person's entitlements from the service such as what support they will be offered as well as what flexibilities are possible to tailor the accommodation according to the needs of the young person. For example, a provider should tailor the times of support sessions with a young person if this suits the young person's mental health needs in terms of when they might most benefit from support staff being on site.

Supporting young people

Staff should take every step to make sure that individual young people are not subject to discrimination, marginalisation or bullying from their peers by virtue of their age, religion or belief, disability, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sex, gender reassignment, sexual identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, mental health, or for any other reason.

The setting should work in partnership with relevant people as appropriate to ensure that each young person is provided with support to communicate their views, wishes and feelings and participate as fully as possible in all aspects of the

service and their support package. This may include the use of and support to use communication aids, equipment and/or any necessary language support.

The involvement of staff in the day-to-day support of young people will differ across different settings within supported accommodation, which ensures a variety of provision is available and flexible enough to meet the diverse needs of young people. It is the registered person's responsibility to outline in the statement of purpose the arrangements for support the service will provide and the degree of staff involvement so that young people and local authorities are clear on what they can expect. This statement should clarify the characteristics of the young people, according to their needs and/or level of autonomy, that would be suitable for and thrive in the setting. As part of this, the statement of purpose should communicate the level of support offered by the service, including details such as the arrangements in place to support young people with SEND needs, health needs including mental health, to support appropriate matching.

The statement of purpose should outline the package of support the young person should expect to receive from the service, including any floating support and/or support offered by external agencies. There should also be information on who the young person can contact to receive on-call help in a crisis and emergency 24 hours a day and in the absence of staff on site. The registered person must ensure that young people understand how to make a complaint. The registered person must have practices in place for dealing with complaints, including recording them and notifying relevant authorities where necessary.

The registered person should keep the statement of purpose under regular review to ensure it remains young person focused and indicates how the service provides individualised support that meets the Quality Standards and improves outcomes for the young people it accommodates. Reviews should take into consideration any feedback and complaints by young people in the service so that any changes made have a positive impact on those affected by the change. Young people should be informed of and given an explanation of any changes to the statement.

The protection standard

The protection standard

- (1) The protection standard is that children are enabled to feel safe and their needs are met.
- (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—
 - (a) ensure that children—
 - (i) are protected from harm;
 - (ii) are enabled to keep themselves safe;
 - (iii) have their individual needs met;
 - (iv) have 24-hour access to help in a crisis or emergency situation;
 - (b) prepare and implement child protection policies;
 - (c) ensure that the effectiveness of child protection policies is kept under review and ensure that, where appropriate, those policies are revised;
 - (d) comply with requests from the accommodating authority to provide the accommodating authority with information relating to a child;
 - (e) ensure that there is a suitable person representing the supported accommodation undertaking available to attend any meeting the accommodating authority may hold about a child;
 - (f) ensure that staff—
 - (i) are familiar, and act in accordance, with child protection policies;
 - (ii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or any other harm, and act to reduce such risk;
 - (iii) work collaboratively with young people to help them understand how to keep safe, by offering guidance and support on how to minimise any potential risk of harm;
 - (iv) work collaboratively with other professionals and agencies, and share information where relevant to keep children safe;
 - (v) support children to maintain appropriate and safe relationships with family, friends and other people who are important to them;
 - (vi) understand the relevant roles and responsibilities assigned to them by the registered person in relation to protecting children.

Explanation of terms

‘accommodating authority’

Accommodating authority means the local authority that arranges the supported accommodation for the young person.

‘child protection policies’

Child protection policies means the supported accommodation undertaking's safeguarding policy, missing child policy and behaviour management policy.

Guidance

Working together

The duties and responsibilities of local authorities and others who deliver children's services with regard to safeguarding children and young people, are set out clearly in the statutory guidance [Working together to safeguard children](#).

The specific responsibilities of the young person's placing/accommodating authority, for safeguarding children and young people who are looked-after, are set out in [Children Act 1989: Care planning, placement and case review](#).

The specific responsibilities of local authorities and their staff in exercising their social services functions for supporting care leavers are set out in [Children Act 1989: planning transition to adulthood for care leavers](#).

The registered person should seek to involve the placing/accommodating authority and the local authority where the setting is located, and other relevant persons whenever there is a serious concern about a young person's welfare. They are also required by the regulations to notify placing/accommodating authorities, Ofsted and other relevant persons about any serious events. The registered person should have regard to the local authority's self-harm and suicide prevention strategies and procedures, should embed practices to reduce the risk of self-harm and suicide and, should provide information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide.

Both the arrangements for contact between agencies and any contact details (telephone numbers, email addresses, etc.) must be included in the care/pathway plan agreed between the registered provider and the placing local authority and should be updated regularly.

Managing risk

The safety of young people in supported accommodation is paramount. Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to identify safeguarding risks and early signs of poor mental health and know how to take action and/or escalate their concerns if resources are not available or flexible enough to meet the young person's needs. Staff should be aware of any additional risk that may be present in the event of an emergency placement—including where they may have limited information on the young person—and should have the relevant skills and knowledge to appropriately manage this risk and take action.

Staff should build trusting relationships with young people, enabling staff to understand the risks each young person faces, including any specific or elevated risks faced by unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Staff should take reasonable precautions and make informed professional judgements based on the

young person's individual needs, circumstances and level of autonomy when identifying a particular risk or following a particular course of action. Staff should discuss the risk and/or concern with the young person and agree steps to mitigate it including what the young person can do to keep themselves and others safe as well as what further support the service can provide to safeguard the young person.

Where there are safeguarding concerns for a young person, their care/pathway plan—discussed with the young person and agreed between the setting and their placing/accommodating authority—must include details of the steps the service will take to work with the young person to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. Staff should work with other agencies where appropriate to help young people understand the risks they face, including risk-taking behaviour, and build on the young person's strengths and skills so that young people are supported and better equipped to make informed decisions.

Staff should share relevant information and decisions with the young person's placing/accommodating authority and, where appropriate, other relevant agencies/professionals providing support, for the purposes of safeguarding the young person or others. Staff should inform the young person of any information sharing and explain the reasons behind the sharing. For further advice on effective information sharing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, see [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#).

A safeguarding culture and ethos

The registered person should build a strong safeguarding culture in settings across the service where young people are listened to, respected and involved in both the development of the service and decisions about the setting, taking into consideration any impact on young people of settings that also accommodate adults. Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a young person is in any way at risk of harm and should know what to do when they have concerns. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed as needed and that training is recorded in the workforce plan.

Staff should do everything they can to ensure young people feel and are safe. Staff should support young people to be aware of and manage their own safety where possible, both inside and outside the setting. Staff skills for safeguarding should include being able to identify signs that young people may be at risk and support young people to get the help they need to stay safe and reduce risks. Staff should encourage young people to express their views about whether they feel safe both within and outside the setting.

All staff should strive to build positive relationships with young people in the setting and develop a culture of openness and trust that encourages them to be able to tell someone if they have concerns or worries about their safety or well-being. Staff should establish good links with external agencies that can support and help

young people. Staff should include information in the young person's guide on how young people can contact their placing/accommodating authority to call for a review of their care/pathway plan if they have concerns about their own safety or welfare. Settings must ensure young people understand how they can speak to an independent advocate, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs), their Personal Advisor, Ofsted inspectors or other relevant persons if they have concerns about their own safety.

Young people should be encouraged to develop positive relationships with others both in and outside the setting, such as with professionals delivering floating support. However, staff should be alert to the possibility that young people may be at risk from some relationships including with other young people in the setting, staff, family members, friends, and others outside the setting, and they therefore should take appropriate steps to protect a young person where there are concerns for a young person's safety. Staff should model and help young people to understand what makes a healthy, nurturing relationship. Staff should be skilled to recognise the signs and provide support to young people in danger of or involved in exploitative or damaging relationships with others and where appropriate, provide guidance and advice to young people on how to keep themselves safe.

Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the setting are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the service so they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of the safety of a young person.

As part of the policies for protection of young people, the registered person should include information about whistle blowing, with clear procedures for how a staff member should report to an appropriate authority any concern they have about a young person within the setting being either at risk of, or already experiencing significant harm. The policy should reflect the principles set out in the Francis review '[Freedom to speak up](#)'.

Supervision

Staff should have a good idea about the circumstances and routines of the young person by establishing and maintaining a good relationship with them. The registered person will need to ensure that arrangements are in place for staff to maintain regular and sufficient contact with the young person to be able to identify any safeguarding risks, mental and physical health issues, signs of harm, and/or if the young person has gone missing.

The registered person should have written safeguarding policies that outline any rules for the service for the purposes of safeguarding the young people in the service, which may be tailored according to the needs of each cohort in a particular setting. These policies should be shared with staff during their induction period and available to all young people in a format that is easily accessed and understood by each young person before or when they arrive at the setting and must be clear and user friendly.

To safeguard all young people in the setting as well as staff, some settings may use a buzzer system to enter the building after certain hours, use magnetic fobs, or if appropriate, have a suggested curfew,. As the level of autonomy for young people in supported accommodation will often be high, it is not expected that they should need permission to leave and return to the setting for same-day outings, but it is expected that staff and young people maintain good communication regarding the young person's whereabouts. Any rules or practices of the setting should be proportionate and balanced and should not unnecessarily hinder the young person's autonomy. Staff should explain why the rules are in place and evidence their benefit to ensuring a safe and secure setting.

Settings should have a policy on overnight stays that is commensurate with the needs, vulnerability, and autonomy of the young people accommodated at the setting. Specific arrangements for each young person may be put in place and must be in line with any agreed agreements reflected in the young person's relevant plans. It is expected that staff maintain regular communication with young people and encourage them to advise staff of planned overnight stays, where they will be staying, with whom, and a plan for return. Policies and practices around overnight stays should be clear to staff and young people so risks to a young person, including going missing, are mitigated and quick action can be identified and taken where there is cause for concern.

In most instances, young people should be allowed to receive visitors where they live. The registered person may—based on the needs of the young people accommodated in a particular setting and on assessed risks to the safety of young people and staff—put arrangements or practices in place for having visitors to the accommodation. For example, some settings may choose to set rules around recording visitor IDs, visiting hours, visitor-approved rooms within the setting, pre-approved visitors, the number of visitors at the setting at any given time, or visitors staying overnight at the setting. These practices and any associated policies should be reasonable, not excessive, and for the purposes of safeguarding all people in the setting. Any specific arrangements in place for a young person to receive visitors must be risk assessed and in line with the young person's relevant plans.

In supported lodging settings, as part of developing a strong and trusting relationship, it is expected that hosts and young people maintain good communication to ensure the comfort and safety of all those living in the host's home, including any other children. The host and young person should work together with the support of the social or support worker to set out and agree house rules, boundaries and expectations and promote a culture of open dialogue from the outset, so the young person feels at home. Any house rules agreed should be reasonable and for the purpose of ensuring the safety and security of all those living in the host's home as well as mitigating risk of danger or harm to the young person or any other person.

A safe accommodation

The accommodation must be stable and safe and must effectively protect young people from harm. Young people should not feel isolated as a result of their accommodation or support. The accommodation should enable a sense of belonging for young people, who should be supported by staff to participate in positive relationships in the local community.

The locking of external doors, or doors to hazardous materials, may be acceptable as a security precaution if applied within the normal routine of the setting. The design of the accommodation as well as the uses of hazard avoidance practices should reflect the characteristics of the young people accommodated in the specific setting.

Abuse

Young people should be supported by staff to understand what abuse is. They should be given information about how to report abuse or any concerns about possible abuse. They should be able to access in private, relevant websites or help lines such as [Childline](#) to seek advice and help.

Young people must be listened to and enabled to report any allegations at the earliest opportunity. Staff should report any allegation or disclosure of abuse immediately to the registered person. Any allegation of harm or abuse must be addressed in line with the provider's child protection policy.

Each local authority should have clear arrangements in place for the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with young people. The relevant officer or teams within the local authority should be informed promptly of all allegations that come to the attention of a registered person or that are made directly to the police. For further information, including about the role of a local authority designated officer see [Working together to safeguard children](#).

Child protection policies

As part of the requirements of this standard, the registered person has specific responsibilities to prepare and implement child protection policies. These include a safeguarding policy, a missing child policy and a behaviour management policy. These policies must clearly set out the arrangements for the safeguarding of young people from harm, abuse, neglect or child criminal exploitation, and the service's procedures for referring child protection concerns to the placing/accommodating authority or local authority where the setting is situated if appropriate, and specific procedures to prevent young people going missing and take action if they do.

The child protection policies should set out the service's protocols around managing difficult situations and violent behaviour so that any action taken by staff is measured and proportionate and does not cause unnecessary criminalisation of young people. More information can be found in [The national protocol on reducing unnecessary criminalisation of looked-after children and care leavers](#).

The child protection policies should be available and explained to young people and their families as well as to all staff, whatever their role. The registered person must make sure that all staff are familiar with this policy and act in accordance with it, particularly, how to use it to report a concern.

The setting's policies and procedures around the protection of young people should reflect any requirements of other relevant legislation.

Safeguarding policy

The safeguarding policy should include arrangements in relation to dealing with allegations involving staff in the service, e-safety and to counter risks of self-harm and suicide. All policies should be reviewed regularly and revised where appropriate.

Policies concerning self-harm and suicide should include what arrangements have been put in place to protect young people, which should reflect the statement of purpose. Staff should support the young person to access suitable professional support to help keep the young person safe and to help the young person to better understand their previous experiences and behaviours of self-harm. Staff should keep appropriate records of self-harming incidents and share relevant information and decisions with the young person's placing/accommodating authority and other relevant professionals. The young person should be involved in decision making around any changes to their support package and living arrangements.

Missing child policy

Young people aged 16 and 17 are no less vulnerable than younger children and face similar risks, particularly of extra familial harm, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation or involvement with gangs. Staff should maintain good and consistent communication with young people and be familiar with the young person's patterns, routines and mental health needs. Staff should be alert to concerning situations and take swift action if they cannot locate or make contact with a young person if that young person hasn't returned to the setting as expected.

We expect that young people who are known to be at risk of going missing or frequently go missing are unlikely to be appropriately placed in supported accommodation as their needs are such that they would likely require a greater level of care and supervision. As a result of developing strong and trusting relationships and effective communication with young people, staff should encourage young people to keep staff informed of their whereabouts, where appropriate, and maintain good communication about their wellbeing. Where there is a possibility that a young person will go missing from a supported accommodation setting, their care/pathway plan (arranged by their placing/accommodating authority) should include a strategy to minimise this risk.

Local authorities should have in place Runaway and Missing From Home and Care protocols agreed with local police and other partners. Where appropriate,

they should also have agreed protocols with neighbouring authorities. The protocols should be agreed and reviewed regularly with all agencies and be scrutinised by the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP).

[Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care](#) sets out in more detail the steps local authorities and their partners should take to prevent children and young people from going missing and to protect them when they do go missing. All settings within the service must have regard to the relevant aspects of this guidance.

Guidance on the management, recording and investigation of missing persons is also available from the police: [College of Policing Guidance on the management, recording, and investigation of missing persons.](#)

If there is a risk that a young person may go missing, staff should do everything they can to help them understand the risks and dangers involved and make them aware of how to seek help if they do go missing.

The registered person must specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a young person is missing from the service and how staff should support the young person on return to the setting. The service's procedures must take into account the views of appropriate local services and have regard to police and local authority protocols for responding to missing person's incidents in the area where the setting is located.

When a young person returns to the setting after being missing, the responsible placing/accommodating authority must provide an opportunity for the young person to have an independent return interview. Staff should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting specific arrangements in place to protect each young person.

Records must be kept detailing all individual incidents when young people go missing from the service. This information should be shared with the placing/accommodating and local authority, and where appropriate, with the young person's parents. Monitoring and evaluating missing incidents should be undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff or to record and retain evidence of what worked well. This evaluation should inform the review of the quality of support.

Where a young person goes missing repeatedly or engages in other risky behaviours, the placing/accommodating authority, in consultation with the registered person and the young person's key workers, should convene a risk management meeting to develop a strategy for managing risks to the young person, which should be reflected in the young person's support plan. The strategy should be agreed with the young person's placing/accommodating authority, the local authority where the setting is located if different from the placing/accommodating authority, and the local police.

Behaviour management policy

The registered person must prepare and implement a behaviour management policy which sets out how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the service and the policy around measures that should be taken following any exceptional use of restraint which may be used in relation to young people in the service. This needs to outline the service's approach to supporting young people to maintain a reasonable standard of behaviour that reduces the risk or impact on the welfare and protection of themselves and others.

Restraint includes physical restraint techniques that involve using force. Restraint also includes restricting a young person's liberty of movement. It is not expected that—given the assessed needs and level of independence, autonomy, and responsibility of young people in supported accommodation—restraint would need to be used in supported accommodation.

Even if the use of restraint is rare in supported accommodation, staff should be trained in preventative and de-escalation techniques, safe practices around managing difficult behaviour and effective conflict management, as well as safe restraint.

Staff should not restrict the movement of a young person to keep them inside the setting, even if they have safeguarding concerns. As part of developing and maintaining good and trusting relationships with young people, staff should encourage open dialogues so they can discuss risks and concerns with the young person to support the young person to keep themselves safe. If staff have concerns around a young person's safety and/or risk of harm or exploitation, they should follow the service's safeguarding procedures, according to the provider's child protection policy.

In the rare event of an extreme emergency where preventative and/or de-escalation methods are not effective in managing the situation and staff are concerned for the safety of any person including themselves, staff should follow the service's emergency protocols. If the urgency of a situation results in a member of staff restraining a young person for the purposes of preventing harm or injury to any person (including the young person who is being restrained), this should be the minimum restraint for as short a period as necessary to prevent the harm or injury. If restraint is used on a young person, staff must ensure the young person obtains medical assistance if they have been hurt.

If a restraint incident does occur, incident reports should be produced by staff and the registered person to learn from the incident and consider the impact on the young person. If restraint occurs, the registered person must follow requirements in the Regulations regarding notification of a serious event. The impact of a restraint incident on the relationships between the young person and staff or other young people who witness the restraint should be assessed and appropriate action should be taken to manage any consequences. Any young person who has been restrained should be offered emotional support with an appropriately trained staff member as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours. A robust review of

the incident, including producing relevant records must take place with the young person and relevant key workers such as a social worker, personal advisor or advocate. Records should set out the reason why the restraint took place, what steps were taken to prevent the use of restraint and how the restraint was carried out. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice and policies to ensure they are lawful and meet the needs of young people.

Location assessments

Settings should be located in an area that supports young people's safety, wellbeing and personal development, which takes into consideration young people's social, educational, employment and training needs. The location of a setting should offer stability and consistency and should support the service's aims, objectives and ethos, as described in the statement of purpose.

When establishing a setting, the registered person must ensure that it is suitably located so that young people are effectively safeguarded and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans.

The location assessment should focus on any potential safeguarding concerns, and the accessibility of local services and should take into account publicly available local data, such as local crime rates and the availability of amenities and services. The location assessment may involve consultation with appropriate local services such as the police, the local authority's children's services, clinical commissioning groups and other person the registered person deems relevant. This information should be used to identify and mitigate against a range of risks such as extra-familial risks and exploitation and should include opportunities such as mental health support services and suitable education providers.

At the point of registration, the provider must declare they have carried out a location assessment for each setting which provides reassurance that the accommodation is appropriately located, risks are mitigated, and that positive opportunities for young people are available.

The registered provider must share the location assessment(s) with Ofsted at registration, inspection and upon Ofsted's request at any other time. When a registered provider notifies Ofsted of a new setting, the registered provider must declare they have carried out a location assessment and may be asked to share the assessment with Ofsted.

The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the supported accommodation setting at least once in each calendar year. This review should include a full risk assessment, taking into account risks and opportunities presented by the setting's location, and including any relevant risk mitigation strategies and actions taken to reduce potential risks as well as the views and experiences of young people.

The accommodation standard

The accommodation standard

- (1) The accommodation standard is that children experience a comfortable and secure living environment.
- (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—
 - (a) ensure that the location of the premises used for the purposes of supported accommodation is suitable for the type of supported accommodation provided, by—
 - (i) completing a location assessment for each premises;
 - (ii) reviewing the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of supported accommodation at least once in each calendar year, and in doing so, consult and take into account the views of each relevant person;
 - (b) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of supported accommodation—
 - (i) provide stability and consistency of accommodation for children;
 - (ii) enable children to have consistent and continuous access to local services, including education and healthcare;
 - (iii) promote children's positive self-esteem and sense of belonging within the local community, and discourage stigmatisation of children;
 - (iv) are located so as to enable children to actively participate and form relationships in the local community;
 - (v) are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child individually and all children collectively;
 - (vi) are suitable for the purposes of supported accommodation and are accessible, safe, secure and well-maintained;
 - (vii) offer a comfortable, positive and therapeutic environment, while respecting children's need for privacy;
 - (viii) are adequately maintained so as to provide a welcoming and homely environment within both individual and shared living spaces;
 - (ix) are designed, furnished and maintained to remove avoidable hazards which could pose a health and safety risk to children;
 - (x) comply with all relevant health and safety and fire safety legislation;
 - (c) only use devices for monitoring or surveillance if—
 - (i) the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
 - (ii) each accommodating authority consents to the monitoring or surveillance;
 - (iii) the monitoring or surveillance is in communal areas;
 - (iv) children are informed in advance of the intention to carry out monitoring or surveillance; and
 - (v) the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy;
 - (d) ensure that each child is provided with a private bedroom—

- (i) with sufficient space to accommodate a reasonable number of personal possessions;
 - (ii) which is equipped to meet the child's individual needs and lifestyle;
 - (iii) which has sufficient telephone or internet connectivity in order to enable the child to maintain relationships and feel connected; and
 - (iv) which is lockable and physically secure;
- (e) ensure that children are provided with basic items such as bedding, towels, personal hygiene products and kitchen equipment, where a child does not have access to such items;
- (f) provide children with a written agreement, in an accessible format, which outlines their rights, the terms and conditions of the supported accommodation provision, and how they can raise concerns about the provision;
- (g) ensure that the supported accommodation undertaking has adequate levels of insurance to cover all aspects of the supported accommodation provision.

Explanation of terms in the regulation

'basic essentials'

Includes but is not limited to, a clean environment, continuous access to drinking water, clothing, hot water, bedding and so on.

Guidance

A welcoming and homely environment

Many young people placed in supported accommodation may undergo a difficult transition to the setting and each young person will have a unique history that may make certain aspects of their care/pathway plan challenging or significant. Staff should provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, supportive, and which provides appropriate boundaries in relation to the manner of conduct expected of young people in supported accommodation, taking due regard to the impact of an emergency placement on a young person, if relevant. Accommodations should offer stability and consistency for the young person and offer sustained access to local services as well as protect the young person against harm and isolation.

Placing/accommodating authorities and providers must work together to ensure young people have access to basic day-to-day essentials and physical necessities, such as clean facilities, continuous access to drinking water, hot water, bedding and towels, and so on. Staff should support young people to meet the young person's basic needs, recognising that many young people in supported accommodation have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met. This recognition is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff are there to support the young person and value them as an individual.

For supported accommodation settings to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of young people, they will always be homely and welcoming environments. Supported accommodation settings must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, fire, food storage and hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, settings should seek as much as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. Providers should take the young person's needs into consideration to ensure they are providing the right facilities, for example, providing a desk in a young person's bedroom to promote their education.

To foster a homely environment, young people should be able to access all shared areas of the setting unless there are specific reasons why this would not be the case. Given the high level of independence of the young people who live in supported accommodation, it is not expected that staff would impose limits on privacy and access, unless confronted with an exceptional circumstance that means these limits are needed temporarily to safeguard the young person or other young people in the setting. Any decisions to limit a young person's access to any area of the setting and any modifications to the environment of the setting, should be short term and only made where this is intended to safeguard the welfare of a young person or any other person. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual young person's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. Information on restraint is contained in the protection standard section of this Guidance.

Tailored design

The registered person should be prepared, within reason, to make adaptations to a setting's design or layout to meet the needs of disabled young people or young people with specific health issues. The suitability of a setting for a young person according to their specific needs should be discussed and agreed between the provider and the placing/accommodating authority. If a service cannot meet the needs of a disabled young person

The design of the setting should enable young people to develop skills for independent living within a supportive environment, such as a kitchen with cooking utensils and appliances, washing machines, and so on.

Depending on the level of staffing and staff oversight set out in the statement of purpose according to the needs of the young people accommodated in the setting, the design of the setting may provide appropriate accommodation and facilities for staff that sleep in the setting overnight.

Providing personal space

Young people in supported accommodation may be used to living with a high level of independence and autonomy. It is important that staff respect young people's privacy as well as promote an environment where all young people living in the setting are respectful of the privacy of others.

Each young person should have their own bedroom that is lockable. Young people should have access to the internet and sufficient mobile reception from their bedroom.

Settings should provide access to a telephone that young people can use privately if a young person does not have a personal mobile phone, or their personal mobile phone is lost, out of credit or broken.

Young people should be provided with appropriate furniture, such as a lockable cabinet or drawers to securely store personal items, including any personal information. Young people should have a separate, spacious bedroom and should not share a bedroom with an adult or another child, unless they are a family or recognised relationship. Young people's views, wishes and feelings should be considered with regard to their personal space and they should be given a choice about how their personal space is decorated.

The registered provider should ensure there is a policy on staff entering young people's bedrooms and that this is communicated from the outset to all young people, such as in the young person's guide. As with standard practices in a tenancy agreement, a young person's bedroom should not generally be entered without their permission or advance notice, such as for a facilities inspection. In most instances, staff should inform the young person in advance of a check or inspection and agree a time for the staff member to gain access to the bedroom. Immediate searching without permission may be necessary where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a safety risk to the young person or another person. If staff must enter the young person's bedroom without permission or advance notice, they should inform the young person that they are entering the room and explain the purposes for entering immediately. Where possible, searches should be carried out by two members of staff so there is a witness.

A safe and secure environment

Any service using CCTV or other monitoring equipment in a setting must have a written policy describing how this will support the safeguarding, protection and wellbeing of those living and working in the accommodation in accordance with the regulations. Use of this equipment should be only in communal areas, no more intrusive than is needed and should respect the privacy of young people. The registered person must ensure the service is compliant with data protection law, protects young people's privacy and personal data and inform young people of the use of any surveillance or monitoring equipment and the purpose of its use. The service must gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing/accommodating authority in writing at the time of placement. The use of CCTV is regulated by the [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Surveillance Camera Code of Conduct \(Home Office 2013\)](#).

The registered provider must ensure that an adequate level of insurance is provided for the overall service, staff, and the young people they accommodate, taking into consideration any specific characteristics.

It is the responsibility of the registered provider to ensure they adhere to all legal requirements to run all aspects of their service. As such, they must consider, for example, their role as an employer, their responsibilities regarding the buildings they use and associated health and safety considerations including fire safety requirements, and so on.

The support standard

The support standard

- (1) The support standard is that children receive individual and tailored support that meets their needs.
- (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—
 - (a) ensure that children are encouraged and enabled to take a lead role in determining the support they receive and to participate in and influence how the supported accommodation provision operates;
 - (b) ensure that support plans are based on initial referral information, are meaningful and are created in full consultation with the child, taking account of existing care, placement or pathway plans for the child;
 - (c) keep the child's support under review, taking into consideration the child's support plans, and care, placement or pathway plans, throughout the duration of the placement in supported accommodation to ensure that the child's needs continue to be met and that they are kept safe;
 - (d) engage and work with the accommodating authority if the registered person has concerns or if the child's support needs change over the duration of the placement in supported accommodation, including where that change may mean that the child requires more intensive support provision;
 - (e) ensure that processes are in place to enable children to access support from other organisations and community services, such that they are encouraged and enabled to access a range of services, including those offered by advocacy organisations and training providers;
 - (f) in the event that the registered person or a member of staff considers that an accommodating authority or a relevant person is failing to provide the support set out in a child's care, placement or pathway plan, make representations to the accommodating authority or relevant person, or, as the case may be, enable staff to make representations to the accommodating authority or relevant person, in order that the child's needs are met;
 - (g) ensure that staff seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations that the registered person considers appropriate, having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended the supported accommodation undertaking is to provide support and accommodation;
 - (h) before a child arrives or upon a child's arrival, ensure that the child is given a written guide, in an accessible format, containing information about—
 - (i) the support and accommodation provided by the supported accommodation undertaking;
 - (ii) what advocacy support or services are available, how the child may access that support or those services, and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision;
 - (iii) how to make a complaint or representations in relation to the support and accommodation provided and how any such complaint will be dealt with;
 - (iv) what services and facilities are available that take account of children's needs arising as a result of cultural differences or disability;

and which the registered person must keep under review, seeking children's comments before revising the written guide;

- (i) ensure a formal, individual plan is in place to support the child to develop the resilience and skills required to transition out of supported accommodation when the child is ready to live more independently;
- (j) ensure that an adequate level of support is available to the child to assist with the transition out of supported accommodation;
- (k) ensure that children are supported to access education, training or employment;
- (l) ensure that children are supported to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect;
- (m) maintain a system for monitoring and improving the quality of support provided by completing a review ("the quality of support review") at least once every six months, which demonstrates that the support provided is informed and improved by—
 - (i) the views of children, including any feedback and complaints received;
 - (ii) feedback from individual children on the impact the supported accommodation provision has had on the child's life, especially regarding how well prepared the child felt for transition into supported accommodation and how well prepared the child feels for transition out of supported accommodation;
 - (iii) feedback from each accommodating authority, staff and relevant persons;
 - (iv) any relevant research and developments in relation to the way in which the needs of children are best met;
- (n) after completing the quality of support review, produce a written report setting out the actions the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of support review ("the quality of support review report");
- (o) provide a copy of the quality of support review report to the CIECSS within 28 days of the day on which the quality of support review report is completed and make a copy of it available on request to each accommodating authority.

Explanation of terms in the regulation

'relevant person'

The relevant person means any person, body or organisation that the registered person considers to be relevant in relation to the support, protection or safeguarding of a particular child in all the circumstances.

'resilience'

Qualities that enable a young person to cope with and withstand challenges and difficulties, both mentally and emotionally. Resilience is not just learned practical skills to manage difficult moments alone but relies on the building and maintaining of loving relationships and ongoing emotional support.

Guidance

Working together

The registered person should ensure that every young person in the service is given tailored and personalised support based on their needs, personal history, levels of autonomy and so on, which informs young people's individual support plans. Staff should engage in strategic multi-agency working, including close working with the placing and local authority to produce and deliver a support plan that meets all the needs of the young person and helps them work toward personal outcomes. Young people should be actively involved in shaping their support plan, which should take into account their views, wishes and feelings and where there are disagreements, staff should work with young people so they understand all decisions made.

The specific responsibilities of the service towards supporting the health and wellbeing of each young person should be agreed with the placing/accommodating authority and recorded in the young person's support plan.

The registered person must ensure all staff are aware of the young person's support plan and that all the young person's needs are being met through the support package, including accommodation.

Supported accommodation settings should be sufficiently flexible and adapt to the changing needs of the young person and without risking destabilising the placement or moving the young person to a different accommodation unnecessarily. Staff should do all they can to ensure safety, security and consistency for young people in a supportive environment. While this provision delivers support and not the level of care that is expected from a children's homes, like any teenager, a young person in supported accommodation may need additional support or staff involvement during certain periods of the placement. These periods might include but are not limited to: when the young person first arrives at the setting and is adjusting to greater independence; if a young person is dealing with stress or a situation that poses additional strain on their routine and/or mental health; or if there is a temporary change to the young person's circumstances that requires adjustment.

Staff should work closely with the placing/accommodating authority to review the ongoing suitability of the placement or arrangement and assess the evolving circumstances of the young person to ensure the service continues to provide them with high quality support that meets their needs and keeps them safe. If it becomes apparent that the young person needs care from their placement as opposed to support, the provider should alert the placing/accommodating authority to consider a change of placement to a children's home or foster care. Young people should be included in these discussions and should be encouraged to express their views, wishes, and feelings, taking a lead role in shaping their support package.

Building strong and meaningful relationships

Staff should take an active role in establishing and maintaining healthy, positive, and supportive relationships with young people. Staff should promote appropriate and safe relationships with other professionals involved in the young person's support package as well as family and friends if appropriate, taking consideration of the young person's individual background and experiences. Staff should support young people to build and maintain healthy friendships in the local community and build strong relationships and a support system that will follow the young person into early adult life.

Young people should be permitted to have friends visit them in their accommodation in line with the setting's visitor policies. Staff should be skilled in understanding the range of influences that friendships can have and where appropriate, should encourage those with a positive impact and discourage those with a negative impact.

Preparing for adult living

The service should work with young people to understand what support they need to live independently, including managing finances and how to maintain a tenancy. The service should work with the placing/accommodating authority, local authority if relevant, as well as social worker and/or Personal Adviser where necessary to ensure the young person can access every support that is available to them and signpost the young person to their local authority's published care leaver 'local offer'. Staff should support young people to understand the financial support available to them as well as how to access this and manage it well.

The registered person must ensure young people receive the right kinds of support based on their needs to help them develop skills for adult living. This may include arranging support sessions on education and training, including opportunities such as apprenticeships; tools and/or resources to support their mental and physical health; employment, including job and interview skills; domestic skills such as cooking nutritious meals; budgeting; and so on. This support might be delivered through floating support agencies or community organised sessions.

Young people should be responsible for their own personal hygiene and for regularly cleaning their bedroom as well as common areas, if appropriate. If needed, staff should support young people to develop skills to keep relevant facilities clean and launder their own clothes, bedding and towels.

In general, young people should be responsible for their own day-to-day transportation to and from the setting. Staff should support young people to access transport confidently and safely, including helping them acquire relevant passes and supporting them to use navigation tools to map their routes. Where appropriate, staff should support young people with regard to transport or may provide transport, for example, to accompany them to their first day at college or a new job or in emergency cases so the young person can access further help.

Supporting the health and wellbeing of young people

Providers must understand the health and mental health needs of young people and support them to access services and medication where appropriate and/or necessary, such as working with young people to encourage them to attend appointments or supporting young people to put measures in place for them to manage their own medication responsibly.

The Care Planning Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 set out that the responsible local authority (meaning the local authority that looks after the young person) must make sure that its looked-after children are provided with appropriate healthcare services. The health and wellbeing of looked-after children must be assessed at regular intervals and the young person's care plan must include an individual health plan setting out the approach that the placing/accommodating authority will follow, and the desired outcomes required to meet the young person's health. Details of the local authority's responsibilities for the health of its looked-after children are set out in [Children Act 1989: Care planning, placement and case review](#).

Information about the statutory obligations and duties on local authorities, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and NHS England to support and promote the health of looked-after children is also set out in [Statutory guidance on promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children](#). There is competency framework which details the abilities that enable staff to effectively safeguard, protect and promote the welfare, health and wellbeing of looked after young people and care leavers in [Looked After Children: Roles and Competencies of Healthcare Staff](#).

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 set out that the responsible local authority must make sure that its care leavers are provided with appropriate healthcare services. Information on the young person's health and development, that is, the arrangements for the young person's medical and dental care, must be reflected in their health plan, which is established within their care plan when they were looked after. This plan should also facilitate access to specialist health and therapeutic services as well as detail arrangements in place to support the young person understand the actions they can take to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Details of the local authority's responsibilities for the health of its care leavers are set out in [Children Act 1989: planning transition to adulthood for care leavers](#).

For young people with special educational needs and disabilities, staff must establish whether the young person has an EHC plan. If the young person does, staff must take account of the health objectives it specifies.

When considering whether a young person placed in the setting by a different local authority will be eligible for secondary health care services, the setting and the placing/accommodating and local authority should support the young person to access these services where necessary, taking into account the NHS England guidance on establishing the responsible commissioner: [Who Pays? Determining responsibility for payment to providers \(August 2020\)](#).

The specific responsibilities of the service towards supporting the health and wellbeing of each young person should be agreed with the placing/accommodating authority and recorded in the young person's care/pathway plan. It is the joint responsibility of the registered person and the placing/accommodating authority that this is agreed at the time of placement. Staff should work to make the setting an environment that supports young people's physical, mental and emotional health, in line with the approach set out in the statement of purpose.

Young people will have varied pre-care experiences. A large proportion of young people engaged with children's social care have experiences related to trauma, neglect, and abuse. The registered person should ensure that staff are prepared and able to listen to young people who want to talk about who they are and where they come from, including their past experiences and relationships, and support young people access relevant mental health services in relevant areas. The registered person should encourage staff to engage in regular reflective practice to ensure staff wellbeing is supported, enabling staff to continue to support young people with their experiences of trauma and mental health needs.

A young person's relevant plan may include a strategy for a particular type of support, treatment, or intervention (for example therapy relating to neglect or abuse). Staff will need to understand the purpose of any such support and the ways in which the past experiences of abuse or neglect may manifest itself in the day-to-day life of the young person.

Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help young people understand, and where necessary work to support them to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and wellbeing such as, but not limited to, nutrition and healthy diet, exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of New Psychoactive Substances (legal highs), drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

Attending medical appointments and administration of medicines

Young people should be provided with information on the local GP, dentist, and other health services, including mental health services, upon arrival. Staff should support the young person to access relevant health services, including identifying relevant therapeutic or other treatments in line with their care/pathway plan. If needed and where the young person has requested this, staff should support young people to book and attend health appointments, with the aim of enabling the young person to increasingly manage their own health needs independently.

Young people in supported accommodation should be responsible for meeting their own day-to-day health needs with support and guidance from the placing/accommodating authority and staff as required and in line with their care/pathway plan. Young people and staff should understand and adhere to agreed arrangements regarding the young person's health such as taking non-prescription medication, managing prescription medications, booking and attending GP appointments (other than annual check-up), and so on.

In most instances, young people will autonomously store and self-administer their own prescribed medications. For some young people who may need additional support with their medications, staff should support the young person ensure safe medication practices, such as providing a lockable medication box, helping the young person set alarms or reminders to take their medications, and so on. In some instances, if the young person requests it, staff may assist with the storing and managing of certain medicines if this assistance is in support of the young person's journey to do this within increasing autonomy in the future and stay safe while doing so.

Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Staff should encourage young people to keep records of the administration of their medication. The registered person should ensure the service has policies and appropriate arrangements in place for managing, administering, and disposing of medication, including processes for record keeping. Where staff have questions or concerns about a young person's medication, they should discuss these with the young person, take necessary safeguarding actions, and approach an expert such as a General Medical Practitioner or community pharmacist.

Choice of expression

Young people should be supported to express themselves as individuals and should have freedom and choice in relation to their day-to-day arrangements in relation to both activities and personal items such as clothing, technology and leisure items. Young people should have autonomy over their use of technology. Where appropriate, staff should provide advice to young people on how to stay safe online and signpost young people to additional online safety information, such as through the NSPCC.

Young people should be able to maintain and develop their cultural or religious beliefs as far as practicable and where appropriate, through participation and instruction, and by observing religious requirements including dress and diet.

Staff should support young people in their development of a sense of self and encourage young people to have confidence in their identity, including with respect to cultural, national, and linguistic backgrounds, religion, LGBT+ identities, and so on.

In line with budgeting support offered, young people should be supported to express themselves as individuals, including choosing and buying their own clothes.

Education and training

The registered person must ensure the necessary support is given to young people to enable them to access their education, training, and/or employment. Staff should work in partnership with relevant professionals such as Virtual School Heals (VSHs) to promote the educational achievement of young people and

enabling young people's access to a suitable range of high quality education options. Further information on the role of VSHs can be found in this guidance on [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children](#).

Support may include helping the young person to use public transport confidently and safely or supporting the young person to use technology to connect with online learning, and so on. Staff should support the young person access resources around career planning, including facilitating conversations with relevant professionals.

The Government has raised the participation in education age so that all young people from summer 2015 are required to continue in education or training until their 18th birthday. Young people can choose how to participate. This can be through full time education, an apprenticeship or traineeship, or by combining full-time employment with part-time education or training. Whilst the duty to choose is on the young person themselves, it is important that staff encourage the young person to continue their education or training and support them to develop the skills necessary to succeed in the option they choose. Staff should also direct young people to the financial support that is available through the 16-19 bursary fund and to the local authority's young people's services who can advise about the options available. Further information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund can be found in this [Overview of 16 - 19 Bursary Fund](#).

Local authorities have a number of responsibilities in relation to education and training for 16–19-year-olds, including ensuring sufficient provision is available to meet their needs and supporting them to participate, including providing arrangements for the provision of transport and/or travelling expenses in accordance with their annual transport policy statement. Local authorities are also responsible for identifying young people covered by the duty to participate who are not in education or training. Supported accommodation staff should work with the placing and local authority to make sure the young people they are responsible for are getting the support they need to participate. Further information on this can be found in the guidance [Participation of young people: education, employment and training](#).

When accommodating unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in supported accommodation provision, the placing and local authority and the registered person should ensure young people have access to English language lessons where needed as well as other additional support to aid participating and integrating into the community and UK life as per the young person's care/pathway plan.

Leisure and community

Where appropriate, staff should encourage and assist young people to participate in a wide range of activities both inside and outside of the setting, such as educational trips, volunteering and leisure activities.

Staff should support young people to understand what local leisure and other community, cultural or religious services are on offer for them and support them to access any relevant leisure passes and encourage them to participate in activities in the community and wider, where appropriate. Staff should provide information to young people on any specific local offers directed at opportunity access and inclusion for looked after children and care leavers, such as [Care Leaver Covenant](#) support packages.

Transitions

Staff should engage with other professionals, including the placing/accommodating authority, to make sure the agreed plan for progression is followed, ensuring the young person is supported for leaving the care system. Joint planning should start early and should involve the young person throughout so that transitions are managed effectively and according to the young person's development needs. This includes supporting the young person to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope without the service's support and continuing to develop practical skills for living independently, such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care.

As the setting will have a day-to-day understanding of young people's capabilities and needs, staff will have a valuable contribution to make to the pathway planning process. They should actively seek to make the fullest contribution, working with other relevant persons.

As some supported accommodations settings will also accommodate adults aged 18 and over, there may be potential for a young person to continue being accommodated by the setting after they turn 18. Regard should be given to the views and preferences of the young person as they prepare to leave the care system. More information on supporting young people as they transition to independence as well as schemes such as *Staying Close*, can be found in the guidance [Keep on Caring: Supporting Young People from Care to Independence](#).

Advocacy and the rights of young people

All young people must have access to appropriate advocacy support, and where possible this should be provided by a person that the young person chooses. Looked-after children and care leavers are entitled to an independent advocate to advise them and ensure they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives, and if the young person wishes to make a complaint. Staff should signpost young people to advocacy support such as [The Children's Commissioner's Help at Hand service](#). Further information about complaints and advocacy for children and young people can be found in the guidance [Get it Sorted \(2004\) Guidance on providing effective advocacy services for children and young people making a complaint under the Children Act 1989](#).

There is a legal requirement for the IRO of a looked-after child to ensure that the child or young person understands they have an entitlement to independent

advocacy support arranged by the young person's local authority (Chapter 3, IRO Handbook). Supported accommodation staff should complement any explanation given by the IRO by helping looked-after children to understand the role of an independent advocate and how they can access one. Staff should regularly remind young people of their right to access an independent advocate, and support them to do so, concerning any matter relevant to the young person's status as looked-after. Independent advocates can support both the young person and the service to seek to redress issues which affect them, such as lack of contact with their social worker, contact with family and leaving care grants, in addition to issues about their support within the service.

There is a legal requirement for the local authority to appoint a personal adviser (PA) to support once a young person has ceased to be looked after to support with the young person's transition to adulthood. The role of the PA is to advocate for the young person as well as to provide the young person with advice and support, participate in the assessment, preparation and review of the young person's pathway plans, keep informed about the young person's progress and wellbeing. More information on the skills, roles and responsibilities of the PA is set out in [Children Act 1989: planning transition to adulthood for care leavers](#).

Staff should ensure unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have access to suitable support from appropriate persons with regard to immigration and citizenship advice.

Producing a young person's guide

The setting must produce a young person's guide. The young person's guide must be made available to all young people in a format that is easily accessed and understood by each young person before or when they arrive at the setting and must be clear and user friendly.

The young person's guide should help young people to understand:

- The statement of purpose and what the day-to-day looks like in the setting;
- what support the young person is entitled to through the service (including support delivered through external agencies) in a variety of areas such as education, training, employment, developing independent living skills, and how the young person can access the support including for their physical and mental health;
- expectations around behaviour and engaging with the service, such as good housekeeping, treating others with respect, and so on;
- policies and agreements around the use of drugs and alcohol;
- arrangements in place for staff entering young people's bedrooms, such as providing advance notice and when this might not be possible;
- how the young person can make a complaint in line with the service's complaints procedure;

- how the young person can access advocacy support or independent advocacy if eligible; and
- how the young person can contact the Office of the Children’s Commissioner.

The registered person should review and update the young person’s guide as necessary, making sure young people are consulted prior to making any changes.

Hearing the views of young people

Young people must be consulted regularly on their views on the setting’s support in order to inform and influence continued improvement in the quality of support they receive. Due consideration should be given to the diverse needs and abilities of young people in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Young people should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon.

Staff should ensure that each young person understands the setting’s procedures and policies for respecting their confidentiality and also when it will not be possible to preserve this – e.g., where protecting a confidence puts themselves or others at risk.

Staff should encourage young people to share any concerns about their support or other matters as soon as they arise. Young people must be able and supported to take up issues or make a complaint and without any fear that this will result in any adverse consequences. The Regulations sets out the requirements on the registered provider to have a complaints procedure. Young people must be aware of this procedure and be reminded of it as necessary.

The registered person and staff should be familiar with the care/pathway planning processes for looked-after children and care leavers and should support young people to prepare for meetings in relation to this, if needed. While the young people in supported accommodation are older children with a high level of independence and responsibility and would be expected to take an active role in preparing for review meetings, staff should also play role in these meetings and support the young person. Staff should support the young person to express their views, wishes, feelings, and expectations for their future. An independent advocate can also be called upon to support the young person in their reviews.

The registered person should provide opportunities and support, where needed, for young people to engage with their placing/accommodating authority, or other such local arrangements, which enable the views and experiences of young people to be heard.

Review of quality of support

The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of support provided by the service, the experiences of young people living in the each of the provider's settings, looking at the impact the support is having on outcomes and improvements for the young people.

The processes the registered person puts in place to enable such a review to take place should allow for a report to be generated at least once every six months. The generated report should be sent within 28 days of completion to Ofsted and the placing/accommodating authority of all young people in the service who are looked-after children or care leavers.

The review must be robust and comprehensive and must consider feedback and evidence from all settings under the provider's registration.

The registered person is responsible for deciding what each review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the service at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the young people in the service, considering any settings that are designed or tailored to support a cohort with specific needs. The registered person will also consider what information or data recorded in the settings will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the service against every part of the Quality Standards every six months – the registered person should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on.

The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the service's support, which will be captured in the written report, which must be submitted to Ofsted. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the service, including any specific actions to individual settings if appropriate, and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement of the service.

Annex A: Explanation of terms

The following descriptions explain terms used in The Regulations. in accordance with the s.23(1A) of the 2000 Act.

| Term | Explanation of term |
|--|--|
| Placement | <p>For looked-after children, a placement refers to the commissioned setting organised by the local authority and agreed with the provider where the young person will be accommodated and will receive a support package.</p> <p>For care leavers, the local authority “arranges” accommodation with support in agreement with the provider.</p> <p>For the purpose of this guidance, the word ‘placement’ has been used to encompass commissioning practices for both looked-after children (i.e. placements) as well as care leavers (i.e. arrangements) and designates the organised and matched accommodation with support.</p> |
| Placing/accommodating authority | <p>The local authority that is responsible for placing a looked-after child or arranging accommodation for a care leaver in supported accommodation.</p> |
| Registered person | <p>The registered person means the registered provider or the registered service manager</p> |
| Registered provider | <p>An organisation, partnership or individual who is registered under Part 2 of the 2000 Act responsible for carrying on the service.</p> <p>As a registered person, the registered provider is responsible for ensuring compliance with The Regulations and upholding the Quality Standards across all settings in the service.</p> <p>If the registered provider is an individual or partnership, each individual and/or partner of a partnership must meet the fitness requirements for this role.</p> <p>If the registered provider is an organisation, the registered provider must nominate an individual to be a point of contact for Ofsted. Local authorities can also register as a provider of supported accommodation.</p> |
| Registered service manager | <p>The registered provider must appoint a registered service manager who is accountable for overseeing the management of all the provider’s settings.</p> <p>The registered service manager must meet the fitness requirements for this role.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | For some small providers, it is possible that the individual who is the registered provider will also take on the role of the registered service manager, if they meet the fitness requirements for the registered service manager. |
| Staff | For the purposes of the Regulations and this Guidance, staff are inclusive of hosts of supported lodgings as well as agency staff and volunteers working in the service. The placing/accommodating authority, the registered provider and hosts should agree on clear roles and responsibilities of hosts and any agency staff or volunteers involved in delivering support or accommodation to a young person in the service. |
| Supported accommodation undertaking | means an undertaking which consists of or includes arranging the provision of supported accommodation. |
| Young people or young person | Any reference to the term “young person” or “young people” in this guidance includes any person who is a looked-after child or care leaver aged 16 or 17 who is living in supported accommodation either through a placement or arrangement by a local authority. |



Department
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