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PRIVACY AND ROOM SEARCH		

Introduction

SJD Homes recognises the right to privacy of all the young people in our care. In order to achieve this aim staff will endeavour to always knock-on a young person's bedroom door and seek consent from the young person before entering. However, there may be certain occasions when it is appropriate and necessary for staff to enter an individual's room without consent in order to safeguard a young person themselves, other residents, staff, or members of the public.

Policy

The occasions when staff may enter a young person's room include the following:

1. Staff have knocked on the bedroom door on more than one occasion and have not received a response. In this circumstance staff should loudly inform the young person they are entering the room to check on their welfare. The member of staff should not enter any further into the room than is necessary to ensure the young person is not unwell or unconscious and are merely sleeping. The door must be left open throughout. The fact the member of staff has entered the room must be recorded in the daily log.
2. A maintenance issue needs to be addressed and the young person is not on site to give consent for the work to be undertaken. If the maintenance worker is not a member of the regular SJD Homes maintenance team, a member of staff must accompany the worker whilst the work is carried out.
3. The bedroom is unclean/untidy to the extent it presents a health and safety hazard, and it is necessary for staff to clean/tidy up. Ideally, this should be done with the young person but if they are uncooperative or off site it is imperative the young person is informed this is going to be undertaken. This can be face-to-face or via a telephone call or text message. As above, the appropriate recordings must be made in the daily log.
4. The young person's allocated social worker/personal advisor asks to have sight of the young person's room and the young person is not on site to give consent. The SW/PA must be accompanied by a member of staff and the entry recorded.

There may also be occasions when room searches need to be undertaken:

1. Staff are unsure whether or not a young person is physically in their room or it is suspected an unauthorised person has been brought into the placement without the knowledge of the staff. In this situation staff should loudly announce their intention to enter the room before doing so. The door to the room should be left open and the search should be limited to places where a person could be hiding e.g., in or under the bed, in the wardrobe or behind curtains. If an unauthorised person is found in the room and they refuse to leave then the police should be called to provide assistance. Full recordings including an incident report must be made.
2. It is suspected that items that could be harmful to others have been brought into the placement e.g., illegal drugs; alcohol; weapons. In such a circumstance staff should not attempt to search the room on their

own but must be accompanied by a colleague. If the risk is imminent and a colleague is not immediately available, then the police should be called to provide assistance. A full incident report must be completed.

3. The police request access to the young person's room. This may be because a young person has been notified as a missing person and the police need to ensure the young person is not hiding somewhere in the room, or to check they have not taken all their personal possessions with them. The police may also suspect the young person has been involved in criminal activity and are searching for evidence. This may include the police searching for illicit substances or weapons. If anything is removed from the room by the police, then a signed receipt detailing exactly what has been taken must be obtained by staff prior to the police leaving the premises. A member of staff should endeavour to be present in the room throughout the search and the appropriate recordings made.

4. Staff should **never** carry out a search of a bedroom at the request of another young person. If a claim is made that a possession of another is in a peer's bedroom, it must be advised that the consent of the room's occupant must be obtained before an entry can take place. If the room's occupant is missing or, the item needs to be retrieved as a matter of urgency then the consent of the social worker/personal advisor/EDT must be obtained in writing before a search may be undertaken.

