

5.1.4 Caring for Children from Minority Ethnic Groups

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Regulation and Standards

England

Care Act 2014

Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014

The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015

- [Regulation 14: The care planning standard](#)
- [Guide to the care planning standard](#)
- [Regulation 17: Placement plan for looked after child](#)

Wales

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

The Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (RISCA)

Statutory Guidance to Parts 3 to 20 of RISCA Regs. 2018

- Regulation 15: Personal plan
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/15/made>
- Regulation 16: Review of personal plan
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/16/made>
- Regulation 17: Records of personal plans
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/17/made>
- Regulation 18: Provider assessment
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/18/made>

Relevant Chapter

Also see: Equality and Diversity

1. Creating the Right Culture

Having the opportunity to express and enrich one's own self and identity can greatly impact upon the way in which children grow and develop.

In order to help children to grow in to healthy adults who are confident and proud of whom they are we need to create a culture where children of every race and ethnicity are understood, valued and respected equally.

No form of racism or prejudice towards children or adults within or outside the home is acceptable. Any expression of racism or prejudice will not be tolerated and if found will be managed under the Disciplinary Procedure, see **Employees Handbook**.

For each child we need to understand how we can provide the best care and support to give the child a positive sense of ethnic background, so that they feel confident and proud of whom they are. This may be achieved through understanding and supporting their interest in spirituality, their family, community groups and history, and by providing opportunity and resources to enable children to identify strong role models from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

For all children in our care it is important to help them feel like they belong. We need to be aware of cultural needs that are relevant to the individual including language, dietary requirements and any hair or skin care needs, but we also have a responsibility to understand and provide the opportunity for the social and emotional needs of the child, including self-awareness, respect, and identity and we should encourage and support the child in taking part in community activities and cultural events.

Children are encouraged to gain knowledge and appreciation of different races through education, sports, drama, music, literature, visual and culinary arts. They are supported in sharing and exploring values with one another. The group living experience offers a great opportunity to share and understand the beliefs and culture of those from different backgrounds and we encourage individuals to celebrate and be proud of their differences.

2. Open Discussion

Most children who live in our homes have very acute feelings of being on the outside of a group, for various reasons, but particularly because they are living away from their families and outside the mainstream of society. In addition to this many children originally come from families who have found it difficult to fit in and have lived on the margins of society; these experiences of being 'outside' have often been compounded for the child by multiple placement moves and experiences of rejection. Some of these experiences will have racial, ethnic, religious and cultural components.

We embrace diversity as positive and enriching and we encourage staff and children to share their thoughts and feelings concerning aspects of their lives within and out of the home and to communicate their understanding about the world around them through regular open discussion.

Inevitably feelings of difference, of being part of a minority, of being misunderstood, can form a significant part of these discussions. Where this occurs, children are helped to reflect upon and process instances where they have been made to feel different and may have been subject to others' prejudice. Where staff experience is not sufficient to help the child/ren to understand and manage their feelings and responses to incidents of racism or prejudice external resources will be sought and made available to the child and, where necessary, to staff and other children in the home.

Significant discussions will be recorded as appropriate so that My Life/Personal Plans can be suitably adjusted and parents and social workers can be included.

3. Identity

Each child's individuality and identity in terms of their history, experience, racial origin, ethnicity, religious belief and cultural and linguistic background will be promoted at all times and will be reflected in the care that they receive. We respect the dignity and privacy of each child, with due regard for these factors as well as gender and disability.

The provision of day to day care ensures that the needs and wishes of all young people are ascertained, respected and met wherever possible, particularly bearing in mind ethnic, religious and cultural factors. Individual time with keyworker's and other staff as well as frequent group meetings ensure that staff are able to keep abreast of developing needs and wishes of each individual child and for the group as a whole.

It is the role of all staff to support all young people to recognise and feel pride in their ethnic origin so that they are able to carry a sense of history and of their roots, both of which are important in forming a positive identity. Significant discussions will be recorded as appropriate so that My Life/Personal Plans can be suitably adjusted and parents and social workers can be included.

4. Daily Care

We deliver services that recognise and build on the strengths of children and young people from all cultures, religions and backgrounds in ways that meet their needs and help them to achieve their full potential.

Every effort is made to ensure that the home is welcoming to all children and to others significant in their care and wellbeing; this effort is reflected in the communication around the home, including: posters, information boards, displays and leaflets. In addition to this:

- a. All children are given the opportunity to be cared for and educated. Where possible this is alongside their peers in order to develop their full potential;
 - b. Children are encouraged and supported to understand their rights and be well-informed about ways of challenging discrimination;
 - c. Home's managers are expected to identify local community resources that contribute to meeting the needs of individuals- these are highlighted and promoted and where they do not meet required needs alternatives are sought and suitably identified regardless of geographical location (for example locating hairdressers who specialise in braiding or cutting African Caribbean hair);
 - d. Children are cared for by staff who have been suitably trained in all aspects of equality and diversity and caring for children from minority ethnic groups including relevant legislation and underpinning responsibilities;
 - e. The home's manager will ensure that assessment of the child and the family's specific needs is carried out with an aim to support and develop their full potential;
 - f. The home's manager is expected to examine ways in which diversity can be valued and activities adapted to meet the individual child's needs including food preparation and menu choices for example is the child a vegetarian? If they do eat meat are they restricted to which animals they can eat; for example, Muslims, Jews and Rastafarians do not eat pork;
 - g. Staff are expected to acknowledge the importance of maintaining a link between the child's home and the Children's Home in meeting the individual's need;
 - h. Staff are expected to offer appropriate support to aid inclusion and ensure that the children can fully participate in the home's activities. If necessary seek additional support in order to do this;
 - i. Additional support is offered to staff and/or Children who are finding difficulty in understanding diverse or complex situations
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5. Children's Religion

Children are encouraged and given the opportunity to practice cultural, religious or ethnic customs and characteristics without interference or prejudice. Where religious practices require special clothing or special diet children are properly equipped and advice is sought from either the young person's family or local religious leaders, where necessary.

Children are enabled to celebrate their own religious festivals and are assisted in understanding and acknowledging the religious festivals of others. It is recognised that it is natural that some young people may express doubt about continuing their religious beliefs or practices; whilst having regard for their wishes, it is important that they are helped to recognise and discuss their choices and are given the opportunity to consider the implications of deferring from these practices (for example implications on their relationships with their family and wider community).

Prayers

Where special privacy is needed in order to pray during the course of the day consideration will be given to how best to provide this, whilst also considering the impact on other children and the group as a whole.

Clothing

Our clothes are a way of expressing our own personal identity, culture and association with a group or trend. Children and young people will often express themselves through dress; sometimes they may feel pressured to follow the latest street fashion.

Some children and young people from minority ethnic communities will have particular clothing that they are required to or choose to wear which identifies them with the culture of their community, where this is the case staff must respect and support the child. Where possible staff should familiarise themselves with the way in which the garments should be worn and how the articles should be laundered.

Some children from minority ethnic groups choose to dress in clothing like other young people which also reflects their identity with music, sport and so on; however adhering to the dress code of the child's culture may still include restrictions on the child's appearance, for example, not being allowed to show their legs or bare their arms or Islamic law says that Muslim women must keep their bodies and figures hidden.

Medical Implications of Religious Background

Where a religion or religious sect prohibits certain forms of medical treatment or requires disfiguring or disabling operative or mutilating treatment, a balance needs to be reached between a parent's legal rights and responsibilities, the relevant authority's view of the young person's best interests and the views of those who know the young person well. Efforts will be made through the social worker to obtain written information with regard to health rules of any particular religion or any medical health rules proposed and, if necessary, legal advice will be sought.

Revision History

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End

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