



Winchester

City Council

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| FOI REF: | 14178 |
| RESPONSE SENT: | 02/04/2024 |

Request:

I am undertaking research into how Children's Social Care and Housing Colleagues at local government level work in partnership to support and protect children living in homes within the Private Rented Sector where health hazards under the HHSRS may exist, with a particular focus on inadequate sized children's bedrooms.

Lack of space and overcrowded conditions have been linked to a number of health outcomes, including psychological distress and mental disorders, especially those associated with a lack of privacy and childhood developments.

Enquiry:

I would like to know if advice was sought from the Housing Team by a social worker concerned that a child's bedroom in the PRS may potentially be less than 6.5m² / 70 sq.ft in size and the child was aged over 10, **1**) you would recommend a Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessment is required to be undertaken.

This would determine whether any health hazards are present falling under the 29 hazards and in particular the psychological grouping of '(11) Crowding and space' – which covers hazards associated with lack of space within the dwelling for living, sleeping, and normal household life.

Under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004, the Council has a duty to take appropriate enforcement action where Category 1 hazards are found and has a power to take action where Category 2 hazards are present.

While The Operating Guidance is silent on suitable room sizes for accommodation including bedrooms, **2**) do you rely upon the measurements of a minimum size of 6.5m² as suitable as a single bedroom for one person aged over 10, which is derived from Part 10 of HA 1985 and supported by the LACORs 'Crowding and Space' guidance?

Unfortunately, sometimes once planning permission is approved for subdivision of a single dwelling house into 2 self contained flats, the landlord may decide to erect a partition wall creating an additional "bedroom" that is undersized. Although the planning permission only ever intended for example for the 2 self contained flats to be 1 bedroom properties and not 2 bedroom.

If a Housing/Environmental Health Officer wants any further clarification, I can be contacted via email or telephone.

Thank you in advance for your response, it is appreciated.



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Response:

I refer to the FOI you submitted and was received by Winchester City Council on 26 March 2024 and given the reference FOI 14178.

I have detailed my response in the body of your email below (prefixed with 'RESPONSE:').

Dear Council,

Enquiry:

- 1) I would like to know if advice was sought from the Housing Team by a social worker concerned that a child's bedroom in the PRS may potentially be less than 6.5m² / 70 sq.ft in size and the child was aged over 10

RESPONSE: I am not aware that the Private Sector Housing team has ever received an enquiry from a social worker concerned that a child's bedroom in the PRS may potentially be less than 6.5m² / 70 sq.ft in size and the child was aged over 10.

- 2) you would recommend a Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessment is required to be undertaken.

RESPONSE: However, should such an enquiry be received we would undertake a HHSRS assessment.

- 3) While The Operating Guidance is silent on suitable room sizes for accommodation including bedrooms, do you rely upon the measurements of a minimum size of 6.5m² as suitable as a single bedroom for one person aged over 10, which is derived from Part 10 of HA 1985 and supported by the LACORs 'Crowding and Space' guidance?

RESPONSE: Yes, we would.