



QiB Procedure: Rooming at residential events

“Quakers in Britain” or “QiB” is used throughout this document as the name for: Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Purpose

This procedure will outline how we implement rooming at residential events for children and young people as part of the events and activities management policy.

Procedures and Guidance

Quakers in Britain is committed to the inclusivity and safety of all participants, staff and volunteers. We take a variety of factors into account when arranging rooming and hygiene facilities for residential events - these include sex assigned at birth, age and gender expression.

Rooming at Residential Events

It is likely that there will be a number of participants (including staff and adult volunteers) who are trans, non-binary or otherwise do not fit a binary gender system. Quakers in Britain aims for all events to be inclusive, whilst both safe and enjoyable.

‘Traditionally, sleeping arrangements are split by the binary genders - one area for girls and another for boys. However, just because a space is single-gendered does not make it safe. At GI we best explain this by saying that ‘bodies are not what makes a situation dangerous - behaviour is.’ – Gendered Intelligence 2022

Where possible, venues that offer some individual rooms to participants should be prioritised. These may be unobtainable, in which case, room sharing venues may be necessary. In this case, if possible, accommodate participants in rooms of 3+. Large, single room accommodation (such as a meeting room floor) should be avoided if an alternative can be found (see Accommodation in a Single Room section below).

It is good practice to carry out site visits or, if that is not feasible, floor plans should be obtained to ensure adequate preparation.

Adult staff and volunteers

Adult staff and volunteers should be accommodated in the same building as participants but not in the same rooms. Ideally, staff and volunteer rooms should be dispersed amongst those used by participants and information about which adults are in which rooms should be shared with participants along with any overnight duty rota.

If the accommodation for adult staff and volunteers requires room sharing, consent and agreement from all adults allocated together in a room is essential. Any concerns must be easy to raise and appropriately considered, including those associated with age, health and any other factors that may impact nighttime behaviours.

Provision for participants

Attention needs to be given to adequate provision for participants of different sex assigned at birth, gender and age, collaboratively with those providing the accommodation venue. Many commercial venues will have safeguarding policies of their own which should be checked carefully before booking.

Whilst participants of any gender may be accommodated together, only participants of the same sex assigned at birth may occupy the same room. Where a participant has indicated trans or non-binary gender, a follow-up communication to discuss their preferred room share arrangement should be made. If rooming a group of trans participants all assigned the same sex at birth together, consideration should be given to how inclusive or othering this experience may be.

The information provided through participants' registration (information & consent form) should be used to make an appropriate rooming plan. Give careful consideration to the information requested. A rooming plan made prior to the event will necessarily be based on some assumptions. If possible, arrange some additional capacity to enable room changes if new information comes to light at the event. When making a rooming plan, careful consideration should also be given to the age and anticipated behaviour of the young people.

Consideration of age

Where possible, avoid more than a two-year difference in age within one shared room.

Participants who will become 18 years old during the event (legally an adult) should not be accommodated in the same room as any younger participants (legally children).

Safer behaviour

Rooms are private spaces at all times, and no participant is allowed in any other bedroom than their own. This must be made clear in any community agreement, code of conduct, welcome talk, and reiterated throughout the event.

Participants sharing rooms should be encouraged to agree on their basic ground rules. These should involve thinking about privacy and comfort, e.g., keeping clothes neat in your area, getting changed, wearing pyjamas in bed, lights on/off, wake-up times, chat etiquette, etc.

It is expected that adult staff and volunteers will monitor for romantic relationships developing between participants during the event. This should include adult presence in corridors for 20-30 minutes after bedtime curfew. This applies to all relationships and all room allocations e.g., same-sex relationships and single sex rooms.

Any relationship developing between two young people currently sharing a room would necessitate a room change.

Accommodation in a Single Room

If a venue that can offer individual rooms for single participants or small groups cannot be found (including because of practical considerations such as unreasonable cost or geographical distance) then the following mitigations must be considered in an accompanying risk assessment:

1. Separation of bodies (e.g. use of individual sleeping bags)
2. Separation of sex assigned at birth (e.g. zones for single birth sex)
3. Inclusivity and avoidance of transphobic or othering arrangements (e.g. discussions with non-binary participants about what is most comfortable for them)
4. Regulation of behaviour (e.g. proximity of adults in a separate room and the content of a code of conduct or community agreement)
5. Use of curtains or furniture or other ways, to divide or demarcate personal space.

Sharing changing and washing facilities

If shared rooms have en-suite bathrooms, check that they have locking doors and are floor-to-ceiling enclosed.

If using shared changing and shower rooms, rotas should be used to ensure this feels comfortable and safe for all. It is important in all circumstances to be aware of the anxiety that may be felt around communal changing and showering. Where possible, avoid venues that only provide this kind of facility. Ensure that there is at least one shower room available for individuals who are uncomfortable changing/showering in the same space as other participants. No adults should share the same space as children while changing or showering.

Related QiB Policies and Governance Documents

Policies and other Governance Documents relating to this procedure are available here:

[link]

Stakeholders

The following chart sets out the stakeholder framework around this procedure:

Responsible	Team Leader: Youth, Children and Families
Accountable	Head of Inclusive Quaker Communities
Consulted	Team Leaders for Youth Development Work; Youth, Children and Families and Head of Inclusive Quaker Communities. QiB Safeguarding Group.
Informed	All Quaker Life Staff and all QiB Operational Managers and Management Meeting

Review

This procedure may be changed:

- to better meet policy objectives;
- to suit operational requirements;
- in connection with the review of an associated policy;
- if there is an incident within the policy area OR there are external changes (eg regulations or legislation) which warrant it;

OR

- an associated policy is found to have been materially breached.

Document Control

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Role for QiB: Team Leader: Youth, Children and Families

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