

HS24/21/8 Criteria

Rooms used by children are kept at a comfortable temperature no lower than 18°C (at 500mm above the floor) while children are attending.

Guidance

The following examples are provided as a starting point to show how services can meet the requirement. Services may choose to use other approaches better suited to their needs, as long as they comply with the criteria.

Temperature in rooms *used* by children

The temperature in rooms must be no lower than 18 °C at 500mm above the floor when **used by children**. Services should ensure the heating is turned on (if required) before children arrive for the day to give time for the rooms used by children to heat up to 18 °C.

Temperatures are *kept* no lower than 18 °C

To ensure the temperature in rooms used by children is **kept** no lower than 18 °C, a service must have a means of checking the temperature regularly at 500mm above the floor. This might include a thermometer that can measure ambient room temperature attached to the wall at 500mm above the floor, or a portable thermometer.

Services will need to manage fluctuations of temperature in rooms used by children eg caused by the opening and closing of doors to the outside space, so that the temperature in rooms used by children is kept no lower than 18 °C.

Rooms used by children at a *comfortable* temperature

18 °C at 500mm above the floor is a minimum requirement. It follows World Health Organisation guidelines for residential living spaces, including those with vulnerable persons such as young children.

Services may choose to keep a higher indoor temperature but should ensure it is comfortable for children. Having a service temperature that is too warm could lead to lethargy.

Other licensing criteria that interact with HS24

[PF2](#), [PF12/10](#), [PF13/11](#) and [C9](#).

PF12/10Criteria

Parts of the building or buildings used by children have:

- lighting (natural or artificial) that is appropriate to the activities offered or purpose of each room;
- ventilation (natural or mechanical) that allows fresh air to circulate (particularly in sanitary and sleep areas);
- a safe and effective means of maintaining a room temperature of no lower than 18°C; and
- acoustic absorption materials, if necessary, to reduce noise levels that may negatively affect children's learning or wellbeing.

Guidance

Heating

Efficient heating that suits your services' layout and design will ensure rooms can be kept at a comfortable temperature while children are attending (see [HS24/21 – Room Temperature](#)). There is a range of options but safety of children is paramount (see [HS12/11 – Hazard Management](#)).

Noise

The materials and decoration used in your centre will help to reduce noise levels for everyone's benefit.

As a general rule, two things help to reduce noise:

1. Soft furnishings. The more soft furnishings you have, the more sound is absorbed. Some practical options are:
 - curtains
 - rugs and carpet
 - big cushions
 - couches/lounge chairs.
2. Complex shapes. Complex shapes break up and scatter sound waves, reducing noise reverberation in the room.

Practical examples are:

- acoustic ceiling tiles
- fabric draped from the ceiling
- decorations on walls, especially thick wall hangings and 3-dimensional decorations rather than flat pictures
- carpet attached to the underside of tables.

Double glazing can be very effective in reducing outside noise, if this is a significant problem. However, it can be expensive to retrofit into existing windows, and alternative ventilation may be needed in place of opening windows.

Ventilation

There must be adequate ventilation in every room in the service that is used by children. Good ventilation is particularly important for sleep rooms, nappy change areas, bathrooms and rooms where unwell children are isolated and looked after temporarily.

Good ventilation will:

- supply fresh air for breathing
- clear away pollutants and odours to improve air quality
- help remove excessive moisture in the air
- improve thermal comfort in warm weather by increasing air movement and removing heat.