



Thomas More Catholic School Home Visit Policy

Policy re-written October 2017 by:
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Mr James Kearns
Mrs Ruth Holden & Josephine Okokon

Rationale of Home Visits

Thomas More Catholic School feel that home visits are an important way to build positive relationships between home and school. Home visits mainly occur when there has been no reason given for a child's continued absence from school or too many unauthorised absences without a valid reason given.

Home visits are for both sides to share information, which is in the best interests of the child and for support to be offered, if needed. Visits also allow parents/carers to share sensitive information without fear of being interrupted or overheard and for the child to feel relaxed in their home setting.

Families should feel empowered after a home visit and feel that their views have been listened to.

Procedure Prior to the Visit

- Staff should attend home visits in pairs for their own security. This could be a member of school staff or an outside agency.
- If the school has been notified that a family have a social worker, the social worker must be informed either before the home visit or immediately after.
- The majority of visits should not be unannounced, however there may be certain situations, such as poor attendance, where an unannounced visit is required.
- The home visit should only go ahead if the parent/carer is present unless it is for attendance issues.
- A brief risk assessment should be carried out on the first home visit and referred to for subsequent visits.
- The two members of staff must ensure they inform the school office where they are attending in case of emergencies and carry either the school phone or their personal mobile phone.

Procedure during the Visit

- Members of staff should introduce themselves and show their name badges as proof and the purpose of the visit should be explained and a home visit letter given to the parents/carers. If no one is at home or nobody answers the door, the letter must be posted through the letter box.
- One adult should lead the visit to avoid the parent/carer feeling overwhelmed.
- Notes should be taken to assist future planning for the family.
- Staff should constantly assess the mood of the visit to ensure that they do not put themselves in danger, including risks from animals.
- Confidentiality should be respected at all times, unless there is a CP concern.

Procedure after the Visit

- All notes should be written up and shared appropriately and a copy placed in the child's school file.
- Referrals to be made to external agencies if necessary.
- Dates for a further home visit could be set.

In Case of Emergencies

- The school office should be aware of who is making a home visit and to which family.
- If the family has a social worker, the social worker's mobile phone number needs to be easily accessible if there is a cause for concern during the home visit.
- Staff will bring the school mobile phone with them for contact and will let group admin know which number they are using. Alternatively they will provide group admin. with the mobile number they will be using.
- If the member of staff does not return at the agreed time, then the school office will ring the mobile phone.
- The Police must be called if there is no answer and there is reasonable cause for concern.
- If the school office receive a call from the member of staff conducting the home visit for emergency assistance then the police are to be called immediately to visit the home.

Home visits should always be discussed and agreed with / by a member of Senior staff and always be carried out in the best interests of the child.