



Home Visits Policy

EYFS Requirement

This policy has been written in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements (section 3.4,3.27)

Related Policies

Safeguarding Policy

Key person

Settling in

Inclusion

Transitions

Legislation

Working Together to Safeguarding Children

Children Act 1989

Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

Children Act 2006

Our Aim

- To provide an opportunity for a new child and family accessing government funding or in need of a home visit to meet the key person and Manager in their own home prior to the child starting at the setting.

The purpose of the visit is to help the child, family and key person get to know more about each other in the home environment where the child usually feels most relaxed. We hope to establish a partnership between parent/carers and staff where both parties share their knowledge and understanding of the child to plan stimulating and challenging learning opportunities as well as planning to meet each child's individual needs.

At Stepping Stones Day Nursery we recognise that parent/carers are their children's first and most enduring educators. Forming relationships with parent/carers and working closely is beneficial for each child's learning and development.

It is our policy to visit the children at home before they enter Nursery, where possible. However this is an optional service that the setting provides and as such not all parents will require an appointment. During the visit, time is taken to find out about the child's likes, dislikes and interests, visits are not to judge parent/carers parenting skills, but to offer parent/carers the opportunity to ask questions and gather any information needed from staff to support the transition.

Only one home visit per family is usual

Benefits:

Setting/Home Visits have many benefits for both parent/carers and staff. For parents and children visits give them the opportunity to meet the key person in a safe environment at home where they feel confident and at ease or in the setting where they can explore a new environment with their family close by. The visits provide the opportunity to:

- Establish early, positive contact
- See children in their own familiar setting and at nursery
- Meet other family members and talk about other people and pets who are important to the children
- Understand the anxieties children may feel when starting nursery, and also understand the wealth of learning that goes on at home.

This all helps staff providing care for children to get a fuller picture. Staff can gain lots of information to inform their planning from observing a child where he or she feels settled and in control.

Rationale:

- To share information between parent/carers, staff and children. Providing a starting point for staff to understand family background, including cultural background.
- Ensure children feel that they are valued and have a familiar face when starting at nursery.
- To provide an opportunity for parent/carers to talk about their child and the nursery, to voice concerns, clear up any misunderstandings and to lessen worries and fears.
- To establish effective procedures to ensure the safety of parent/carers, staff and children during the visits.

To ensure parent/carers understand the purpose and procedure before the visit.

Procedure:

A key person is allocated before the child starts at the setting. Home visits will be offered in the welcome letter.

During registration parents will be informed of the following:

Who will be attending and when

How long the visit is expected to last

What will happen

What kind of questions will be asked

What information staff will bring

Any information the key person would like from the parent/carer during the visit

- Appointments should be confirmed in writing to parent/carers on a welcome email/letter and recorded in the nursery diary; which is kept in the office.
- Home visits will take place any morning or afternoon, at a time convenient to parent/ carers; this will be established during registration.
- The child's 'Learning Journey' will be explained and we will complete any background information with the key person (in their absence another member of staff from the child's area) will conduct the home visit along with a Manager.
- Staff carrying out the home visits will be in nursery uniform, and will identify themselves before entering the family home.
- Staff will be briefed about the area they are visiting and location.
- Parents are informed about the nursery website/Facebook page and its content as well as provided with Email/hard copies of nursery policies if requested (policy & Procedure file available at all times in the entrance to the setting)

- If parent/carers are not at home when staffs visit then a compliments slip will be posted to let them know we called.
 - Staff will leave the following at nursery before the visit, in the nursery diary:
Their mobile telephone number
The name, address, and telephone number of the child's home
The approximate arrival time and estimated length of the visit
 - If there is a change to plan after leaving nursery or the child's home then the nursery must be informed.
 - Staff are expected to have their mobile phones switched on at all times and must make parent/carers aware of this during the home visit.
 - If staff feel uncomfortable in the child's home then they should leave immediately, reporting back to management at the nursery. There is a password system in place in case of emergencies staff can say the password during a telephone conversation and management at the nursery will know if everything is ok or not.
 - An evaluation of each visit must be recorded by staff when they return back to nursery and settling in records must be completed along with a thank you letter sent to the parent/carers.
 - Any incidents that may occur during a home visit must recorded in writing
 - Any actions agreed during the home visit should be recorded and confirmed with parent/ carers
 - Visits will be carried out in pairs, allowing one staff member to speak with the parent/carers and the other to interact with the child. This enables parent/carers to talk without worrying about the child as well as providing opportunity to observe the child at play in a familiar environment.
 - The staff will stay together during the home visit and would not expect to be left alone with the child during the visit.
 - Visits will last a maximum of one hour.
 - Staff will be conscious of the fact that they are guests in the family home and will treat all families with a high level of respect and regard during the visit.
 - At any time during the visit parents/carers may ask both staff members to leave and do not have to give a reason why.
- What staff will take on a home visit?
Take a home visit pack; this is kept in the office.
Take a selection of toys form the nursery, as this enables the child to choose whether to play with a familiar or unfamiliar toy, providing a source for interaction.
Take information from nursery to discuss with parent/ carers
Take the child's registration records to check details and ensure that all evidence has been seen prior to the child starting at nursery.
Take a learning journey to show parents and explain, as well gathering photos etc... From parent/carers to include in the journey for when the child starts at nursery.

This policy was reviewed in; May 2014

Signed on behalf of the setting; (Caroline Betts) Signature.....

Date for review; May 2015