

# HOME VISITS

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

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**Purpose:** To provide clear guidelines for pastoral staff conducting home visits to ensure the safety and well-being of students, staff, and families, and to promote effective communication and support.

## **1. Preparation**

### **1.1 Obtain Approval:**

- Obtain approval from the relevant senior leader and DSL before scheduling a home visit.

### **1.2 Gather Information:**

- Collect all relevant information about the student and the purpose of the visit.
- Review any previous notes or reports related to the student's situation.

### **1.3 Schedule the Visit:**

- Contact the student's parents/guardians to arrange a suitable date and time for the visit.
- Confirm the visit details and ensure the parents/guardians are aware of the visit's purpose.

### **1.4 Inform Relevant Parties:**

- Inform the school office and a senior leader of the visit details, including time, location, and expected duration.
- Ensure another staff member is aware of the visit and can be contacted if needed.

### **1.5 Safety Precautions:**

- Arrange to conduct the visit in pairs if possible, especially if there are safety concerns.
- Carry a fully charged mobile phone and have emergency contact numbers readily available.

## **2. During the Visit**

### **2.1 Arrival:**

- Arrive on time and introduce yourself clearly, showing identification if necessary.
- Explain the purpose of the visit to the parents/guardians and the student.

### **2.2 Conducting the Visit:**

- Engage in open and respectful communication, actively listening to the concerns and needs of the family.
- Discuss the specific issues at hand, offering support and guidance as appropriate.
- Take detailed notes on the discussions and any actions agreed upon.

## **2.3 Safety and Professionalism:**

- Maintain a professional demeanor at all times.
- Stay alert to any signs of distress or unsafe conditions and respond appropriately.
- If you feel unsafe at any point, politely end the visit and leave the premises.

## **3. Post-Visit Actions**

### **3.1 Documentation:**

- Write a detailed report of the visit, including observations, discussions, and any agreed actions.
- Submit the report to the Head of Pastoral Care or designated senior leader for review.

### **3.2 Follow-Up:**

- Schedule any necessary follow-up actions or visits as agreed with the family.
- Ensure that relevant staff members are informed of any important information or actions that need to be taken.

### **3.3 Debrief:**

- If the visit was conducted in pairs, debrief with your colleague to discuss observations and next steps.
- If necessary, seek support from the Head of Pastoral Care to address any concerns or emotional impact from the visit.

## **4. Confidentiality and Record-Keeping**

### **4.1 Confidentiality:**

- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding the details of the visit and the information shared by the family.
- Only share information with relevant staff members on a need-to-know basis.

### **4.2 Secure Storage:**

- Ensure all notes and reports are stored securely in accordance with the school's data protection policies.
- Avoid leaving any sensitive information in unsecured locations.

By following this Standard Operating Procedure, pastoral staff can ensure that home visits are conducted safely, professionally, and effectively, fostering positive relationships with families and providing essential support to students.

## **What a Home Visit by Pastoral Staff Will Not Look Like:**

### **1. Unplanned and Unscheduled Visits:**

- Home visits will never occur without prior notice and agreement with the parents/guardians. Surprise visits can cause unnecessary stress and may breach trust.

### **2. Lack of Preparation and Information:**

- Staff will not attend home visits without adequate preparation. Each visit will be backed by a thorough review of the student's background, the purpose of the visit, and a clear plan for the discussion.

### **3. Unsafe and Unprofessional Conduct:**

- Visits will not be conducted in a manner that compromises the safety of staff or families. Professionalism is paramount; staff will not display unprofessional behaviour or disregard safety protocols.

### **4. Invasion of Privacy and Disregard for Confidentiality:**

- The home visit will not involve invasive questioning or disregard for the family's privacy. Information gathered will be treated with strict confidentiality and only shared with relevant personnel.

### **5. Failure to Document and Follow Up:**

- Visits will not be conducted without proper documentation and follow-up. All interactions and agreements will be carefully recorded, and necessary follow-up actions will be taken to ensure ongoing support and resolution of issues discussed.

## **Resources**

- Identification badge
- Fully charged mobile phone
- Notebook and pen or device
- Relevant student records and documentation
- Emergency contact numbers
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