Kinsale Infant School

Home Visit Policy

Rationale

At Kinsale Infant School we believe home visits are an important way to build positive relationships and a sense of trust between home and school. Home visits occur in the term prior to a child starting their first term in Reception at Kinsale Infant School.

Home visits are an opportunity for both home and school to share information about the child and the school. Visits also allow parents/carers to share sensitive information without fear of being interrupted or overheard and for the child to meet their staff while feeling relaxed in their home setting.

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

Procedure prior to Visit

- Staff must attend home visits in pairs for their own security. The pairing will usually consist of the child's forthcoming class teacher and another member of school staff – either the SENCO, another member of the Senior Leadership Team or a classroom teaching assistant.
- Staff attending home visits must leave a copy of their planned visit schedule with the Headteacher and School Office before leaving the school site. This plan must contain names, dates, times and locations of all planned visits.
- Parents and carers will be informed in advance of the date and time of the proposed home visit. This will usually be in the form of a letter given at the Reception induction meeting in early June or through the post if the family are unable to attend the induction.
- The Home Visit risk assessment should be updated before the first home visit takes place and referred to for subsequent visits.
- The Headteacher or School Office should be aware of the vehicle and registration number of the car attending the home visit, in case of an emergency.
- A code word will be set up between the member of staff and the school office in case of emergencies. If a member of staff needs to contact the office in an emergency, they should telephone immediately and ask the office and use the agreed code word**.** See Emergency Procedures below for more information.

Procedure during Visit

- Members of staff should park close by and in a place near the road and/or reverse into a space for quick exit if necessary.
- Members of staff should introduce themselves and the purpose of the visit should be explained.
- The home visit should only go ahead if the parent/carer is present.
- One staff member should lead the visit and conversation with parents and carers. The second staff member will engage with the child during the visit, introducing themselves and asking the child about favourite toys etc.
- Notes should be taken to inform future planning for the family. These should be kept in the child's blue folder in the classroom.
- Staff should constantly read the mood of the visit to ensure that they do not put themselves in danger and immediately end the visit if they feel it necessary.
- Staff must assess any potential dangers posed by pets during the visit and must terminate the visit if they feel to be in danger from an animal in the house.
- Staff must take a fully charged mobile phone and keep this on their person at all times during the visit.
- Confidentiality should be respected at all times, unless there is a safeguarding concern which should be reported immediately to one of the school Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Procedure after Visit

- All notes should be written up and shared appropriately.
- Referrals to be made if necessary.
- Dates for a further home visit could be set.
- Home visits should always be discussed with a member of SLT upon return to school.

In Case of Emergencies

- The Headteacher and School Office must be aware of who is making a home visit and to which family.
- Mobile telephone numbers for all staff involved in the home visit must be easily accessible to the Headteacher and School Office.
- If members of staff do not return at the agreed time with no prior notification, then the School Office will call the mobile phone of the staff member involved to verify their safety.
- The police must be called if there is no answer and there is reasonable cause for concern.
- If the Headteacher or School Office receives a call from a member of staff on a home visit and the code word is used, then the police are to be called immediately on 999. The police should be provided with the names and last known locations of the members of staff as well as vehicle registration and any other relevant information. The Headteacher should be informed immediately if not already aware.

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