

St. Margaret Clitherow's Catholic Primary School

(Part of St. Oswald's Catholic Voluntary Academy)



CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY
PRIMARY ACADEMY

Home Visits Policy

June 2016

Written by:	Miss McNicholas
Review Frequency:	Annually
Review Date:	June 2017

Introduction

At St Margaret Clitherow's School we aim to make the transition from home to nursery a positive experience which focuses on the individual needs of the child and their family. We believe that this can be achieved through developing positive relationships between parent/carers and staff. Continuity for children and their families is crucial in making transitions successful. Visiting parent/carers and children in the familiar environment of home where the children feel confident and comfortable provides staff with the opportunity to discuss with parent/carers any concerns as well as answering questions and observing children.

Staff use the information gathered during the visit to plan for each child's needs in preparation for when they begin their sessions at nursery. This enables the nursery staff to make any necessary adaptations to the environment and to consider how activities may need to be differentiated in order to meet the needs of all children. It is important for the child's class teacher to establish positive starting points for learning and development and to consider challenging and realistic next steps.

We recognise that parent/carers are their children's first and most enduring educators. Forming relationships with parent/carers and working closely together is beneficial for each child's learning and development. We aim to establish a partnership between parent/carers and staff where both parties share their knowledge and understanding of the child.

It is therefore, our policy, wherever possible, to visit the children at home. We offer home visits to every family. 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. Two members of staff will attend the home visit, one of the members of staff will be the child's Nursery teacher and the other will be our school's family support worker, Becky Gaynon Johnson who is a key part of our EYFS (early years foundation stage) team.

Benefits

Home Visits have many benefits for both parent/carers and staff. For parents and children, a visit gives them the opportunity to meet St Margaret Clitherow's staff in a safe environment where they feel most confident and at ease. The visit provides the opportunity to:

- establish early, positive contact;
- meet other members of the family and 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 to understand family background, including cultural background;
- ensure children feel valued;
- ensure the children will know a familiar face when starting nursery;
- to provide an opportunity for parent/carers to talk about their child and the nursery, 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;
- to tailor our home visits to the individual needs of the family.

Procedure

When a child is offered a place at St Margaret Clitherow's School their parent/carers will:

- be given an initial written confirmation that we have received their application and that they have a place in Nursery.
- the term before they are due to start nursery, they will receive a letter to ask session preference.
- a home visit will be arranged (phone call to parent/carers) and undertaken by the EYFS lead, Mrs Adams and the schools family support worker, Becky-Gaynon Johnson, a couple of weeks before the child's provisional start date. During this phone call parents/carers will be informed:
 - who will be attending and when;
 - how long the visit is expected to last;
 - what will happen;
 - what information staff will bring;

- any information the class teacher would like from the parent/carer during the visit;
- a phone call will be made the day before by Becky to remind the parents/carers of the home visit time.
- at the home visit the parent/carer will be given a confirmed start date in writing.

Staff carrying out the home visits will always wear a school identification badge, and will introduce themselves before entering the family home. They will be briefed about the area they are visiting and the location. Should for any reason staff feel uncomfortable in the child's home then they should leave immediately. If there is a change of plan after leaving nursery or the child's home then the SLT must be informed. Should there be no-one home when staff visit then a card will be posted to let them know we called.

Records will be kept in the school office regarding:

- staff mobile telephone number;
- car registration number;
- the name, address, and telephone number of the child's home that is being visited and at what time.
- expected time to return to school.

An evaluation of each visit must be recorded/discussed by staff when they return back to nursery. Any incidents that may occur during a home visit must be reported to the head teacher immediately and recorded in writing. Any actions agreed during the visit should be recorded and confirmed with parent/carers.

Staff will take to with them on the home visit:

- a selection of toys/books from the nursery - this enables the child to choose whether to play with a familiar or unfamiliar toy/book;
- information from nursery to discuss with parent/ carers;
- questionnaire to be completed by Mrs Adams upon discussion with parent/carers.
- photographs of the nursery setting e.g. photo book;
- an example of a learning journey as a means of explaining the observation and assessment process.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed annually as part of the nursery's continuous efforts to improve our practice.



CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY
PRIMARY ACADEMY

We called today for a home visit but unfortunately you were out. We are sorry to have missed you; we would be grateful if you could contact school (01642 835370) and ask to speak to Becky to arrange another time.



CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY
PRIMARY ACADEMY

We called today for a home visit but unfortunately you were out. We are sorry to have missed you; we would be grateful if you could contact school (01642 835370) and ask to speak to Becky to arrange another time.



CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY
PRIMARY ACADEMY

We called today for a home visit but unfortunately you were out. We are sorry to have missed you; we would be grateful if you could contact school (01642 835370) and ask to speak to Becky to arrange another time.