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| **What is a Statutory Visit, when and how are they done?**  Statutory visits are the visits that Social workers are required to do, where the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or where they are a Child in Care. The statutory nature of the visits mean that a) they take place at set intervals based on the child’s plan and level of need (see below); b) they must always be carried out by a qualified social worker; and c) once a month the visit must be in the child’s home, and for children aged 5 and over, they are seen alone and their views are sought; infants and young children should be observed. **The purpose of a statutory visit is to promote the welfare and protection of the child, ensure their views are heard and acted upon and that the child is seen.** | | | | | |
| **Type of Stat Visit** | **Frequency** | **Link to Gloucestershire Social Work Standards** | **Before the visit** | **During the visit** | **After the visit** |
| The child is subject of a Child Protection Plan | * As set by the Initial CP Conference and Core Group * At least once every 10 working days * At least once per month relative to need visiting should include time in the family home; and, for children aged 5 and over, time alone with the child. | **Page 4 – Visiting Timescales At a Glance**  *This standard includes the timescales set out here and timescales for a range of other children, including those in adoptive placements, privately fostered children and young people aged 18-25*  **Standard One: Direct Work with Children**  *This supports clear understanding of expectations for purposeful and engaging direct work with children*  **Standard Four: Planning**  *This will help you make the link between a purposeful statutory visit and a good standard plan*  **Standard Five: Recording**  *This standard sets out practice expectations for use of language and including the child’s voice*  **Standard Seven: Professional Culture**  *This links your visit to Restorative Practice as you build, maintain and repair relationships* | * Book the visit beforehand to ensure within timescale * Consider if announced or unannounced visit * If announced, arrange the time and date with the family or carer and the child * Check accuracy of current data held about the child and the family or carer * **Be clear about the purpose of the visit** and what specific issues you want to cover, linked to the Child’s Plan * Be clear about what to do if no-one is at home   *At least once a month, a statutory visit should be in the child’s home, in order to achieve its full, child focussed purpose.*  *Other statutory visits can take place in another suitable setting such as the school or in the community but not instead of monthly home visits.*  *If in doubt, refer back to the purpose of statutory visits in relation to achieving the child’s plan, and consult your line manager*. | **ALL visits**   * See the child * Ask the child how they feel and for their views about their life * Observe relationships * Assess whether their needs are being met, linked to their plan (including diversity issues) * Prepare for the next review with the child; how to capture their contributions and feelings * Note any significant events/changes to the plan * Clarify what actions have been identified at the visit: what, by when, by whom, how to check that it has been done * Celebrate what it going well and where progress has been made. | **Recording: What does a ‘Good’ record of a stat visit look like?**   * The date of the stat visit * Who was seen and where * Whether the child was seen, whether seen alone * If not seen alone or in the home, why * SWs observations about the child’s welfare/relationships and the stability of the placement/ home environment * Comment on specific areas directly linked back to the Child’s Plan * Any comments made by the child, using their own language, especially around current needs/wellbeing and lined to the future plan * Analysis of visit including strengths, concerns or difficulties * Actions identified during the visit – what, by whom, by when * Date of next stat visit   **Recording it on Liquid Logic**  **Type: Visit**   * Sub Type: Stat CP or * Sub Type: Stat LAC or * If a non-statutory visit - Sub Type: CIN or home visit general.   **Recording the LL Outcome:**   * Child seen * Child seen alone * Child not seen |
| Child in Care | * Within 1 week of the beginning of any placement * During the first year of any placement, at intervals of not more than six weeks * Every six weeks during subsequent years unless formally agreed as a permanent placement where it is at intervals of not more than three months | **Child Protection Statutory Home Visits**   * Assess stability of home environment * See family and others in the home * How does child engage with family * Challenge safeguarding concerns * Address specific issues raised in the child’s plan and reviews * Consider – is it time to see this child’s bedroom? * Assess progress of any interventions * Set a date for the next statutory visit within timescales |
| **Children in Care Statutory Visits**   * Assess and review stability of placement * Observe how child engages with carer * Note carer issues * See child’s sleeping arrangements (minimum of once per year) * Assess contact arrangements * **Set a date for the next statutory visit within timescales** |

**Further Guidance**

**What has informed this wording?**

* Working Together and Children in Care regulations
* Leeds guidance, Essex guidance
* Discussion with OLT and Practice Learning Team

**Is this different to previous policy and guidance?**

* This is in line with and replaces previous guidance on Tri X.

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| **What** | **Why** |
| **When the child is seen alone and at home:** | It is important to see the child alone and in the place where they are living. The Social Worker can then assess the suitability of the accommodation and the overall circumstances of the child’s living environment, including how the child responds to carers and their home. The child must be given the opportunity to say how they are feeling and for the Social Worker to assess and report on the safety of the child, their health and other matters relevant to their living environment. To fully assess this it may be necessary, on occasions, to see the child outside of the home. Whilst young children may not be able to verbalise their feelings, observations of their mobility, signs of injury, confidence in their environment, reaction to carers are all key to assessing their well-being. |
| **The names of all those present are recorded** | In order to understand the child’s environment, it is important to know who lives in the household and what part they play in the child’s life. Consistently absent carers at visits may indicate a difficulty for the child with that adult, certainly it is difficult to assess the child’s environment without seeing key carers with the child. Where the child has a child protection plan is in place, visitors or associates of the family may be key to the safeguarding aspects of the child’s home life or of the Child Protection Plan. |
| **The child’s environment is assessed according to the issues of concern** | This is particularly relevant in child protection. The home conditions should be investigated in accordance with the issues of concern, for example in neglect cases the food volume, clothing stock, dryness of beds, locks on doors etc should be the focus, whilst in alcohol abuse cases additional investigations of alcohol stocks, bins and cupboards will be helpful. It is important to undertake some of these visits with other partners and to bench mark our assessments of poor home conditions on occasion, given that we may become desensitised to the conditions overtime. |
| **The child’s sleeping arrangements are seen** | Sleeping arrangements for children subject to Protection Plans should form part of the assessment. The standard of care in the home should be observed and recorded. |
| **Some unannounced** | To ensure that a full and comprehensive assessment of the child subject to child protection enquires or a Child Protection Plan it is necessary to see the child in as many different circumstances as possible. Unannounced visits offer the Social Worker the opportunity to see the child and the carers without the pre- planning processes that may have occurred prior to a planned or expected visit. This will provide a balanced perspective of the quality of life for the child in the home. However planning will be required to manage the possibility of an unsuccessful unannounced visit impacting of the timeliness of visiting requirements for the child. |
| **Detailed recording of the visit** | Recording statutory visits and Child Protection/ Children In Need visits is mandatory. After each visit the record of the visit must include whether the child was seen alone, comment on the child’s health, wellbeing and any issues relating to safeguarding. In addition to this, the wishes and feelings of the child during the visit should be recorded. Clear recording of statutory visits will support the quality of critical reflection, supervision, and honours and respects the child should they return to read their file as part of making sense of their childhood. |
| **Note: If Parent refuses to allow worker to see the child:** The starting point is Restorative Practice: clear engagement, explanations and expectations; building the working relationship; and high support/high challenge in equal measure. If the parents continue to refuse access to the child or will not consent to you seeing the child alone, management advice should immediately be sought as you may, depending on the complexity of the case and the level of risk, need to consider bringing the child protection review forward or in some situations consider taking legal advice. **Please refer to the Failure to Gain Access policy on Tri X.** | |