Visitors Policy

**REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS**

[**Regulation 5 – Engaging with the Wider System to Ensure Each Child’s Needs are Met**](http://qualitystandards.proceduresonline.com/homes/p_quality_standards.html#reg_5)

**The Protection of Children Standard**

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**1.****General**

1. We wish to maintain an open and professional relationship with our neighbours, agencies and visitors to the home. We welcome and encourage visitors to all our homes but we understand that this has to be achieved within the context of protecting the interests and rights of everyone living and working within the home;
2. **ALL** visitors to the home must have their ID checked and verified, regardless of who they are. No entry should be permitted unless ID is seen and the person is verified.
3. There is a potentially wide range of people who may wish to visit our homes and staff need to be vigilant when permitting visitors to enter the home, ensuring identification is always authenticated. If the visitor is unable to prove their identity, the manager must be consulted and give approval before contact is permitted;
4. Visitors to homes fall into several categories: Social workers, parents, relatives or friends of children, prospective employees, employees from the wider network such as senior management or staff from other homes, contractors, inspectors, neighbours or representatives of community/agency groups, workers, delivery drivers, meter readers and the like;
5. The degree of briefing they need should be appropriate to the risks to which they are exposed and to which they might expose children. We understand this must be kept in context. We want the children in our care to lead normal everyday lives and to learn how to assess and manage risks;
6. The following applies to all visitors who are likely to remain in the home or come into contact with children:
   * They should have a clear understanding of the purpose and function of the home, this does not mean that they should be required to read our Statement of Purpose, but they should be briefed on the purpose of the home and risks they may encounter; Visitors are to be given a copy of Benecare’s Safeguarding Information Leaflet.
   * The visit should normally be planned/announced and agreed by the manager or staff (e.g. for social worker visits). Visits to children by parents, relatives and friends must be planned as set out in [**Section 2, Parents, Relatives and Friends**](https://www.proceduresonline.com/caldecott/chomes/chapters/p_visitors.html#parents). As part of the planning process, a risk assessment must be undertaken;
   * Visitors should, where possible, be welcomed by a manager or senior member of staff on duty, who should act as a reference person for the visitor for the duration of their visit. The manager/member of staff should ensure that the visitor's identity is authenticated as described in [**b) above**](https://www.proceduresonline.com/caldecott/chomes/chapters/p_visitors.html#potentially);
   * The visitor should be briefed on what behaviour they are likely to encounter, what to do if an incident occurs, practical matters such as fire precautions, location of toilets, mealtimes, etc.;
   * Any visitors that are unchecked (DBS Checks) must be chaperoned at all times when on the home’s premises;
   * Their arrival and departure must be recorded in the Daily Log, Visitors Book and, if an individual child has been visited, his/her daily record.

## **2.****Parents, Relatives and Friends**

We will do all we reasonably can to encourage contact with parents, relatives and friends but we have a duty to protect children's rights and interests. Therefore contact with parents, relatives and friends must be planned/agreed with social workers in consultation with children, and clearly set out in [**Placement Plan**](http://www.proceduresonline.com/resources/keywords_online/nat_key/keywords/placement_plan.html)**s.**

If parents. relatives and friends arrive without prior agreement and this is not included in the Placement Plan / Contact Agreement, staff should politely and sensitively explain that they can not allow contact until the manager/social worker has been consulted; and then consult the manager. If there appear to be any immediate risks to the child or others, staff should seek guidance and support from a manager or, in exceptional circumstances, the Police.

In relation to planned contacts, before or upon arrival parents and relatives will need a fuller briefing including information on how to react if there are problems or if children make offensive suggestions. If they are staying for longer periods particularly overnight they will need a full fire precautions briefing.

Staff will take precautions to prove the identity of parents, relatives or friends before entering the home, this will include visibly checking their ID and verifying this. If the person is unable to do so or there is any doubt or concerns on the part of staff, they may not come into the home and should be politely referred to a manager.

**3.****Delivery Persons**

People dropping off deliveries at the door for short periods such as delivery drivers, post office staff etc. will not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children and will not normally be expected to note their arrival or departure in the Daily Log and Visitors Book. However when circumstances are required for delivery persons to come into the home the staff will ask for their ID prior to entry to the home and the delivery will be logged in the log book with a record that ID has been checked.

**4.****Maintenance Workers and Contractors**

Before Contractors are permitted to undertake work in the home, the manager must ensure that they are properly briefed on the purpose and function of the home, and that any parameters are agreed, preferably in writing e.g. which parts of the home they may access, safe management of tools/equipment.

Staff must ask any contractors to prove their identity before entering the home. If the person is unable to do so or there is any doubt or concerns on the part of staff, they may not come into the home and should be politely referred to a manager.

Under no circumstances may contractors have unsupervised contact with children, even if they have obtained DBS checks.

All arrivals and departures must be recorded in the Daily Log and Visitors Book, any concerns raised by the workers or by staff within the home must immediately be brought to the attention of the manager.

**5.****Officials (e.g. Social Workers, Independent Visitors, Regulatory Authority)**

All Official Visitors to the home must provide ID before being allowed entry to the home. They are then to be logged into the visitors book and log book with a record of ID seen and verified.

Independent Visitors or Advocates who are likely to require unsupervised contact with children must firstly satisfy the manager of the home that they have up to date Enhanced DBS Checks.

Social workers, police officers and representatives of Regulatory Authority will not be required to provide details of DBS Checks.

Should such visitors require unsupervised contact with children, this is acceptable but they should not be alone with children in their bedrooms.

**6.****Employees and Children from other Homes**

Staff and children not working/living at the home must be treated as visitors; their arrival and departure must be recorded in the Daily Log and Visitors Book.

ID must be checked and verified prior to entry to the home. They are then to be logged into the visitors book and log book with a record of ID seen and verified.

Visits from children who reside at other homes must be planned and agreed with the manager prior to them coming to the home.

Should family members of employees visit the home, they must not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children.

**7.****Neighbours**

Neighbours may not have unsupervised contact with children.

We are keen to establish good relationships with people in the community, maintaining an open and honest dialogue.

A children's home no matter how well run is likely to have some degree of negative impact on its neighbours.

1. Where possible the locations of homes are chosen where such impact is minimised but where this is not possible, physical measures are taken such as the erection of substantial fences or the double glazing of windows from which a noise nuisance might emanate;
2. Homes should discourage behaviour patterns, which seem likely to cause difficulties e.g. noisy activities or loud music in close proximity to neighbours' property;
3. In new locations, contact should be made with neighbours at the earliest opportunity and regular contact after that should be maintained. All efforts should be made to build up goodwill and understanding as they are of assistance if difficulties do arise. The parish council are involved at the early stage of registration when no young people have yet been placed at the Home;
4. Neighbours should be given practical advice on dealing with our children which might include not inviting them into their homes, not lending money or offering cigarettes, etc.;
5. If an incident occurs, it must be taken seriously. All phone calls or visits should be dealt with calmly and politely, even if aggressive. A manager should call back as soon as possible and if at all possible, arrange a visit to the neighbour. If the neighbour wishes to make a complaint, the manager should refer to the [**Representations, Compliments and Complaints Procedure**](https://www.proceduresonline.com/caldecott/chomes/chapters/p_representations.html).

**8. Recording in the Visitors Book**

Once the visitors ID has been seen and verified by a Benecare staff member they are to be welcomed into the home and signed into the visitors’ book.

This should include a record of;

* The date they have arrived
* Their name
* The name of the staff member signing them in
* The company/organisation they work for
* Who they are here to see
* If there ID has been checked and verified
* If a visitors badge has been received
* If the fire evacuation procedure has been explained
* If the Benecare Safeguarding Information Leaflet has been given and explained
* If their temperature has been taken
* The time they arrived
* The time they left
* Their signature

All ID should be checked and the person verified prior to entry to the home. It is not permitted to put N/A for Not applicable in this box.

All visitors must receive information about the fire evacuation and if there are any planned fire drills. It is not permitted to put N/A for Not applicable in this box.

**9. Recording in the Log Book**

Once the visitors ID has been seen and verified by a Benecare staff member they are to be welcomed into the home and signed into the visitors’ book. Once this has been done the visitor is to be recorded in the log book. This should include a record of;

* The time of arrival
* Their name and who they are here to see
* ID checked and verified and by who
* The time they have left

**10. Covid 19 Procedure for Visitors to the Home**

Inform the visitor you will need to take their temperature at the door, if this is above 37.8 degrees Celsius, they will not be permitted entry to the home.

* **Ask the following questions;**
* Do they have a new and or continuous dry cough?
* Have they had a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste?
* Have they travelled anywhere on the exclusion list?

If the visitor is clear of the above they can be allowed access to the home.

Please remind the visitor that should they test positive for Covid-19 within two weeks of visiting the home then they are to contact us and let us know. If there is a positive case within the home environment the home is to contact all visitors present in the home over the past two weekly period.

Please inform the visitor to wash or sanitise their hands and inform them of social distancing requirements in the home environment.