

1.14.22 Visitors Policy

(The current visitors policy should be read in conjunction with the pandemic policy which currently restricts non-essential visitors)

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1. Regulations and Standards

England

- [Regulation 12: The protection of children standard](#)
- [Guide to the protection of children standard](#)
- [Schedule 4: Other records with respect to children's homes](#)

Wales

- [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)
- [Statutory Guidance For service providers and responsible individuals on meeting service standard regulations](#)
<https://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/180201statutory-guidanceen.pdf>
- [Regulation 15: Personal plan](#)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/15/made>
- [Regulation 44: Premises](#)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/44/made>
- [Regulation 59: Records \(Schedule 2\)](#)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/schedule/2/made>

2. Outcome

The services maintain an open and professional relationship with neighbours, agencies and interested people in the community, welcoming visitors while protecting the interests and rights of everyone living and working within the home.

3. General

1. We wish to maintain an open and professional relationship with neighbours, agencies and interested people in the community. We also 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 Bryn Melyn Care;
 2. There is a potentially wide range of people who may wish to visit our services 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;
 3. Visitors to services fall into several categories: Social workers, parents, relatives or friends of children/young people, prospective employees, inspectors, neighbours or representatives of community/agency groups, workers, delivery drivers, meter readers and the like;
 4. The degree of briefing they need should be appropriate to the risks to which they are exposed and to which they might expose children/young people. We understand this must be kept in context. We want the children/young people in our care to lead normal everyday lives and to learn how to assess and manage risks;
 5. The following applies to all visitors who are likely to remain in the home or come into contact with children/young people:
 - (a) 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;
 - (b) The visit should normally be planned/announced and agreed by the manager or staff (e.g. for social worker visits). Visits to children/young people by parents, relatives and friends must be planned as set out in Section 4, (Parents, Relatives and Friends). As part of the planning process, a risk assessment must be undertaken;
 - (c) Visitors should 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 point 2 above;
 - (d) 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;
 - (e) Any visitor that is not DBS checked must be chaperoned when on the home's premises;
 - (f) Their arrival and departure must be recorded in the Visitors Book and if an individual child/young person has been visited this should be included in their daily records.
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4. Parents, Relatives and Friends

1. No contact may be permitted between children/young people and their parents, siblings, relatives or friends without the approval of the social worker - preferably outlined in the Placement Plan.
2. We will do all we reasonably can to encourage contact with parents and relatives but we have a duty to protect children's/young people's rights and interests. Therefore contact with parents or relatives must be planned/agreed with social workers in consultation with child/young person, and clearly set out in Placement Plans.
3. If parents or relatives arrive without prior agreement, staff should politely and sensitively explain that they cannot 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 children/young people or others, staff should seek guidance and support from the manager, the Regional Manager, Operations Director or in exceptional circumstances, the Police.
4. 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/young people make offensive suggestions.
5. Staffs needs to take reasonable precautions to prove the identity of parents, relatives or friends 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.

5. Delivery People

People visiting for short periods such as delivery drivers, post office staff etc. will not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children/young people and will not normally be expected to note their arrival or departure in the Visitors Book.

6. Maintenance Workers and Contractors

1. Before Contractors are permitted to undertake work, the registered manager/home 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.
2. Staff must ask the visitor 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/young people, even if they have obtained DBS checks, unless the relevant social worker approves it.
3. All arrivals and departures must be recorded in the Visitors Book, any concerns raised by the workers or by staff within the home must immediately be brought to the attention of the registered manager/home manager.

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

1. Official visitors must provide identification before being allowed access to the home.
2. Independent Visitors or Advocates who are likely to require unsupervised contact with children/young people must firstly satisfy the registered manager/home manager that they have up to date enhanced DBS checks.
3. 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/young people, this is acceptable but they should not be alone with children/young people in their bedrooms.

8. Employees and Children/Young People from other Homes

1. Staff and children/young people not working/living at the home must be treated as visitors; their arrival and departure must be recorded in the Visitors Book.
2. Should family members of employees visit the home, they must not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children/young people.

9. Neighbours

1. Neighbours may not have unsupervised contact with children/young people.
2. We are keen to establish good relationships with people in the community, maintaining an open and honest dialogue.
3. A home, no matter how well run, is likely to have some degree of negative impact on its neighbours.
 - (a) 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;
 - (b) Homes should discourage behaviour patterns, which seem likely to cause difficulties e.g. noisy activities or loud music in close proximity to neighbours' property;
 - (c) Neighbours should be given practical advice on dealing with our children/young people, which might include not inviting them into their homes, not lending money or offering cigarettes, etc;
 - (d) 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 Complaints Procedure.

10. Revision History

Date last updated: May 2020

Date of next review: May 2021

Date of release: December 2018