



Warrnambool West  
Primary School

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Contact us:

Hoddle St, Warrnambool  
Victoria 3280, Australia

Phone: 03 5561 3161

## HOME VISITS POLICY and PROCEDURE

### Rationale:

We feel that home visits are an important way to build positive relationships between home and school. Home visits may occur when a new family start with us or for special events. However our Wellbeing Officer or Principal may carry out visits for other students throughout the year. Home visits are for both sides to share information, which is in the best interests of the child and for support to be offered, if needed. Visits also allow parents/carers to share sensitive information without fear of being interrupted or overheard and for the child to feel relaxed in their home setting.

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

### Aims:

- To ensure that staff are aware of the procedures for and the possible risks associated with 'conducting' Home Visits.
- To comply with DET directives and/or guidelines relating to Home Visits.
- To minimise the possible OHS risks associated with DET employees conducting 'Home Visits' (or away from DET workplaces).

### Implementation:

#### Procedure **Prior** to a Visit:

1. Check Client (family) case history with Wellbeing Officer
2. If visiting outside business hours must make prior arrangement with the Principal or Wellbeing Officer and notify them of your safe return.
3. Record your whereabouts on Home Visit register (located in the Office). This includes recording the time and date of the visit, the student/family, the reason for the visit and the address.
4. Staff must attend home visits in pairs for their own security. This could be with a member of school staff or an outside agency.
5. Carry a fully charged mobile phone and keep it turned on.
6. Establish an unspoken communication system with your 'co-worker' should the visit need to be ended quickly.

#### Procedure **During** a Visit:

7. Park in a location that permits a quick and safe exit.
8. Keep your car keys in your personal possession at all times.
9. Do not enter home unless invited.
10. Establish who is in the house before entering.

11. Members of staff should introduce themselves and the purpose of the visit should be explained.
12. Position yourself near an exit where you can see the rest of house.
13. Request that doors **not** be locked with deadlocks etc.
14. Interview client in room closest to the front door avoiding kitchen and bedroom if possible.
15. One staff member should lead the visit to avoid the parent/carer feeling overwhelmed.
16. If necessary, notes should be taken to inform future planning for the family.
17. Staff should constantly read the mood of the visit to ensure that they do not put themselves in danger, including animals.
18. If anyone unexpected arrives during the visit terminate the visit.
19. At any time if you feel unsafe terminate the meeting, leave and contact your Principal.
20. Appropriate PPE must be worn if there is a potential exposure to biological hazards.

**Procedure After a Visit:**

21. If conducting a visit during school hours, notify Principal or Wellbeing Officer and sign the register upon return to school.
22. If conducting a visit 'out of hours' contact Principal or Wellbeing Officer via phone once you have left the visit.
23. All notes should be written up and shared appropriately.
24. Referrals to be made if necessary.
25. Dates for a further home visit could be set.

**In case of emergencies:**

- The school office will be aware of who is making a home visit and to which family.
- If the member/s of staff do not return at the agreed time, then the school office will ring the mobile phone number provided.
- The Police must be called if there is no answer and there is reasonable cause for concern.

**Important:**

Home visits should always be discussed with the Principal and/or the Wellbeing Officer and always be carried out in the best interests of the child.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review process.

Date: 19/03/2018	Responsibility: School Council	Review Date: March 2021
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