



Phoenix Community Care Ltd Foster Care Policy & Procedure

0229 - Unannounced Visits Guidance and Protocol

Version	Written	Updated/ Reviewed	Scheduled Review Date	Author/ Reviewer	Approving Body	Date Approved
1	2008	2008	2009	Anne Sprigs		
2	2013		2014	Gena Areola	Directors	5.2.14
		Jan'15	Jan'16	J A Coates	PCC Director	Feb'15
		July'16	July'19	J A Coates	PCC Director	July '16

Unannounced Visits Guidance and Protocol

The UK National Standards for Foster Care and the Fostering Services regulations recommends that Foster Carers have at least one unannounced visit conducted per year. For best practice, PCC aims to carry out two unannounced visits per year.

We are aware that some Foster Carers have anxieties about the nature of the visits. This guidance sets out the expectations about how these visits should be conducted and recorded.

Guidance

Why 'Unannounced Visit'?

PCC acknowledge and recognise that the Supervisory service we provide is of a good standard but we are continually striving to improve to ensure that children in foster care are safe. Unannounced visits are one of the measures available to ensure that foster care being provided by PCC is of a high standard.

What we will want to know?

Who is looking after the child or young person?

Who is in the home?

If the Foster Carer is not at home, what arrangements have been made to care for the child/young person?

What is to be seen?

The child(ren)'s bedroom(s) and the communal spaces available to the child such as the bathroom, kitchen and living rooms. We will not want to see the foster carer's bedroom or their children's bedrooms unless they share with the fostered child (i.e. baby under 2 years)

Our Undertaking

PCC will complete the visit as quickly as possible.

Clarify any issues with you and then

Have a standard format for unannounced visits so that all visits are the same.

NB: This visit is not about checking on how tidy your home is. The visits will be conducted by the supervising social worker who is aware of the general standard of your home.

Protocols

All unannounced visits will take place between 8:00am and 8:00pm, on any day of the week (however it is anticipated that most visits will take place during Monday to Friday).

All carers will have an unannounced visit at least once a year (can be more, at the discretion of the supervising social worker and the manager).

If a foster carer is not at home, the supervising social worker will leave a note to say they have visited.

If the child/young person is being looked after by a babysitter or back-up carer, the supervising social worker will seek to identify the person looking after the child/young person.

If the circumstances warrant it, the supervising social worker may request that the child is seen and continue with the visit, or may not continue the visit.

We would not expect foster carers to refuse an unannounced visit.

All supervising social workers must follow the standard pro-forma.