Support for Early Years Home Visits Guidelines

1. Scope

_Launching into Learning teachers_, Kindergarten teachers and Child and Family Centre staff may make a home visit with other colleagues or professionals from other services, for example, Early Childhood Intervention Services, Child Health Nurse or Family Support Worker. These must be negotiated prior to the visit in partnership with the family. The purpose of the meeting needs to be clear, the role of each team member explained and any need for ongoing visits and support agreed.

2. Purpose

These guidelines support the purpose and practice of home visiting for early childhood teachers, particularly _Launching into Learning_ and Kindergarten teachers. All staff making home visits must be familiar with Conducting Home Visits Procedures and Worker Safety Guidelines.

Home visiting begins with the premise that the parent is the child’s first and most important teacher and the home is the most influential learning environment.

_The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia_ identifies working in partnership as one of the key principles that reflect contemporary theory and research evidence concerning children’s early learning and development. ‘Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families’ (page 12). Home visits can be an important strategy for fostering a partnership between home and school. Visits should always occur in negotiation with the family.

Home visiting, as a valued practice for early childhood teachers, recognises that these visits build relationships between school and home and enable parents to share knowledge of their child, interests and abilities. They also provide an opportunity for parents to discuss and ask questions related to their child’s development in a private environment as well as ask questions about school policies. Children, often, enjoy the fact the ‘the teacher’ has visited ‘their space’.

3. Requirements

- The principal or senior manager must be aware of and has approved the home visit.
- A colleague, principal or office staff member must be aware of the time and place of the home visit.

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