

## **Protocol for Members to drop in to visit Our Children's Homes**

As Corporate Parents we should all know that our residential children's homes are being run to the best possible standards. With this in mind we already do formal inspections.

To supplement these inspections and to encourage strong relationships between the homes – particularly between the children and Councillors - we are going to encourage more informal drop in visits by members.

So we don't overload the homes we have written a short protocol for members to work to.

1. Prior to attending visit, all Councillors **MUST** have a completed CRB Check and have attended the relevant Corporate Parenting Training
2. The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer (OSCer) Ellen Bird, will hold a list of dates that Members can visit homes. These dates will not be known by the homes or management. The OSCer will contact Members of the Corporate Parenting Board and Local Ward Councillors to arrange a schedule for these visits.
3. Members must arrange the unannounced visit with the OSCer and must not turn up at a home without confirming arrangements prior to arrival.
4. Visit days and times will vary so that Members can see the home at different times of the day. It will be possible for Members to visit on a weekend
5. As these visits are not part of the formal visit plan the member should treat them as an informal drop in for tea / coffee type of visit. With a view to get to know staff and children and pick up any issues of concern that might arise.
6. On arrival at the home members should make them selves known to senior staff member and tell them that it is an informal visit agreed with above officer. Councillors should take their Council Identification with them and present it upon arrival.
7. **If for any reason the staff member says it is not convenient to visit at this time please leave and inform Ellen Bird.** The OSCer will follow up to find out reason and inform the member and chair of corporate parenting. Another visit will then be arranged.
8. These visits are informal however it would be useful if you sent a brief note/email to Ellen Bird with your views and findings. Particularly if you have any concerns that require immediate attention.
9. Please remember you are visiting someone's home treat it as you would like your home to be treated.

10. If before you go to visit a home you need to ask any questions or want any background information please contact the above officer of chair of corporate parenting.

It is hoped that Members will develop strong relations with staff and the children and young people and that this will help to support the residential homes and drive up services.