



EYFS Home Visit Policy and Procedure

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Signed: Chair of Trustees	(Sue Trentini)

1. Policy Aims

- To ensure that communication between both parties (parents/carers/guardians and staff) are able to share their knowledge with the best interest of the child in mind.
- To reduce the risk of staff members when completing home visits.
- Ensure good working practice and procedures are followed.
- Provide guidance and reassurance to staff and promote best practice in line with current legislation.

2. Legislative Framework

- Children's Home Regulations (2015)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1999
- UN Convention on Rights of the Child 1989
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016
- Human Rights Act
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage 2012
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017

3. Other Supporting Documents

Government Guidance, Regulations and Quality Standards for Children's Homes
Guide to the Children's Home Regulations including the quality standards (2015)

4. Introduction

The aim of this policy procedure is to ensure good working practice and to provide guidelines in reducing risks to member of staff when undertaking home visits.

The purpose:

- To establish a partnership between parents/carers/guardians and staff so that all parties share their knowledge about the child to enable the individual needs of the child to be met.
- To develop and strengthen relationships with parents/carers/guardians for the best interests of the child.

The definition of a home visit:

- A home visit is a visit that requires member(s) of staff to enter the home of a parent, carer, or guardian in the case of an emergency visit or a procedural visit.

All home visits conducted by staff must be authorised by the senior or deputy Safeguarding Lead.

In addition, wherever possible parents/carers/guardians should be informed of the home visit prior to arrival. There will be exceptions to this, for example a visit to confirm that an absent child is at home when parents/carers/guardians are not responding to telephone calls/text messages or emergency safeguarding visits.

5. Reasons for Home Visits

Home visits are important in helping the school to make contact with new or hard to reach parents/carers/guardians. They are particularly useful as they enable the parents/carers/guardians to still have contact with the school, but in their own environment.

Home visits are to be used when:

- Students are refusing to come into school
- When there are attendance issues/concerns
- When all other means of contact with a family has failed
- To meet with parents/carers/guardians to discuss their child, where it is in the best interest of the child to have that discussion in their own home rather than at school or where it would be difficult for a parents/carers/guardians to attend school for a meeting.
- To try to establish that a child is safe if they are absent from school and attempts to contact parents/carers/guardians have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the student. To work with and support parents/carers/guardians in developing strategies to help their child attend school where attendance is an issue.
- To collect from or drop a child off at home where there are concerns for a child's welfare if they travelled by other means.
- To drop off or collect work for a child when they are completing schoolwork at home e.g. following a fixed term exclusion or medical issue.
- To visit a child who has been off school for a period of time, for example due to a medical issue, so that they do not feel isolated from school.
- To investigate situations when there are suspicions that someone may be on holiday contrary to earlier indications (for example when a child is not at school and reported as being ill during the same period for which a request for exceptional leave in term-time had been refused).

6. Benefits of the Home Visit

Home visits have many benefits. For parents, carers, guardians and children, a home visit gives the opportunity to meet a key person in a setting that they are familiar and comfortable with. Other opportunities are to:

- Establish a positive contact with a key member of staff who is supporting the child.

- Meet family members that are important to the child.
- Talk about the child and their needs.

7. Procedures of the Home Visit

Before the home visit:

- Be familiar with the school's policy and procedure for home visits.
- Be clear about the purpose of the visit. Make sure that a home visit is really necessary. (If possible and/or practical, arrange for parents/carers/guardians to come into the school)
- Arrange for an appropriate person to accompany you, home visits must be conducted in pairs. Clarify each person's role.
- Make sure you are well informed about the subject of the visit. Collect any necessary documentation. Check on school's policy and practice.
- Consider who you need to see, e.g. one or both parents/carers/guardians, with or without the child.
- Make sure you are well informed about the family and are aware of personal circumstances.
- Wherever possible make an appointment to establish a time convenient to the family and to ensure that everyone you want to see will be present. Either make a phone call or send a letter. The time of the appointment is then recorded in the administration file, stored in the admin office and in a locked unit.

During the home visit:

- Park in a well-lit area and in a position where you do not need to reverse on leaving.
- Home-visits are to be completed only during hours of daylight.
- Dress appropriately, following the standards of the school staff handbook.
- Inform the office that you are leaving and the time you will be returning/calling to confirm you have left.
- If you are not returning directly to school, telephone/email the school after the visit to say you have left the home visit – concerns to be raised by the office if not contacted for a set period of time (45min). Timers to be set to allow the office to check between intervals.
- Be aware of the animals present and observant of their behaviour towards you. If a potential risk (see risk assessment) ask for the animal to be removed or for the home visit to be rearranged.
- Introduce yourself, have identification available and explain again the purpose of the visit, carry your identification do not use a necklace lanyard (clip release lanyards only).
- Do not enter the premises unless invited in by a responsible adult.
- Do not enter the premises if invited to do so by a child that is on the premises unsupervised by a responsible adult.
- Only speak to an adult with parental responsibility (parent/carer/guardian) or another responsible adult whom parent/carer/guardian has delegated to be there in their absence and they have given us permission to speak to about the student for whom we are making the home visit.

- Do not speak to siblings other than to ask if their parent/carer/guardian is available. Do not discuss the purpose of the visit with siblings or any other unknown young person or adult at the premises.
- Do not go upstairs in a property unless accompanied by a responsible adult and then ONLY if you deem it completely safe to do so and necessary.
- Do not enter a child's/young person's bedroom.
- If you are concerned that a child/young person is in the home inappropriately, alone/unsupervised/in danger contact the schools designated senior or deputy Safeguarding Lead to discuss your observations or to seek immediate advice from them if you are uncertain whether the child is alone/unsupervised/in danger. If appropriate, the senior or deputy Safeguarding Lead will make a referral to social care.
- If you feel that, a child/young person is in immediate danger contact emergency services 999.
- Assure parent/carer/guardian that you will treat anything they tell you sensitively and will only tell the Principal or other appropriate staff. Explain that you may need to take notes during the meeting. Do not promise not to relay information to school. Remember that under the child protection procedures you must report disclosures or suspicions to the designated teacher for child protection.
- Be sensitive to the culture, religion etc. of the home.
- Be professional; give professional advice and information rather than personal opinions.
- Be sympathetic, but remain neutral. Do not get personally involved. Be discreet but assertive about the direction of the conversation; do not gossip about the school or staff.
- Do not stay too long. Keep to the point.
- Do not carry large sums of money when making a home visit.
- Complete Home Visit Form to evidence visit.

Action to take if threatened during the home visit:

- If you are threatened or prevented from leaving, stay calm and try to control the situation. Try to appear confident, speak slowly and clearly and not be enticed into an argument.
- Keep your distance, never touch or turn your back on someone who is angry.
- Between the working pair, agree a code word (safe word) or phrase to alert a colleague that you need assistance or should leave.
- The same code word should be used if you contact school to alert them that you are in danger and need support.
- Staff must leave the property and reach a place of safety if you have any concerns about personal safety and inform school immediately.

8. After the home visit:

- Report to the school; if possible, give written feedback to the appropriate staff in line with school policy.
- Any Child Protection concerns arising from home visits should be discussed with the senior or deputy Safeguarding Lead on arrival back in order to then be reported on CPOMS once on the school system.

- At school, do not discuss individual home visits with staff who are not involved with those particular children.

Policy Appendices

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment Form						
Task/Activity: Home Visits						
Location/ Key Stage: Out of School		Date Assessed: 31/01/22		Issue Number: NA		
Assessed by: STAFF MEMBERS NAMES		Review Date: Annually/as and when required		Reference Number: NA		
Hazard/Risk	Persons at risk	Controls in place	Severity (1-5)	Likelihood (1-5)	Risk Rating	Additional controls required
Major injury occurred through aggressive or violent parent/student/family member.	Staff completing home visit.	Staff aware of the procedures (informed through the policy). Staff to have their mobile phones accessible to call/respond to office contact/alert emergency services Staff aware of home circumstances. Risk reduced by informing safeguarding team prior to the visit.	4	2	Medium	Office to be informed how to respond if 'safe word' used.
Driving to location: Vehicle breakdown/accident/intruder in vehicle when unattended/phone usage.	Staff completing the home visit.	Staff to maintain vehicle properly. Designated driver to have a breakdown cover. Staff to carry torch, phone etc. for emergency. Passenger to use the phone to communicate. Valuables not left in car (e.g. laptop).	3	2	Medium	Breakdown cover – designated driver decided in advance.

Movement through public e.g. to/from car/house.	Staff completing the home visit.	Staff to be alert and aware of their surroundings. If confronted, staff to call for help/use attack alarm/surrender valuables if personal safety is at risk. Staff to use public transport if available. Staff to receive past incident support should the incident arise.	3	1	Low	
Attack by dog or other animal present at the visit.	Staff completing the home visit.	Staff to avoid contact with animals. Staff to show appropriate behaviour near animals – avoid alarming them, e.g. sudden movements. If possible and suited to the situation, staff are to direct the parent to take the animal to another room/location as the visit continues.	3	2	Medium	

Risk Rating Indicator Key

Severity (Consequence)

1. Negligible (delay only)
2. Slight (minor injury / damage / interruption)
3. Moderate (lost time injury, illness, damage, lost business)
4. High (major injury / damage, lost time business interruption, disablement)
5. Very High (fatality / business closure)

Likelihood

1. Improbable / very unlikely
2. Unlikely
3. Even chance / may happen
4. Likely
5. Almost certain / imminent

RISK RATING PRIORITY INDICATOR MATRIX

LIK ELI HO OD	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5
		SEVERITY (CONSEQUENCE)				

Summary

Suggested Timeframe

12-25	High	As soon as possible
6-10	Medium	Within next 3-6 months
1-5	Low	Whenever viable to do so