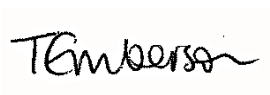
Home Visits Policy

Approval Date: **November 2024**

Review Date: **November 2028**

Headteacher: 

Contents

1. Aims 2
2. Legislation and Guidance 2
3. Definitions 2
4. Roles and Responsibilities 2
5. Reasons for Home Visits 3
6. Procedures 4
7. Monitoring Arrangements 6
8. Links with other Policies 6

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that staff, parents/carers and pupils understand:

- When and why our school conducts home visits;
- How our school conducts home visits safely and effectively;
- What we do after we've conducted a home visit.

If there are any concerns about a pupil's safety or wellbeing during a visit, appropriate action will be taken in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy takes into account the responsibilities laid out in:

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

Children missing education

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school

It also reflects general health and safety legislation.

3. Definitions

A home visit is a visit that requires member(s) of staff to enter the home of a parent or carer. There are different types of home visit:

- A procedural visit, e.g. to drop off work when a pupil is unable to attend school;
- A safe and well check (or welfare check), e.g. if a pupil is absent without good reason and the school has concerns about their welfare;
- A visit that member(s) of staff will undertake before (or soon after) a child begins attending school, to get to know them and their family.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Approving this policy.

4.2 The Headteacher (DSL) or Deputy DSL

The Headteacher or Deputy DSL is responsible for:

- Authorising any home visits when the visit has a safeguarding focus;
- Responding to any issues or concerns raised by parents or carers about home visits.

4.3 Senior staff, including the Headteacher and DSL (where appropriate)

All senior staff, including the Headteacher and DSL (where appropriate), are responsible for:

- Sharing this policy so staff know why, when and how to conduct a home visit;
- Training staff in the school home visit procedures and conduct;
- Overseeing risk assessments;
- Deciding which members of staff should attend a home visit;
- Not allowing any visits which place staff at risk (read more details about these risks later in this policy);
- If pupils/children are judged to be at risk: Making sure staff follow school and/or local safeguarding procedures.

4.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Keeping to the policy;
- Following the correct procedures before, during and after a home visit, including reporting and recording any safeguarding issues;
- Taking reasonable steps to ensure their own safety, as detailed later in this policy;
- Informing the school of their movements and time of return.

4.5 Parents/Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Communicating any issues or concerns about a home visit to the Headteacher.

5. Reasons for Home Visits

We might conduct a home visit to:

Build relationships with pupils and their parents or carers. This could include:

- A visit before the child begins at the school;
- When families aren't engaging in other forms of contact;
- To work with and support parents/carers to develop strategies to improve a pupil's attendance.

Make sure we are fulfilling our safeguarding responsibilities, including:

- To make a safe and well check (this may happen in conjunction with the Local Authority Social Care Team);
- To investigate when a pupil is refusing to come into school.

Other procedural reasons:

- When a pupil is being educated at home, including to drop off or collect work;
- If a pupil is late to a statutory examination (KS2 test week) and we can't contact them;
- To visit a pupil who has been off school for a period of time, e.g. due to a medical issue, so they don't feel isolated from the school community;
- To visit a child after a certain number of absences.

6. Procedures

6.1 Before the visit

Staff will:

- Familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy;
- Ensure that a home visit is necessary. If possible and/or practical, arrange for the parent/carer to come into the school;
- Be clear about the purpose of their visit;
- Be aware of any relevant background information, including who lives at the address and any safeguarding information, by checking with the DSL if necessary;
- Make sure they can be accompanied by a colleague;
- Arrange the first visit over the telephone, where appropriate, at a time when a parent/carer will be home;
- Use the call to give the parent/carer an opportunity to ask questions about the visit, confirm the home address and proposed length of visit;
- Log any home visits planned with the office staff, with times and venues;
- Familiarise themselves with the address they'll be visiting, including any transport or parking arrangements.

6.2 During the visit

Staff will:

- Be on time as agreed in advance with the parent/carer, and be able to let them know if they're running late;
- Dress appropriately and act in a professional manner at all times;
- Identify themselves and show their identification badge;
- Check with the parent/carer whether they understand the purpose of the visit;

- Only enter the premises when invited in by a responsible adult. If no responsible adult with parental responsibility for the child is present, the staff member(s) will return to school and attempt a visit at another time;
- Only speak to adults with day-to-day responsibility for the child;
- Request that all animals in the home should be kept in a separate room, and cancel the visit if the responsible adult refuses, or is unable to adhere to the request;
- Behave with respect in the home, respecting the culture and customs of the family, and only use areas of the property with permission and never entering bedrooms;
- Explain that their phone will be on throughout the visit;
- Take notes for ease of recording the content of the visit afterwards, and explain to the parent/carer that the notes will only be shared with the relevant senior leaders;
- Leave the property immediately if they feel uncomfortable, or at any risk;
- Consider the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures at all times, and call 999 if they feel a child is in immediate danger.

For EYFS visits:

- Spend time with the parent/carer and the child;
- Bring activities to keep the child occupied.

6.3 In the event an incident does occur

Staff will:

- Contact emergency services on 999 if they feel themselves or someone else is in immediate danger;
- Terminate the visit immediately and leave the property swiftly in order to reach a place of safety;
- Once in a place of safety, inform the Headteacher/DSL and any other appropriate members of staff of the incident to agree appropriate next steps and obtain support;
- Record full details of the visit as soon as possible after the incident so they don't forget any details.

6.4 After the visit

Staff will:

- Let the school know immediately that they have left the property;
- Write up the outcome of the visit and file any notes made during the visit;
- Report any concerns, including safeguarding incidents, to the relevant members of staff;
- Only discuss individual home visits with other staff members where relevant and/or necessary.

6.5 Safeguarding

- Any safeguarding concerns identified during the visit will be shared with the DSL immediately, in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy or the relevant local authorities if the child isn't a pupil at the school yet;

- Any allegations made against a member of staff making a home visit will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring this policy:

- The Headteacher will review the policy every two years;
- The policy will be approved by the Governing Board.

8. Links with other Policies

This Home Visits Policy is linked to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Children Missing Education (CME) procedures and policies;
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- EYFS Policy.