



Home Visits Policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that staff, families and students 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 student's safety or well-being during a visit, appropriate action will be taken in line with our child protection and safeguarding policy

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy takes into account the responsibilities laid out in:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [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 a member(s) of staff to enter the home of a Wren School family member. There are different types of home visit:

- A procedural visit, e.g. to drop off work when a student is unable to attend school
- A safe and well check, e.g. if a student is absent without good reason and or the school has concerns about their welfare

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- Authorising any home visits, along with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) when the visit has a safeguarding focus.
- Authorising named staff beyond the attendance, safeguarding and progress leader team to complete home visits as part of their role.
- Responding to any issues or concerns raised by families or staff about home visits

4.2 Senior staff, including the Principal and DSL, where appropriate

All senior staff, including the Principal 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 students are judged to be at risk: making sure staff follow school and/or local safeguarding procedures.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Following 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.

4.4 Families

Families are responsible for:

- Communicating any issues or concerns about a home visit to the principal.
- Act in accordance with our family and school agreement when visits take place.

5. Reasons for Home Visits

We might conduct a home visit to:

- Build relationships with students and their families. This could include:
 - When families aren't engaging in other forms of contact.
 - To work with and support families to develop strategies to improve a student's attendance.
- Ensure 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 student is refusing to come into school.
- Other procedural reasons:
 - When a student is being educated at home, including to drop off or collect work.
 - If a student is late to a statutory examination and we can't contact them.
 - To visit a student 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 check the welfare of a student who has been absent without contact for more than five days.
 - To confirm reasons for a student's absence.

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 families and students to come into the school in the first instance.
- Be clear and explicit about the purpose of their visit and who they need to see on their visit.
- Be aware of any relevant background information, including who lives at the address and any safeguarding information, by checking Arbor and with the DSL if necessary.
- Undertake a risk assessment, (see appendix 2) and make sure they can be accompanied by a colleague where necessary.
- Arrange the first visit over the telephone, where appropriate, at a time when the appropriate family member is also available.
- Use the call to give the family member an opportunity to ask questions about the visit, confirm the home address and proposed length of visit.
- Log any planned home visits with the reception staff, with times and venues as in Appendix (1).
- Familiarise themselves with the address they'll be visiting, including any transport or parking arrangements.

Reception staff will alert the principal should a member of staff on a home visit not return within the expected timeframe.

6.2 During the visit

Staff will:

- Be on time as agreed in advance with the family member, and be able to let them know if they're running late.
- Park in a suitable and well-lit area.
- Dress appropriately and act in a professional manner at all times.
- Introduce themselves showing their identification badge and Wren lanyard.
- Check with the family member 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 adult family members with day-to-day responsibility for the child unless translation or support is required.
- Request that all animals in the home should be kept in a separate room, and cancel the visit if this request is refused, or if they are unable to adhere to the request.
- Behave with respect in the home, respecting the culture and customs of the family, and only using areas of the property with permissions 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 family member 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 child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures at all times, and call 999 if they feel a child or themselves are in immediate danger.
- Ensure that the visit is brief and focused on clear outcomes.

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.
- Leave the property swiftly and terminate the visit immediately in order to reach a place of safety.
- Once in a place of safety, inform the principal and any other appropriate members of staff (e.g. the DSL) 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 reception team know immediately that they have left the property.
- Write up the outcome of the visit and file any notes made during the visit, recording these in the relevant attendance spreadsheets.
- Report any concerns, including safeguarding incidents to the relevant member/s 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 child protection and safeguarding policy or the relevant local authorities if the child isn't a student at the school yet.
- Any complaints made against a member of staff making a home visit will be dealt with in accordance with our Concerns and Complaints policy.
- Visits should not take place outside of school hours unless approved by the principal and never after 4pm.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring this policy:

- The principal will review and approve the policy every year, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8. Links with Other Policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures, which are available to view [here](#).

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Risk assessment policy
- Children missing education (CME) procedures and policies
- Attendance policy
- Allegations against staff policy
- Health and safety policy

Appendix 1: Home Visit Form

DATE AND TIME OF DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL	START TIME OF VISIT (and expected length)	STAFF NAME AND MOBILE NUMBER	STUDENT/FAMILY BEING VISITED	FULL ADDRESS AND CONTACT NUMBER OF STUDENT/FAMILY	TIME RETURNED TO SCHOOL

Appendix 2: Home Visit Risk Assessment

Adapt this risk assessment template to suit your school. Any details filled in are suggestions only.

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED?	WHAT ARE YOU DOING ALREADY?	DO YOU NEED TO DO ANYTHING ELSE TO CONTROL THIS RISK?	ACTION: WHO?	ACTION: WHEN?	DONE
<i>An aggressive or violent student or family member</i>	<i>Staff members undertaking a home visit</i>	<i>Procedures outlined in the home visits policy</i>				
<i>Car accident</i>						
<i>Use of illegal substances</i>						
<i>Attack by a dog or other animal</i>						
<i>False allegations</i>						