



North Ridge School Home visit Policy for all Staff

Sept 2022

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Main amendments	
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Review	Every 2 years
Author	school
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Equality Statement: - Under the public sector equality duty (PSED), all schools/academies must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and to foster good relations across all protected characteristics. This means schools/academies must take into account equality considerations when policies are being developed, adopted and implemented. The One Education HR and People team regularly reviews all policies and procedures which are recommended to schools/academies to ensure compliance with education and employment legislation including the Equality Act 2010. Consultation with schools/academies is an important part of this review process. Headteachers, Principals and Governing Bodies are asked to contact the HR and People team via the HR One Helpline if they believe there are any negative equality impacts in their school/academy in relation to the application of this policy/procedure. Schools should also contact HR and People team if they need to access this policy in a different format.

HOME VISITS POLICY

1. Purpose

1. The purpose of the home visit policy is to ensure good working practice and to provide guidelines in reducing risks to members of staff when undertaking them.
2. To ensure that designated staff follow the correct procedures and policies prior, during and after carrying out a home visit.
3. That necessary information has been obtained prior to home visit in order to carry out the risk assessment.
4. A general risk assessment should be prepared to cover home visits.

2. Reasons for home visits

Home visits are important in helping the school to make contact with new or hard to reach parent/carers. They are useful as they enable the parents/carer to have contact with the school, but in their own environment. Home visits are to be used when:

- Pupils are refusing to come into school.
- To undertake an Early Help Record with a family.
- New intake pupils where specific needs have been identified in prior contact.
- When there are attendance issues/concerns.
- To confirm a family are living at a certain address.
- When all other means of contact with the family has failed.

Home visits should not be undertaken by any member of staff without the permission of the Head teacher or DSL and Parents/Carers should be informed of the visit prior to arrival.

3. Preparation for home visit

- Visits should be undertaken by prior arrangement. Parents should be informed by letter or by telephone clearly stating the date, time and purpose of the visit.
- For Health and Safety reasons the head teacher or designated safeguarding lead should be notified of whom you are visiting.
- The school should be given staff mobile numbers for emergencies.
- If staff cannot make contact with the family a group call message will be sent alerting the parent that a visit will be made, date and time. If there is no response when arriving at the property then staff will leave a note informing of the visit and asking the parent/carer to contact school.
- Cultural sensitivity/awareness should be observed during the home visit.

4. Carrying out a home visit

- Staff undertaking home visits must have appropriate skills i.e. empathy, be non-judgement and have an awareness of confidentiality. If necessary training can be arranged.
- The visit should have a clear outline and purpose enabling parents, carers, children and staff to view it as a positive experience.
- Staff must carry mobile phones and school ID when carrying out a home visit.
- Staff must remember they are visiting someone's home and so should be courteous at all times. Be sensitive to the culture, religion etc of the home
- Staff must ensure that the office knows the location of the visit and planned return time.
- They must ensure they inform the office when they return from a home visit.

- If staff realise that their initial visit will over run they must contact the school informing them of the revised return time.
- Park in a well- lit area and in a position where you do not need to reverse on leaving.
- Dress appropriately.
- Ensure that there are no animals in the room where a meeting takes place.
- Introduce yourself, and explain again the purpose of the visit, wear your school identification on your lanyard.
- 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 or another responsible adult whom 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 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 (parent / carer) and then ONLY if you deem it completely safe to do so and necessary.
- Do not enter a child's/young person's bedroom unless accompanied by a responsible adult (parent / carer) and then ONLY if you deem it completely safe to do so and necessary. Wherever possible seek the permission of the child to enter the room.
- If you are concerned that a child/young person is in the home inappropriately alone/unsupervised contact the schools safeguarding team straight away to discuss your observations or to seek immediate advice from them if you are uncertain whether the child is alone/unsupervised. If appropriate the 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 the parent that you will treat anything they tell you sensitively and will only tell the head teacher 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 Safeguarding Lead.
- Be professional; give professional advice and information rather than personal opinions
- If staff have not returned to school at the planned time the office will contact staff on the visit within 15 minutes of their return time.
- If they do not answer another member of staff will visit the address. Should it be necessary the police will be contacted.

5. Dealing with difficulties and boundaries

- All home visits must be made by at least 2 members of staff.
- Staff should feedback appropriate information to relevant staff regarding home visit e.g. any child protection concerns arising from home visits should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead on arrival back at school. – use CPoms to record this information.
- If staff undertaking the visit feel threatened or at risk then they will terminate the visit and leave the property. They will record this for reference. Have a coded word that you will use to indicate to each other if you do not feel safe and need to leave immediately. You may need to use this code when contacting school.
- Incidences of any abuse against a member of staff during a home visit should be recorded and discussed with the headteacher or a member of SLT. This must be recorded for future reference.

- All staff should have access to a debrief in the event of a difficult home visit.

6. Using information received.

All information received will be used confidentially and will help staff to learn more about the educational, social, emotional and development needs of pupils.

NORTH RIDGE SCHOOL

HOME VISITS RISK ASSESSMENT

Staff undertaking home visit (this must be 2 if it is an initial visit or high/unknown risk)	NAME MOBILE NUMBERS:
<u>Where is the visits to</u>	
<u>Pupil name, parent and address</u>	
<u>What is the purpose of the visit?</u>	
<u>Date and time of visit</u>	
<u>Expected return time</u>	
Evaluation of visit. Where there any Health and Safety concerns?	
<u>Nature of any risks:</u> 1. Is there a history of violence in the home? yes/no 2. Are any members of the family using illegal drugs? yes/no 3. Are any staff members suffering from mental illness/epilepsy or other relevant medical conditions? yes/no 4. Are there vicious dogs or other animals present in the home? yes/no 5. Is there a risk of infection e.g. sickness in the family? yes/no	<u>What plan have you made to mitigate risk?</u> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Level of risk- delete	<u>High/ medium/ low</u>
Code word to be used if you feel unsafe and agreed action	
Form completed by	
Date	

