



# Harborne Primary School

## ***Home Visits Policy***

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## Statement of intent

At Harborne Primary School, staff may be required to undertake home visits for a variety of reasons, such as to support pupils' attendance, carry out safe and well checks, carry out statutory assessments, and to establish partnerships with parents and carers to secure the best support for their child (including when children first join the school in Reception). The school is committed to ensuring all home visits are effective and procedures are in place to minimise potential risks to staff and pupils.

This policy sets out how home visits will be conducted in order to ensure:

- Visits always have a clear and legitimate purpose
- Appropriate arrangements are in place for all visits
- The health and safety of staff is prioritised
- Sufficient records are kept
- The school's safeguarding procedures are adhered to at all times.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)
- [Children missing education](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

This policy is designed to be used in conjunction with other policies such as the following:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- EYFS Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate procedures are in place for home visits

- Ensuring staff conducting home visits have received appropriate training, where necessary
- Ensuring the effective implementation of the school's safeguarding procedures during home visits
- Ensuring appropriate insurance arrangements are in place to cover staff undertaking home visits.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Approving all home visits and ensuring they only take place where necessary and appropriate
- Ensuring staff understand and follow the school's home visit arrangements
- Ensuring the appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place
- Ensuring risk assessments are completed for home visits
- Ensuring staff conducting home visits are provided with relevant background information and circumstances to inform the risks that may be present.

Staff conducting home visits will be responsible for:

- Following this policy for all home visits
- Acting professionally and sensitively, with due regard to all relevant school policies and procedures
- Seeking authorisation for all home visits and ensuring the school has all the relevant details of the visit
- Prioritising their own health and safety during visits.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

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

### **3. Home visits**

Home visits will be undertaken for a number of reasons. These will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- To build relationships with pupils and their parents/carers before a child starts in Reception, or at any other time deemed necessary
- To establish the welfare of a pupil (a safe and well check), e.g. in response to an unauthorised absence
- To work with parents to support and improve their child's attendance
- To hold discussions with parents where it is in the best interests of the pupil to be held at their home, or the parent cannot attend school, e.g. due to a disability.
- To collect or drop off a pupil in certain circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher, or to collect or drop off work or equipment for a pupil.
- To maintain contact with a pupil who is absent from school for a long period of time, e.g. due to an illness.

### **3.1 Before the visit**

Home visits will be scheduled in advance with the agreement of the parents, unless the visit is due to an emergency or immediate concern, e.g. an unauthorised absence with no contact from parents or a safeguarding issue.

All home visits will require the authorisation of the headteacher and be conducted in line with the relevant risk assessment(s). Home visits will only be authorised where they are deemed necessary and in the best interests of the pupil concerned. In almost all scenarios, a home visit will be carried out with at least two members of staff.

Home visits will take place during school hours wherever possible. Home visits outside of school hours will only be authorised if absolutely necessary and there is no reasonable alternative – in such cases, a responsible contact will be established to check on the welfare of staff conducting the visit.

### **3.2 During the visit**

Staff will carry an identity card which is shown upon arrival for a first visit at a home – the card will not be worn around the neck.

Staff will arrive at the time agreed with parents/carers. They will attempt to let the parents/carers know if they are running late.

If the pupil's parents are not present at the arranged time, staff will wait no longer than 20 minutes. If the pupil's parents do not arrive, the visit will be cancelled.

Staff will not enter a pupil's home if they feel unsafe. If a visit is cancelled because of concerns over safety, the reason for cancelling the visit will be communicated in writing to the headteacher.

If there are potentially dangerous animals in the residence, the school will request that they are kept in a separate room or placed outside for the duration of the visit. If the parent refuses, or is unable to adhere to this request, the visit will be cancelled.

Any issues or incidents during a home visit will be reported to the headteacher.

Where a staff member cannot be contacted or located during or after a home visit, the headteacher will be notified as soon as possible to decide on the appropriate response. The police will be contacted where there is concern for a staff member's welfare.

### **3.3 After the visit**

Staff will immediately inform the school office that they have left the property.

Staff will write up the outcome of the visit and record this on CPOMS, reporting any concerns, including safeguarding concerns, to the relevant members of staff.

Staff will only discuss individual home visits with other staff members where relevant and/or necessary.

## 4. Personal safety

The headteacher will ensure staff are aware of the following before a home visit:

- The findings of the relevant risk assessment, i.e. the risks and how to minimise them
- The area they will be visiting and any relevant information
- Information on the pupil(s) involved, e.g. medical needs, any aggressive tendencies
- Relevant background information and family circumstances, e.g. aggressive tendencies, cultural sensitivities
- The potential presence of any aggressive pets
- The need to provide details of the visit, e.g. an itinerary with expected departure and arrival times
- The need to always carry a mobile phone and keep it switched on
- To never enter a home without an appropriate adult present
- To prioritise their health and safety and leave if at any point they feel unsafe or uncomfortable

A Home Visit Risk Assessment will be conducted. If a particular home visit poses new or additional risks, the risk assessment will be updated before the visit.

It is the responsibility of staff conducting home visits to keep themselves safe at all times. Staff will be instructed to avoid any situations that may risk their safety. Before entering the home and once inside, staff will identify possible exit routes and ensure they always have access to escape quickly in the event of an emergency.

Staff conducting home visits will carry a mobile phone which is kept switched on at all times. The number will be recorded and held by the school office. Staff will not carry large quantities of cash or other valuable personal possessions during home visits.

Where a staff member feels uncomfortable or unsafe at any point, they will end the visit immediately. The police will be contacted where there is a threat or use of violence.

The school office will check in by calling a staff member ten minutes into a visit's scheduled start time. Thereafter, staff will notify the school office every hour to confirm there are no concerns. A code word will be established to enable staff to discretely alert that help is needed if required during a phone call or text.

Wherever possible, lone working will be avoided during home visits. At least two staff members will conduct home visits together, unless the headteacher decides it is safe and appropriate for a home visit to be conducted alone. In this circumstance, a risk assessment will be undertaken to ensure that risk factors are mitigated as far as possible.

Staff will notify the school office of any changes to the schedule of a home visit, e.g. a delay due to traffic, as soon as possible.

Where possible, staff will park in a safe and well-lit area with the car facing in the opposite direction of the property.

## **5. Attendance visits**

Home visits for the purpose of attendance support and improvement will be used in line with the Attendance Policy.

In the event of an unauthorised absence in which the school is unable to make contact with parents/carers, a home visit will be conducted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of absence. In the event of any concerns, including those related to safeguarding, a visit may be made on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of absence or at any point subsequently, regardless of whether contact has been made.

After a visit, any agreements made between an attendance officer and parents will be recorded and kept on CPOMS. Reminder letters will be sent to the pupil's parents if the pupil fails to adhere to the agreements made during the home visit in accordance with the school's Attendance Policy. Continued failure to adhere to the agreement may result in a follow-up visit.

## **6. Child protection and safeguarding**

Staff conducting home visits will carry out their work in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times.

Prior to a staff member being assigned to undertake a home visit, the school will ensure the staff member has the appropriate level of DBS check. An enhanced DBS and barred list check will be undertaken where necessary.

The headteacher will ensure staff understand the Staff Code of Conduct continues to apply during home visits. Staff will never enter a home or stay inside without an appropriate adult present. Staff will not hold conversations with siblings or other children in the home without an appropriate adult present.

Staff conducting home visits will report any safeguarding concerns to the DSL or a deputy as soon as possible. Serious concerns about a pupil's immediate welfare will be reported to the police and any relevant agencies.

Any allegations made against staff conducting home visits will be dealt with in accordance with the Low-Level Safeguarding Concerns Policy or Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and the governing board.

The headteacher will be responsible for monitoring this policy and procedures and will amend it accordingly following any incidents or concerns. Feedback from staff who have conducted home visits will be used to inform the review process.