ST.ANNE'S COPP CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, GREAT ECCLESTON

Home Visit Policy



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Approved by GB: November 2026
Next review due: November 2027
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"Let us love, not in word, but in truth and action." (1 John 3:18)

In building solid foundations for every unique individual and putting God's love at the centre of all we do, our children learn to embrace our diverse world. We encourage our children to learn universally in order to understand our heritage and roots as a village, town, region and nation. Through strong community links, our children grow in compassion and understanding, promote justice and possess commitment and aspire to make a positive difference. We offer an ambitious curriculum that ignites curiosity along with high personal expectations that fosters resilience and which enables them to flourish. Our children are easily distinguished by the courage they show when making brave choices and understand the importance of becoming the very best versions of themselves.

ALL HOME VISITS CONDUCTED BY STAFF MUST BE AUTHORISED BY THE HEADTEACHER.

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.

Home Visit Definition:
A home visit is a visit that requires members of staff to enter the home of a parent, carer, or guardian in the case of an emergency visit or a procedural visit.
Aims:

- At St. Anne's Copp CE Primary School, Great Eccleston, we recognise that parents/carers/guardians are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

The aim of a home visit is:

- 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.

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 students are being educated at home
- To facilitate introduction to school (eg. New Reception starters or new starters across school)
- When all other means of contact with a family has failed

- To meet with parents/carers/guardians to discuss an issue regarding 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 and information needs to be shared in a face to face meeting in a timely manner.
- To try and 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 drop off or collect work for a child when they are completing school work 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 facilitate a national test where the home environment has been assessed as a more suitable and less stressful setting for the child to complete the assessment.
- 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).

Benefits:
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.

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

Before the 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) Discuss with Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Arrange for an appropriate person to accompany you, home visits should be conducted in pairs. Clarify each person's role. All staff accompanying visits aware that information relating to families is confidential.
- 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. Have a calling card to leave if the family are not at home with the date and time of the visit.
- Complete Home Visiting Risk Assessment Appendix 1.
- Refer to the 'Home Visiting Risk Assessment' (appendix 1), and office staff of your intended location before departing for a home visit. If you are visiting more than one location provide details of all addresses.

During the Visit

- Park in a well-lit area and in a position where you do not need to reverse on leaving.
- Dress appropriately.
- Ask that there are no animals in the room where a meeting takes place. (It is their home.)
- Introduce yourself, have identification available and explain again the purpose of the visit, carry your identification do not use a necklace 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 parents/carers/guardians) or another responsible adult whom a 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 and are unable to contact parents/carers/guardians contact emergency services on 999, stay at the property and contact school to speak to a member of SLT.
- If you feel that a child/young person is in immediate danger contact emergency services 999, stay where you are, contact school to speak to a member of SLT.
- Assure parents/carers/guardians 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 person 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. Don't 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. Have a time limit set for the visit.
- Do not carry large sums of money when making a home visit. Do not have any personal items.
- Make notes if making multiple visits.

After the visit

- Report back to the school and complete CPOMS record of visit alerting appropriate staff members.
- If you are not returning directly to school, telephone the school after the visit to say you have left the home visit.
- Any Child Protection concerns arising from home visits should be discussed with the SLT on arrival back to school.
- At school do not discuss individual home visits with staff who are not involved with those particular children.
- Update the Home Visiting Risk Assessment.

Recording Visits

- It is essential that staff write a short report on every visit they make on CPOMS.
- If an incident does occur the visitor should record all details as soon as possible after the incident, before precise recollection of events fall from their memory.
- If an accusation of abuse is made against the visit/visitor advice should be sought from the head teacher as soon as possible.

Making Safe Home Visits: summary

Before

- Complete/hand in, a list of the names and addresses of the families you will be visiting and give this to a member of staff in the office, a clear time of when you intend to be out of each visit needs to be identified so that office staff are aware. Provide the number of the mobile phone you have with you. Provide details of the make, model, registration number and colour of the car you will be using.
- Be clear about the purpose of the visit.
- Arrange for an appropriate person to accompany you. No visits to take place by individual members of staff.
- Be well informed about the subject of the visit.
- Complete a Home Visit Risk Assessment form.

During

- Carry a mobile phone with you.
- Consider who you need to see.
- Make a prior appointment to establish a time of visit.
- Staff must carry identification at all times during a home visit. Identification should not be worn on a neck lanyard but carried securely and produced when required, to minimise potential health and safety risks.
- Do not stay too long.
- Introduce yourself.
- Be professional.
- Don't carry any personal items, eg cash, handbag.

Action to take if you are threatened

- 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. Try to diffuse situation by saying you will seek advice from a senior member of staff or colleague.
- Keep your distance, never touch or turn your back on someone who is angry.
- A code phrase 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.

After

- Report back in school or if you are not returning directly to school, telephone the school after the visit to say you have left the residence.
- If more than one visit you must call school in between each visit.
- Office staff must keep a record of which visit you are currently at.

Actions for Office staff members

Office staff to be mindful of the visiting time proposed to end, if this has expired past 30 minutes and a call has not received they must;

- Attempt to contact both staff members carrying out the visit.
- Inform a member of SLT.
- Contact the police to alert them of concern if needed.

If you are concerned about your safety do not visit. It is strongly recommended that no one makes any home visit outside of school opening hours.

Community Lone Working Risk Assessment *Appendix 1*

WORK ACTIVITY RISK ASSESSMENT Task being undertaken:

Lone Working Risk Assessment – out of office

All Staff Any vulnerable persons particularly at risk:

Senior Leadership team aware of named visit Date of assessment:-

Hazards	People	Severity of harm	Likelihood	Risk Level	Controls
Aggressive or violent parent/student/family member	Member of staff may be harmed	Major injury may occur	Remote possibility	low	Refer to home visit policy risk reduced by informing SLT prior to visit. 2 person visit at all times. Inform reception and sign out so others aware. Take mobile phone for communication. Complete risk assessment.

Driving	Member of staff may be harmed	Vehicle breakdown Accident Intruder in vehicle when unattended Use of mobile phone Fatigue	Remote possibility	Low	Maintain vehicle properly Belong to a breakdown organisation Carry torch, phone etc for emergency Advise office staff where you are going. Phone in if plan changes Do not leave valuables in car (e.g. laptop) Avoid risky areas

Movement through public areas e.g. to/from car parks	Member of staff may be harmed	Attack Theft of property	remote	Low	Back down from confrontation Call for help Keep valuables secure and out of sight or disguised Surrender valuables if personal safety is at risk Use public transport if available Post incident support
Illness or injury/ accident	Member of staff may be harmed or injured	Illness or injury Take mobile communications	Remote	low	Alert Emergency services if appropriate Alert SLT members if able to Ensure access to phone Take prescribed medication as directed or as needed Complete injury at work protocol on return

Attack by dog or other animal	Member of staff may be harmed or injured	Major injury may occur	Remote	Low	Avoid contact with animals Seek local advice before entering premises with animals Appropriate behaviour near animals – avoid alarming them, e.g. sudden movements

Appendix 1

Home Visiting Risk Assessment

Child and Parent/Carer/Guardian Names	Address		Contact Details

Date completed:		By Whom:

	Not Known	Yes	No
Have any risk been identified by any other agency?			
Are the entrances /exits to the property easily accessible?			
Are there any dangers/hazards associated with the property?			
Are you aware of any intimidating /threatening clients, relatives or friends living at or likely to visit the property?			
Are there pets in the household, are they threatening?			
Are you confident all safety measures are in place?			
Do any members of the household smoke, have you discussed smoking policy?			
Do you think contact should be made outside of the home?			

	Areas of concern

Action (s) to eliminate/reduce risk?		By whom?

Date	Manager's signature	Worker		Other agency

	Date of review

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