



Home Visits Policy



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| Policy Date: | January 2024 | Version: | |
| Policy Review Date: | January 2027 | Head of School: Andrea Fletcher | |
| Ratified by Governing Body: | | | |
| Chair of Governors: Ann Melville | | | |

Dove Bank Primary School

Home Visits Policy

1. Purpose

- 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.
- To ensure that designated staff follow the correct procedures and policies prior, during and after carrying out a home visit.
- That necessary information has been obtained prior to home visit in order to carry out the risk assessment.
- 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 could be used when:

- Pupils are refusing to come into school.
- To undertake an Early Help Record with a family.
- 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.
- 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 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).

Home visits should not be undertaken by any member of staff without the permission of the Headteacher or DSL and parents/carers should be informed of the visit prior to arrival if possible.

3. Home visits for the purpose of investigating unauthorised absence or safeguarding concerns

- All the same safety precautions will be observed during the visit.
- If there is no answer and paperwork need to be left to inform the family that an attempt was made to make contact, the paperwork should be in a sealed envelope and clearly addressed.
- A log will be made of these visits on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System)

4. Safety and professional integrity precautions to observe

- Park in a well lit area and in a position where you do not need to reverse on leaving.
- Dress appropriately, in line with our staff handbook.
- 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.
- Do not speak to siblings other than to ask if their parent/carer 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 or enter a child's bedroom in a property unless accompanied by a responsible adult and then ONLY if you deem it completely safe to do so and necessary.
- If you feel that a child/young person is in immediate danger contact emergency services 999.
- Do not carry large sums of money when making a home visit.

5. Preparation for home visit:

In consultation with Headteacher or Designing Safeguarding Lead:

- 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 required, arrange for an appropriate person to accompany you, for example the police, social worker etc; home visits should be conducted in pairs. Clarify each person's role.
- Make sure you are well informed about the family and are aware of personal circumstances.
- Consider who you need to see, e.g. one or both parent/carer, with or without the child.
- Where possible, visits should be undertaken by prior arrangement. Parents should be informed by letter, email, or by telephone clearly stating the date, time and purpose of the visit. A voicemail can be left if no answer by telephone.
- For health and safety reasons, the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be notified of whom you are visiting.
- Complete the Home Visit form ensuring it is signed by the safeguarding lead (or a member of the SLT).
- Staff must ensure that the school office knows the location of the visit and planned return time.
- Staff should research the address and check the directions are correct
- The school hold staff mobile numbers on file and can use them in emergencies to gain contact.
- Cultural sensitivity/awareness should be observed during the home visit. This information can be found on their pupil profile.

Examples include:

- Remove shoes if entering the family home
- Consider if an interpreter is required
- Dressing appropriately

6. 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.
- 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.
- Only speak to an adult with parental responsibility or another responsible adult whom has been delegated to be there in their absence and they have given us permission to speak to them about the student for whom we are making the home visit.
- 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.
- Be professional; give professional advice and information rather than personal opinions.
- 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.
- Do not stay too long. Keep to the point.
- Complete Home Visit Form to evidence visit.

If you are concerned about your safety do not visit.

It is strongly recommended that no one makes an evening home visit.

7. After the visit

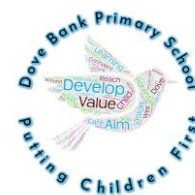
- Staff must ensure they inform the school office when they return from a home visit.
- If you are not returning directly to school, telephone the school after the visit to say you have left the home visit
- If staff members have not returned to school or telephoned to inform the school office within 15 minutes of the planned return time, an attempt to contact staff member will be made, if unable to make contact, Police will be contacted if deemed appropriate.
- Staff to hand in the Home visits form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, these will be recorded and logged.
- Any child protection concerns arising from home visits should be discussed with the Safeguarding team on arrival back to school.
- At school do not discuss individual home visits with staff who are not involved with those particular children.

8. 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, and attendance of pupils.

Dove Bank Primary School

Home Visits form



Person visiting _____

Job Role _____

Visited Home Address _____

Student Name _____

Reason for visit _____

On (date) _____ at (time) _____

Comments _____

Signed _____ (Staff Name) _____

Signed _____ (Parent/Guardian Name) _____

Visit authorised by Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead:

Date: _____ Time: _____

Outcome of home visit

Action required

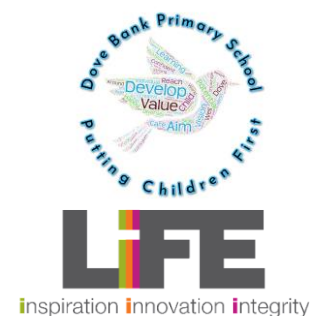
WORK ACTIVITY RISK ASSESSMENT

Task being undertaken: - Lone Working Risk Assessment – out of office

Occupations:- All Staff

Any vulnerable persons particularly at risk:- Safeguarding team or SLT aware of named visit

Date of assessment:- Any



| Hazard | 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refer to home visit policy - Risk reduced by informing safeguarding team/SLT prior to visit - 2 people to visit - Inform school office and sign out so others aware - Take mobile phones for communication |
| Driving | Member of staff may be harmed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vehicle breakdown -Accident -Intruder in vehicle when unattended -Use of mobile phone -Fatigue | Remote possibility | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain vehicle properly - Belong to a breakdown organisation - Carry torch, phone etc for emergency - Advise team or partner where you are going - Phone school office if plan changes - Do not leave valuables in car (e.g. laptop) - Avoid risky areas |

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| | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must have business insurance on car being used for visit |
| Movement through public areas e.g. to/from car parks | Member of staff may be harmed. | -Attack -Theft of property | Remote | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Back down from confrontation - Call for help - Use attack alarm - Keep valuables secure and out of sight or disguised - Surrender valuables if personal safety is at risk - Post incident support |
| Illness or injury/ accident | Member of staff may be harmed or injured | Illness or injury | Remote | low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alert Emergency services if appropriate - Alert team members if able to - Ensure access to phone - Ensure mobile phone has a signal and is working before entering the property. - 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid contact with animals - Seek local advice before entering premises with animals - Appropriate behaviour near animals – avoid |

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| | | | | | alarming them, e.g. sudden movements |
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