



Home Visit Policy

Giffard Park Primary School

Approved by: FGB Committee **Date:** 15/10/25

Next review due by: October 2027

This policy links to other school policies on:

Safeguarding

Attendance

Home Visit Policy and Procedure

All home visits conducted by staff must be authorised by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or member of the safeguarding team) prior to the visit taking place.

In addition, wherever possible parents/carers 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 are not responding to telephone calls/text messages or emergency safeguarding visits.

Home Visit Definition:

A home visit is a visit that requires member(s) 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 Giffard Park Primary School we recognise that parents/carers 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 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 for the best interests of the child.
- To gather information to support children settling in to Foundation classes.

Reasons for home visits:

Home visits are important in helping the school to make contact with new or hard to reach parents/carers. They are particularly useful as they enable the parents/carers 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
- When all other means of contact with a family has failed
- To meet with parents/carers 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 parent/carer 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 have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the student.
- To work with and support parents/carers in developing strategies to help their child attend school where attendance is an issue.
- To collect from or drop a child off at home where there are concerns for a child's welfare if they travelled by other means.
- To drop off or collect work for a child when they are completing school work at home e.g. following a fixed term suspension 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 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 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 members of staff when undertaking home visits.

Before the Visit

- Be familiar with the school's policy and procedure for home visits.
- Leave details of the visit with member of the School Office team
- 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 to come into the school)

- Ensuring the Safeguarding Lead (or member of the Safeguarding team) is aware of the purpose of the visit.
- Arrange for an appropriate person to accompany you; home visits should be conducted in pairs. Clarify each person's role and ensure staff safety.
- 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 parents/carers, with or without the child.
- 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.
- Agree with the team back at school whose mobile phone will be called and within what time frame of arriving the call will be made. Re-establish the in need of help phrase **"It's in the filing cabinet."**

During the Visit

- Park in a well lit area and in a position where you do not need to reverse on leaving.
- Dress appropriately.
- One person to text the team to confirm arrival and that signal is available. Countdown to safety phonecall begins once this text has been received.
- Ensure that there are no animals in the room where a meeting takes place.
- Introduce yourself, have school identification available and explain again the purpose of the visit.
- 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 parent/carer or another responsible adult whom a parent/carer 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 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 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 parents/carers 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 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.
- Do not carry large sums of money when making a home visit.
- When school call to check safety ensure that the call is answered. Failure to answer the call will be taken as a sign that you are in immediate risk and this will result in 999 being called.
- If all is well at the visit then answer "yes that's fine, I'll be back shortly."
If you are unsure how things will go answer "I think it might be in the filing cabinet, maybe try again in a bit." If this phrase is said then another call will be made by the school in 10 mins.
If you are in immediate risk of harm or feel that urgent police back is needed then answer "It's in the filing cabinet." This phrase will mean that 999 will be called for urgent assistance.
If this phrase is used then try to keep the call engaged and place the phone in a pocket so that school can continue to listen.
- Complete Home Visit Form to evidence visit.

After the visit

- Report back to the school and hand in the completed Home Visit Form to the Safeguarding office in line with school policy.
- 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 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.

Home Visit Form (see Appendix 1)

- It is essential that staff write a short report on every visit they make.
- 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

If you are concerned about your safety do not visit.

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

Appendix 1

Giffard Park Primary School

Home Visit Form – Parent/Carer Copy

Persons Visiting: _____

Job Role: _____

Visited Home Address: _____

Pupil's Name: _____

Reasons for Visiting: _____

On (date): _____ Time: _____

Other Comments: _____

Signed: _____

Parent/Carer: _____

Visit authorised by DSL: Date _____ Time _____

Giffard Park Primary School

Home Visit Form

Persons Visiting: _____

Job Role: _____

Visited Home Address: _____

Pupil's Name: _____

Reasons for Visiting: _____

On (date): _____ Time: _____

Other Comments: _____

Signed: _____

Parent/Carer: _____

Visit authorised by DSL: Date _____ Time _____

Outcome of Home Visit:

Action required:

Appendix ii – Risk 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	Low	Refer to home visit policy Risk reduced by informing safeguarding team prior to visit and sign out so others aware Take mobile phone for communication
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 team or partner 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 Use attack alarm Keep valuables secure and out of sight or disguised Surrender valuables if personal safety is at risk.
Illness or injury/accident	Member of staff may be harmed or injured	<i>Take mobile communication</i> Illness or injury	Remote	low	Alert Emergency services if appropriate Alert team 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 harmd 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