



STANWICK PRIMARY ACADEMY

Document Name: Home Visit Procedure

Person(s) Responsible for Document: Mrs Chloe Neild

Date Document Approved: Spring 2023

Frequency of Review: 2 years

Date Document to be reviewed: Spring 2025

Rationale

We believe that our first encounter with parents and children is crucial in helping to form a positive partnership between home and school. Before coming to school, parents/carers are their child's first teacher. Parents/carers have valuable knowledge about their child which will help staff to provide appropriate experiences for them at school. Home visits provide a forum for such knowledge to be shared in an informal way.

Purposes

1. Ensure that children are admitted to our Reception classes following LA and Academy procedures.
2. Visit each child's home to share information and knowledge and complete relevant admission documents.
3. Encourage parents to ask questions in an informal way.
4. Begin to build up a relationship with child and parent/carer.

Guidelines/procedures

1. Pre-visits

- Visits are organised in location areas.
- Dates are set by the Principal, and Early Years Lead for home visits to be carried out.
- Parents/carers will be provided with a slot by the class teachers.
- During a 'Stay and play' session, parents and carers can check their visit time and date with the Reception class teacher if needed.

2. The Visit Procedure

- Staff are required to carry out visits in pairs. At least one of the pair should be the Reception class teacher. Class TA should preferably be the second member of staff unless a job share.
- A copy of the daily visiting schedule should be left with the Academy office staff, including staff car registration details, mobile phone number and addresses and times of the home visits.
- Each new Reception pupil visit should last approximately 20/30 minutes, making time for 4/5 visits per session.
- The visiting pair need to take a home visiting pack with them.
- An emergency telephone number should be left with office staff.
- A fully charged phone with emergency contact details should be taken for communication.

The safety of our staff is very important. Staff should not take risks. If they feel insecure they should not go on a home visit.

Staff safety during home visits

- The Academy staff are to remember that they are guests who have been invited into the family's home. Staff can ask parent/carers for information but they are under no legal obligation to give it to you. Parents/Carers can also ask the Academy staff to leave at any time or decline that the Academy can undertake a home visit.

- When the Academy staff arrives, they should assess if it is appropriate for them to be there. For example, do you feel welcome? Do you feel unsafe? Have you turned up in the middle of another appointment?
- Academy staff should make sure they have appropriate identification and encourage the family to check it properly, particularly if they haven't met you before.
- If the parent doesn't mind, ask that the TV is turned off so that talk can be uninterrupted. Ask that family members do not smoke during the visit.
- Maintain professional boundaries in your relationship with the family e.g. do not drink alcohol or smoke with them.
- Consider confidentiality at all times. Do not chat about other families that the family is in contact with. Do not discuss anything in front of other family members without checking beforehand or privately that it is ok to do so.

Where a home visit is deemed to be of higher risk, the following steps should be taken:

i) Your Principal must know the time of the appointment (allow time to get there safely) and the time the appointment is likely to end. Also, provide your estimated time due back at the Academy.

ii) You must ask the Academy office staff to make a call to you during your allotted visit time, this is to check you are safe and in no imminent danger. Give the member of staff a code word you can use if you feel you are in danger, this will enable them to make a 999 call without alerting the person causing the alarm.

If an incident occurs

On return to the office after an incident the worker must contact their line manager, inform them of the incident and complete an incident report form, making sure that the incident is factually recorded.

Containing Aggression

It is important, even if someone is trying to provoke you, not to respond in kind. Meeting aggression leads to confrontation and someone could get hurt. Stay calm and speak slowly and clearly. Do not argue, be patronising or try to outsmart the person verbally. Breathe slowly to control your own tension. Avoid body language which may be misinterpreted, such as looking down on the aggressor; hands on hips; folded arms; any physical contact. Keep your distance. Talk through the problem; suggest going to see a colleague; suggest a walk or some fresh air, allow aggression to be diverted against inanimate objects, such as banging the table.

If you can't deflect or defuse the situation, get away. Make an excuse to leave, e.g. remember an urgent appointment. Trust your instincts and do not underestimate the situation. Things can get out of control very quickly.

Whilst talking, assess possible ways you can escape if the situation worsens.

Never turn your back, if you are trying to get away, move gradually backwards.

Contact the Police when physical abuse/assault has occurred.

If you arrive for a home visit and no one is home:

- Leave a note with the date and time you were there, the Academy phone number and a time that you could be reached to set up a new appointment.

- Return to the Academy and try to call the parent.
- If you are unable to locate the parent at that time, send a note home with the child the next Academy day, asking the parent to contact you for a time the visit could be rescheduled.
- It is the home visitor's responsibility to ensure that parents are contacted immediately if unable to keep the scheduled appointment. If the home visitor cancels a home visit (due to illness or otherwise) it must be reconvened at a later date.

Safety

- Stay alert, sit close to an exit,
- Trust your instincts,
- Dress appropriately, leave jewellery at home,
- Travel in pairs when possible,
- Remove yourself from dangerous situations,
- Leave purse/bag at school,
- Carry only necessary cash, keys, and identification,
- Ask family members to come out to meet you if uncomfortable with the area,
- Ask family to secure pets before arrival,
- Consider the use of mobile phones.

Suggestions

- Be a good listener,
- Have specific goals or objectives for each visit,
- Realise the limitations of your role,
- Help parents become more independent,
- Keep language appropriate,
- Remember that small improvements lead to big ones,
- Be yourself,
- Be confident,
- Respect cultural and ethnic values,
- Monitor your own behaviour the parent is observing you.

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

If any member of staff breaches this policy it may result in disciplinary action being taken.

APPENDIX 1 Home visit Risk Assessment form

Family name		Address		Contact details	
Date completed		By whom?			
				Yes	No
Have any risks been identified by any other agencies?					
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 any pets in the household, are they threatening?					
Are you confident all safety measures are in place?					
Is anyone in the household known for violent offences?					
Is anyone in the household known to misuse drugs or alcohol?					
Do you think contact should be made outside of the home?					
Areas of concern					
Actions(s) to eliminate/reduce risk?				By whom?	
Date	Senior Leader signature	Staff member	Staff member		

