

## **ARUNDEL COURT PRIMARY ACADEMY SCHOOL & NURSERY EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE HOME VISIT POLICY**

**ALL HOME VISITS CONDUCTED BY STAFF MUST BE AUTHORISED BY THE SAFEGUARDING LEAD. If a visit is considered high risk then a home visit should not take place. A more safe and secure area at the school should be used for the appointment.**

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. This policy is designed to protect the safety of all school staff carrying out home visits. Where home visits take place, a risk assessment should be completed in advance. This will identify any concerns about potential risks and appropriate measures to be taken. If specific information is known about families, this should be added to the risk assessment.

### **Aims**

The aim of a home visit is:

- To establish a partnership between 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.

### **Rationale for carrying out home visits**

There is a unanimous feeling in our school that the home visits, which staff undertake, have huge benefits. The home visits are the start or the continued building of the relationship with parents, which is vital if we are to be successful in providing for the needs of the child. It also shows parents that the school respects them and wants to share their knowledge, which puts the relationship on a more equal footing.

Meeting each child in his or her home environment has proved invaluable in:

- gathering information that will enable the children to settle into Nursery and Reception classes
- establishing positive links with families, especially those of vulnerable pupils.

For parents and children, a visit gives them the opportunity to meet the teacher and staff in a safe environment, where they feel confident and at ease.

For teachers and support staff, a visit provides the opportunity to:

- establish early, positive contact
- see children in their own familiar settings;
- meet other family members, people and pets who are important to the children;

- understand the problems that children might encounter at school, and also to appreciate the wealth of learning that goes on in the home.

This all helps to get a fuller picture of the children. Professionals can gain much from observing a child where he or she feels settled and in control.

## **Procedures**

### **Before the visit**

- Be familiar with the school's policy and procedures for home visit.
- Make appointments in advance and offer alternative dates/times.
- Ensure that parents know when you will arrive, how long you will stay, what will happen, what kinds of questions you will be asking and what information you will bring.
- Ask them to think about the information they need from you in advance of the meeting.
- Accept the right of a family not to want a home visit.
- Confirm Parents/Carers actual name and title and keep on record.
- Do not presume that there are two parents with the same surname as the child.
- Do not assume that all Parents/Carers are literate.
- Make sure you consider diversity of social, cultural, racial, religious and sexual orientation
- Familiarise yourself with the route/location, parking restrictions etc before you leave. Check the LA database (The Source) for flagged addresses.
- Leave details of your visiting schedule and expected return time with another member of staff in the office.

### **During the visit**

- Show respect for Parents/Carers as equal partners.
- Remember you are a guest who has been invited into the family's home. You may ask people for information but they are under no legal obligation to give it to you. They can also ask you to leave at any time.
- Be aware of pets and other adults who may be in the home. If necessary, ask the family to put any uncaged animals in a separate room.
- Sit near a door or exit and if you feel uneasy or worried at any time, make an excuse and leave.
- Staff should avoid commenting on a child's home or provision so that parents do not feel that any judgement is being made on their home or lifestyle.
- Staff should demonstrate an awareness and respect for differing cultures.
- They should comply with appropriate customs such as removing shoes, wearing modest clothing etc.
- Staff should remain aware of time constraints on both themselves and parents.
- Maintain professional boundaries in your relationship with the family e.g. do not drink alcohol or smoke with them and don't accept presents.

- 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.
- Consider safeguarding policies and procedures at all times. You need to be prepared to deal with the unexpected.
- Before you leave, check that family members are satisfied with the outcome of the visit.
- Unless you have child protection concerns, if there is information to be shared with other agencies, check with the family.
- If you are concerned about the child's safety or wellbeing and it is not appropriate to discuss this with the family, you **MUST** report this to the designated safe guarding lead.

### **After home visit**

- Follow up any safeguarding or child protection concerns.
- Share information with appropriate agencies and other EYFS staff.

### **Risk Assessment**

- Check records to see what is known and information available.
- Talk to other professionals who may already have had contact or involvement with the family.
- Obtain information about the location of the home visit. For example, does the area have a reputation for being unsafe, isolated or poorly lit?
- Discuss strategies to adopt when working with a potentially challenging Parent/Carer/Family with your line manager.
- Where potential risks are identified, arrange an alternative meeting environment.
- Always complete the risk assessment before taking part in home visits.

**Review date: July 2024**



**Arundel Court Primary Academy & Nursery**  
**Risk Assessment for Home Visits**

<b>Hazards</b> (What could cause harm?)	<b>People</b> (Who might be harmed?)	<b>Severity of Harm</b> (How badly could they be harmed?)	<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Controls</b> (What controls are in place?)	<b>Likelihood</b> (Likelihood of harm with present controls)
Aggressive or violent parent/carer or family member	Member of staff may be harmed	Major injury or illness	Remote possibility	Refer to home visit policy Mobile phone taken 2 person visit Family information reviewed before visit Leave details of visit with office	Low
Driving	Member of staff may be harmed	Major injury or illness	Remote possibility	Let the office know you are using a car	Low
Walking through public areas	Member of staff may be harmed or injured	Being attacked by public	Remote possibility	Call for help Always go in pairs Call emergency services	Low
Illness or injury	Member of staff may be harmed or injured	Illness or injury	Remote possibility	Do not do the home visit if feeling unwell at the start Call emergency services if appropriate Cancel appointment if needed Complete injury at work on return	Low
Attack by dog or other animal	Member of staff may be harmed or injured	Major injury may occur	Remote possibility	Avoid con	Low

