

# Uplands Junior School

## Home Visit Policy and Procedure

### January 2024

#### Introduction

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, safeguarding or attendance visit. The aim of the home visit and procedure policy is to ensure good working practice and to provide guidelines in reducing risks to members of staff undertaking home visits.

**ALL HOME VISITS CONDUCTED BY STAFF MUST BE AUTHORISED BY THE SAFEGUARDING LEAD (Mrs Webster-Smith, Headteacher) OR A MEMBER OF THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM PRIOR TO THE VISIT TAKING PLACE.**

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.

This policy has been written in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy and Attendance Policy and Pathways, both can be found on our school website.

**This policy been written in conjunction with the UN convention on the rights of the child: article 2 non-discrimination, article 3 best interest of the child, article 5 parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities, article 12 respect the views of the child, article 28 right to education and article 29 goals of education.**

#### The aim of a home visit is:

- To establish a partnership/relationship between parents/cares/guardians and staff so that all parties share their knowledge about the child to enable the individual needs of the child to be met.

#### Reasons for home visits:

- When there are attendance issues/concerns.
- To try and establish that a child is safe if they are absent from school and attempts contact parents/cares/guardians have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the student.
- 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 if the parents/cares/guardians are unable to do so e.g following a fixed term exclusion or medical issue.
- When students are being educated at home.
- 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 at home rather than in school or where it would be difficult for a parent/carer/guardian to attend school for a meeting and information needs to be shared in a face to face meeting in a timely manner.
- 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.
- 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).

## Procedure

### Before a visit:

- Be familiar with the school's policy and procedure for home visits.
- Read the 'Home Visit' risk assessment (appendix 1).
- Be clear about the purpose of the visit, make sure that a home visit is really necessary (if possible or practical arrange parents/cares/guardians meetings to come into school).
- Complete the 'Home Visit Form' (appendix 2) ensuring it is signed by the Safeguarding Lead (or a member of the Safeguarding Team). A log is then made of any children that are transported and the form is to be uploaded to CPOMS (Uplands safeguarding system).
- Always take another appropriate person to accompany you; **home visits must be conducted in pairs**. Clarify each person's role.
- Ensure you are well informed about the family and are aware of personal circumstances.
- Consider who you need to see; the child, parents/cares/guardians with or without the child.
- If relevant make an appointment to establish a time convenient to the family and to ensure that everyone will be present.

### During the Visit

- Ensure you carry a mobile phone and dress according to the Uplands Code of Conduct.
- Introduce yourself, have identification available and explain 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.
- Ensure there are no animals in the room where the meeting takes place.
- Only speak to an adult with parental responsibility or another responsible adult whom a parent/carer/guardian had delegated to be there in their absence and they have given permission.

- Do not speak to other 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/adult on the premises.
  - Do not go upstairs in a property unless accompanied by a responsible adult and the ONLY if you deem it completely safe to do so and necessary.
  - Do not enter a child's bedroom.
  - If you are concerned that a child is in the home inappropriately alone/unsupervised contact the safeguarding team straight away to discuss your observations or to seek immediate advice from them. If appropriate the safeguarding team will make a social care referral or a call to the Police.
  - If you feel that a child is in immediate danger contact emergency services 999.
  - Assure parents/carers/guardians that you will treat anything they tell you sensitively and will only share information with the relevant people. Explain that you may need to take notes during the meeting. Do not promise to keep information to yourselves, **under 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' you must report disclosures and concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Team.** The Safeguarding team: Mrs Webster-Smith, Mrs Walker, Mrs Roberts and Mrs Shakesheave.
  - Be sensitive to the culture and religion of the home.
  - Be professional; give professional advice and information rather than personal opinions.
  - Do not carry money.
  - Complete 'Home Visit Form' to evidence visit.
- If there is no answer at the property, complete the 'Not at home form' (appendix 3) and push it through the letterbox.

### **After the Visit**

- Report back to school and hand in the completed Home Visit Form to the safeguarding Team and dealt with inline with the school's safeguarding procedures. This form will be uploaded to CPOMS.
- If you are not returning directly back to school, telephone the school after the visit to say you have left the home visit.
- Any child protection concerns arising from the 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 children.

### **Home Visit Form (appendix 2) & Not at Home Form (appendix 3)**

- It is essential that staff complete the home visit form for every visit they make.
- If an accident does occur the visitor should record all details as soon as possible after the incident.
- If an accusation of abuse is made against a visitor advice from the headteacher should be sought.
- If there is no answer a 'Not at home form' should be left at the property.

**Action to be taken if you are threatened.**

- If you are threatened or prevented from leaving, stay calm and try and control the situation.
- When working as a pair, agree a code word (safe word) or phrase to signal that you should both leave.
- Staff must leave the property and reach a place of safety if you have any concerns about personal safety and return to school immediately.
- If you feel in danger at any moment call the emergency services 999 and leave the property.

**If you have any concerns about making a home visit, do not visit, call the emergency services to call on school's behalf.**

**No home visits should take place during the evening.**

Appendix 1: Home Visit Form

Appendix 2: Not at Home Form



### **Uplands Junior School – Home Visit Form**

Before undertaking this home visit I have read the 'Home Visit Risk Assessment' and I am aware of the Home Visit policy and procedures.

Child's Name	
Reason for Visit	
Date & Time of Visit	
Home Address	
Telephone Number	
Staff Visiting (signatures)	
Authorised by Safeguarding Lead	
Outcome of home visit	
Action required	



## Uplands Junior School – Not at home



**Today you have received a visit from Uplands Junior School, could you please contact school on 01902 558870 at your earliest convenience.**

Child's Name	
Reason for Visit	
Date & Time of Visit	
Home Address	
Telephone Number	
Staff Visiting (signatures)	