



**Saint Nathaniel's Academy  
Home Visit Policy**

**2021-2022**

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## Home Visit Policy

Home Visits Policy Definition: Any visit that necessitates a member of staff entering the home to meet with parents/ carers.

The purpose of home visits is to develop and strengthen relationships, to identify needs and deliver an intervention programme by offering support and advice and a signposting service to relevant agencies.

There may be times when a member of staff needs to meet with parents/ carers and may be most appropriate to visit the home.

Meeting staff members can be a daunting prospect for some families, particularly if their own experiences of using outside agencies and education were less than positive. Parents/carers may feel more secure and in control in their own homes, and therefore able to talk more freely. In familiar surroundings, they may find it easier to ask for help and support and advice.

Home visits provide an opportunity for one-to-one interaction with the family, at a time that suits the family. They should enable an exchange of information between parents/ carers, teachers, key workers and children. They also provide a starting point to understand family backgrounds and cultural needs.

For parents/ carers a home visit provides an opportunity to talk about their child, their needs and to voice concerns that they may have. For the key workers, home visits provide an opportunity to assess the families' needs and sign post support accordingly. For the child it can be a starting point to a better future.

Arrangements should always be made professionally and sensitively. Staff should not visit family homes alone without taking the following precautions.

### Guidelines

- Discuss a possible referral, home visit with your line manager
- Contact the family to arrange a date and time
- Follow home visit procedures
- On your return complete the referral forms whilst the information is still fresh in your mind

### Procedures

When making home visits you must keep your personal safety in mind at all times.

- Always ask/ inform your manager and leave details of where you are going and how long you intend to be
- Always take your mobile phone with you and leave it switched on
- Always inform the office if you make any changes to your arrangements and timings

- All visits must be done in pairs

### **Before visiting a home**

- Always telephone or write to ask if it would be convenient to make a visit
- Always make the purpose of your visit clear
- Always respect parents/ carers views and the need for confidentiality
- Outcomes or information from the visit should be recorded and shared with your manager initially. They will decide if the information needs to be shared.
- Have respect for different cultures and backgrounds you will encounter
- Make sure you are dressed appropriately and sensibly for visiting homes, showing respect for different religious or cultural backgrounds
- Ensure that you will be able to communicate effectively with parents/carers and use or take an interpreter who will translate if necessary
- Home visit parent agreement needs to be signed and dated by both parent and practitioners. A copy will be given out to parents.
- Before visiting any home give time to find out as much factual information as you can

### **Identification**

All workers must carry an identity card which must have the following:

- A photograph
- Name
- Job title
- Organisation
- Organisation work address and phone number identification must be shown on all home visits
- A person being visited in their own home must be able to phone the organisation to check and verify the workers identity if they want to

### **Health and safety procedures**

Considering potential risks arising from home visits should result on schools having clear procedures for staff to follow. Staff should be briefed about the area they are visiting and they should leave at the Nursery school details of:

- Their mobile number
- Their registration of their car
- The name, address and telephone number of their child's home
- The approximate arrival time and estimated length of their visit

If there is a change of plan after leaving the school, the school should be informed.

If staff feel uncomfortable in the child's home, they should leave immediately.

If staff are visiting a location which may pose a risk to their personal safety, they should arrange either to telephone after the visit to confirm their safe exit, or they should arrange

for someone to telephone them during the visit to check their well-being. Each completed visit should be reported.

If a member of staff fails to return to work at the designated time, an emergency procedure should be in place for action to be taken.

Any accidents occur during home visits should be recorded in writing as soon as possible, while events are still fresh in people's memories.

Due to COVID-19, from September 2021, all home visits will be 'door knocks' only and the home visit will take place on the door step/ front yard/garden. Parents need to be notified of this procedure and the reasons why.

### **Emergency procedure**

This procedure will come into action when:

- A panic call has been received

If staff feel that they are at risk during a home visit they are to contact the school office immediately. All staff will be given a safe word to inform the office of an emergency.

### **Safe word for office: "I'm going to be late for the meeting."**

- The worker has not returned one hour after estimated arrival and has made no contact. Organisational procedure:
- Try to contact the worker on the numbers given
- Phone 999 giving as much detail as possible
- Inform the manager
- The manager will remain in the building, take advice from the police and keep the police informed of any changes. If in doubt at all about your personal safety, do not visit.