

Home Visits Policy



Policy updated by Mr Grogan (Headteacher), Mrs O'Brien (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs Malley (Assistant Headteacher):
November 2024

Policy approved by Governors: November 2024



Chair of Governors



Headteacher

Policy shared with staff and shared on the school website: November 2024

'Never settle for less than your best'

HOME VISITS POLICY

Our school motto

Never settle for less than your best.

Our Vision

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, each member of our community will flourish as resilient, respectful and adaptable individuals prepared for life's journey. Along the way we will encourage and inspire each other to continue growing as beacons of light in our own lives and the wider world.

Our Mission Statement

St. George's Central seeks to provide quality education rooted in the Christian faith, serving the spiritual, moral, and educational needs of the community of which it is part.

Introduction

At St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery we recognise that parent/carers are their children's first and most enduring educators. Forming relationships with parent/carers and working closely is beneficial for each child's learning and development. This is why home visits are carried out prior to children starting at our nursery and at our school. We hope to establish a partnership between parent/carers and staff where both parties share their knowledge and understanding of the child to plan stimulating and challenging learning opportunities as well as planning to meet each child's individual needs. During visits, opportunities are provided for parents/carers to ask questions and gather any information needed from staff to support their child starting in our setting. Home visits may also be undertaken by school staff where necessary at any point during the child's time in our school. The aim of the home visit policy is to ensure good working practice and to provide guidelines in reducing risks to members of staff when undertaking home visits.

'New starter' home visits (Nursery/Reception)

Home Visits have many benefits for both parents/carers and staff. For parents and children, a visit gives them the opportunity to meet the staff in a safe environment where they feel confident and at ease. The visit also provides the opportunity to:

- Establish early, positive contact.
- See children in their own familiar setting.
- Meet other family members, people and pets who are important to the children.
- Understand the anxieties children may feel when starting nursery/school and also understand the wealth of learning that goes on at home.
- Provide support to families where needed.
- To share information between parents/carers, staff and children. Providing a starting point for staff to understand family background, including cultural background.
- Ensure children feel that they are valued and have a familiar face when starting at nursery/school.
- To provide an opportunity for parents/carers to talk about their child and the nursery/school, to voice concerns, clear up any misunderstandings and to lessen worries and fears.

Procedure for 'new starter' home visits (Nursery/Reception)

Before the visit parents/carers will be informed of the following:

- Who will be attending and when.
- How long the visit is expected to last.
- What will happen.
- Any information the staff member would like from the parent/carer during the visit.
- Appointments should be confirmed by letter to parent/carers and recorded in the school diary.
- Home visits will take place at a time convenient to parent/carers.

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- Parents/carers are informed about the school website and its content as well as provided with hard copies of any policies if requested.
- If parent/carers are not at home when staff visit then a card will be posted to let them know we called.
- Staff will leave the following at school/nursery before the visit:
 - Their mobile telephone number.
 - The name, address, and telephone number of the child's home.
 - The approximate arrival time and estimated length of the visit.
- Any incidents that occur during a home visit must be recorded on CPOMS.
- Any actions agreed during the home visit should be recorded and confirmed with parent/ carers.
- Visits will be carried out in pairs, allowing one staff member to speak with the parent/carers and the other to interact with the child. This enables parent/carers to talk without worrying about the child as well as providing opportunity to observe the child at play in a familiar environment.

What staff may wish to take on a 'new starter' home visits (Nursery/Reception)

- Take a selection of resources from school as this enables the child to choose whether to play with a familiar or unfamiliar item, providing a source for interaction.
- Take information from school to discuss with parent/carers.
- Take the child's entry records to check details and ensure that all evidence has been seen prior to the child starting at nursery/school.

'General' home visits

These provide an opportunity to discuss:

- On-going attendance where concerns have been identified or where attendance falls below 90%.
- Disclosure of any safeguarding concerns to outside agencies.
- Discussion with the named Health Visitor (if prior permission is given by parents/carers).
- Discussion with parents around any additional needs we have concerns about, with the possibility of discussion with the Local Authority SEND Team for further support.
- Occasions where staff are unable to make contact with parents/carers.

Due to the nature of 'other' home visits, there may be occasions when no notice is given that school staff will be visiting. Staff may be following up an unexplained absence or visiting to support children and their families to reduce any barriers to learning.

Procedures for all 'general' home visits

Before each home visit:

- All home visits MUST have been authorised by the Headteacher.
- Staff members should be familiar with the school Home Visit Policy.
- Staff members must be clear about the purpose of the visit – new starter visit, welfare check, non-attendance, dropping off work, when all other means of contact with the family has failed.
- Two staff members are to undertake the home visit wherever possible.
- Staff members to always make sure that the school know where you are going.
- All staff members undertaking home visits to carry a mobile telephone.

During each home visit:

- Carry out a '10 second risk assessment' when they first arrive at the location. If they feel in danger, they should have an appropriate reason to not enter the house and arrange an alternative appointment.
- Be aware of any animals in the house and ask for them to be secured in a separate room.
- Ensure that they shut the door behind them and make themselves familiar with the door lock, in case an emergency exit is required.
- Not position themselves in the corner of a room or in a situation where it is difficult to escape.
- Remain calm and focussed at all times, and keep their possessions close to them.

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- Record the home visit on CPOMs.
- School identification to be visible.
- Staff members are to be professional at all times.
- Staff members are to only enter the property when invited in by an appropriate adult.
- Staff members are to be sensitive to the culture, religion etc of the home.
- If there are immediate safeguarding concerns, staff members are to ring 999.
- Staff members need to disclose any child protection concerns arising from the visit on return to school.
- Staff members are to only speak to an adult who has parental responsibility for the child/ren.

After the visit:

- Staff members are to return to school.
- Record of home visit to be recorded on CPOMS.
- If staff members are not returning directly to school, a telephone call should be made to say you have left the home visit.

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