

# St. Benedict's Primary School

## Home Visits Policy



Ratified by Governors - 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023

## **Aims and Values**

St. Benedict's Primary School is a Rights Respecting School and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is at the heart of everything we do.

We aim for our children to be:

Enjoying their rights, fulfilling their dreams.

- Ambitious: To take pride in learning, make progress and achieve.
- Resilient: To face challenges with perseverance and determination.
- Respectful: To be inclusive, enjoy their rights and respect the rights of others.

## **SECTION 1**

### **Our Policy in Practice**

- This policy is designed to protect the safety of all St. Benedict's School staff.
- Potential dangers include verbal abuse, or threatening behaviours, emotional or physical violence and potentially damaging allegations being made against staff
- Home visits will only take place with staff in pairs on the first occasion, but can then be carried out individually if the risk assessment deems it appropriate

### **Staff specific**

- Home visits should not be the first option, other procedures in line with safeguarding and attendance should be carried out first e.g. phone contact with parents/carers
- Home visits can only take place when the policy and protocols are fully met, and only within the context of the school's role
- Accompanied home visits with other professionals should always follow school policy and protocols
- Home visits must be logged on CPOMS.
- In the case of nobody answering the door, a note should be left to inform that a visit had been attempted
- This policy should be used in conjunction with existing school policies and procedures
- Policy and procedures must be consistently applied

### **Working in partnership with Parents/Carers**

- Be aware of parent/carer responsibilities for the child & check parental responsibility
- Be a good listener
- Whenever possible make appointments in advance for home visits except in the case of safe and well checks
- With pre-arranged appointments ensure that parents/carers 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
- 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 or at the same address
- Make sure you consider diversity of social, cultural, racial, religious and sexual orientation

### **Working in Partnership with other Agencies**

- Communicate with other agencies that are already involved with the family

- Clarify the role of professionals involved to avoid duplication and so that you are not working at cross-purposes with other agencies
- Evidence of good practice is where services liaise and support each other with a clear and common aim of assisting the student and family to overcome barriers to learning
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## **SECTION 2**

### **Specific Protocols for all Home Visits by all staff**

#### **Risk assessment**

- Where home visits take place a risk assessment should be made in advance and any areas of concern following the visit should be passed on. Potential risks should be identified and appropriate measures taken to secure the safety of staff
- Check to see what is known and information available about the home and family
- 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
- Discuss strategies to adopt when working with potentially challenging parent/carer/family with your Line Manager
- Where potential risks are identified consult your Line Manager whether alternative arrangements can be made

#### **Health and Safety**

- Home visits must be undertaken by at least two people on the first occasion, but can then be carried out individually if the risk assessment deems it appropriate
- Inform members of the Leadership Team and office staff when you are leaving for a home visit and ensure they have your mobile phone number.
- Members of staff should also formally sign out and sign back in.
- Details of the visit should be recorded on CPOMS.
- Carry with you and show parents/carers identification
- Demonstrate normal courtesy – wait to be invited into the home
- If a child answers the door, ask if an adult is present in the house before entering. In line with safeguarding procedures do not enter if an adult is not present
- If you are concerned about the safety of a child left home alone or for any other reason, follow the usual safeguarding procedures
- If you need to speak to a child in confidence, a member of the family or a colleague should be present or within sight during the interview
- If the parent/carer appears at all uncomfortable about the visit continuing, staff should leave, offer to continue the contact with a telephone call.
- All contacts with the child and family should be recorded on CPOMS.
- Be alert, trust your instincts and if a situation feels dangerous or threatening – leave, prearrange an exit code with your partner
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## **After the Home Visit**

- Contact a member of the leadership team immediately after the visit is finished informing them that you have returned safely.
- Details of the visit and agreed action should be recorded on CPOMS and relevant staff made aware of the action

Patricia Clayton

Deputy Headteacher