

Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust

Home Visits Guidance & Procedure

In accordance with the schools Health and Safety Policy, these guidance and procedure notes are designed to ensure that all staff members conducting home visits are safeguarded and necessary risk assessments prior to conducting visits are carried out.

Document Control

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Revisions

Version	Page/Para No.	Description of Change	Approved On

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1 Purpose

Visits to families in their homes are necessary in order to provide relevant support and/or advice regarding attendance, school and welfare issues.

Home visits should normally be pre-arranged by letter, however for the purposes of promoting attendance and ensuring pupil safety, ad-hoc “safe and well” visits will also be necessary at times. Wherever possible, home visits should be conducted in pairs.

2 Before the visit

Prior to conducting a home visit, a risk assessment must be done ensuring the following are considered:

- Are there concerns about the intended visit e.g. potential threat or aggression from occupants of household; any concerns must be raised with line manager or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and discussed prior to visiting – decision to be made as to whether extra precautions are necessary in order to preserve staff safety e.g. joint visit, police visit;
- Staff member making the visit must liaise with the Receptionist/ Student Support Assistants (SSAs) whilst on visits and must sign in and out in Reception;
- Staff member making the visit records the appointment ensuring the electronic calendar is updated with time, approximate duration and address of the intended visit;
- If extra visits are necessary whilst already conducting the scheduled visits they must be added to the electronic diary remotely (if accessible) or telephoned through to Receptionist/SSAs and duly noted.

3 Conducting the visit

When conducting a home visit staff should ensure that:

- If concern has been raised prior to the visit but it is deemed safe to visit alone, arrange for Receptionist/SSA to call 5-10 minutes into the visit; ensure that the call is overheard and the address being visited is confirmed aloud – purpose: identifies that visit location is known to others.
- If in doubt, do not enter the house if the parent/carer is not present and the child is alone;
- Avoid visiting out of hours (after the close of academy reception desk). If a visit after this time is required refer to SLT or Police;
- Carry a mobile phone in order to be contacted or make contact in the event of an emergency;
- Carry their identification card and ensure this is shown prior to entering the house;
- Be mindful of where their vehicle is parked i.e. park in a manner that allows ease of escape with the car facing in the direction of exit.
- Ensure they are aware of exit route from the property i.e. make a mental note of house layout.

- Be aware of surroundings to identify any potential safety threats or issues that will need to be addressed with parent/carer e.g. child protection 'red flags'.

4 Managing an unexpected concern

Home Visit Procedure if an unexpected concern arises about safety

If concern is noted prior to entering the property:

- Risk assess whether it is safe to continue with the visit
- Arrange for Receptionist/SSA to call once inside the property as per above instructions.

If the concern arises during the visit:

- If you feel intimidated/threatened or uncomfortable – terminate the home visit in a courteous way, making up an excuse to leave if necessary.
- **If you feel you are in immediate danger** – do not excuse, leave the property immediately.

5 Return from a visit

It is the responsibility of the staff member conducting the home visit(s) to ensure the Receptionist, SSA or line manager is aware that they are safe following completion of the visit(s). Failure to do so will result in the following actions:

Procedure if staff conducting a visit fails to return or make contact with school

If a contact has not been made by the person home visiting within a reasonably expected time following the finishing time of their scheduled visits (suggested an hour):

- Contact the member of staff via mobile;
- If no contact can be made raise concern with SLT;
- SLT will attempt to make contact with the staff member again via mobile, and if required, with staff member's next of kin to check if any contact has been received. SLT will then also try to contact families on scheduled visit list using contact numbers on school database – purpose: to identify the address member of staff was last seen;
- If contact cannot be made - Police to be informed

6 Dealing with aggression

Action following an incident of verbal or physical aggression by a Parent Carer or Student whilst conducting a home visit

The incident must be reported and logged with the Senior Leadership Team. In respect of the student the Academy Behaviour Sanctions will be followed. In respect of parent/carer this will be passed on to the Peterborough City Council to record on the Violence at Work Register. Refer also to the Managing Violent or Abusive Parents Policy

The file/database should be highlighted to indicate caution at further visits.