



Home Visits Policy

May 2024

Vision Statement:

Being Different; Belonging Together.

Frances Olive Anderson Church of England Primary School is a place where all are welcomed and considered valuable and valued as unique children of God. As a school community we aim for all to develop wisdom, hope for the future and a sense of self-worth - to aspire to be the very best we can be, and to enable us to serve others.

We have a strong and dedicated team who endeavour to provide an exciting and enriched curriculum from which we can all learn. The academic and emotional needs of our community are considered, to enable everyone to flourish. Happy learners are lifelong and successful learners.

We strive for our children and adults to be resilient to face any challenges and become a voice for change in the world where change is needed.

"All of us are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it." (1 Corinthians 12:27)

Approved by the governing body on:	May 2024
Signed (Chair of Governors)	Julia Bowdler
Signed (Headteacher)	Sarah Woolley
Review Date	May 2025

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of **Home Visits** in our school. It reflects the consensus of opinion of all members of staff. It is based on current practice and has the full agreement of the governing body. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Head, teaching staff and support staff. It is our collective responsibility to raise awareness and that all policies are known, understood and used in an appropriate way.

Definition: *A home visit is a visit that requires members of staff to enter the home of a parent or carer.*

Aims

At Frances Olive Anderson C of E Primary School we recognise that parents or carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. When a home visit is necessary and applicable, the aim of a home visit is:

- to establish a partnership between parents, carers and staff so that all parties share their knowledge about the child to enable the individual needs of the child to be met.



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- to develop and strengthen relationships with parents and carers for the best interests of the child.
- to ensure the safety and well-being of the child.

Benefits

Home Visits are carried out if a child is not attending a pre-school or nursery in preparation for transition to reception. This enables early, positive contact and an opportunity to talk about the child and their needs. Staff are able to observe the children in their own setting and meet family members that are important to the child.

Home visits may also be carried out as a 'safe and well' check if a child has an unexplained absence from school and we have been unable to make contact with the family.

The **Home Visit Policy** ensures that all staff members who enter the home of a parent and carer are fully aware of the procedures and protocols required (see Appendices).

Safeguarding procedures

At Frances Olive Anderson C of E Primary School we have a positive culture of safeguarding, with effective policies and procedures in place. Our safeguarding procedures are outlined in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which can be found on our website.

Appendix i

Procedures for a home visit

When making home visits staff must keep their personal safety in mind at all times. Staff must always:

- Inform the Headteacher, the SLT or the School Office staff of the timetable of home visits.
- Take a mobile phone and inform the school office of the number.
- Keep the mobile phone on at all times.
- Inform the school office who they are visiting (names, addresses and contact numbers).
- Complete home visits in pairs.
- Inform the parents or carers of the date and time of the visit.
- Wear a school badge as a form of identification.

Appendix ii

Protocols

Protocol before the visit:

Parents will be informed:

- Who will be visiting, when and how long the visit will last.
- A reminder phone call will be made to the home within 24 hours of the visit, as a courtesy.

For safe and well visits, we have had no contact with the family therefore we are unable to inform the family beforehand. However, we will always leave a voicemail to explain that we will be visiting the home.

During the visit: (for the purpose of transition into reception)

- Visits will be carried out in pairs, allowing one member of staff to speak to the parent or carer and the other to interact with the child.



- Staff will discuss the following with the parents and carers about the child: who is important to them, their likes and dislikes and any speech, medical or toileting issues.
- If on arrival at the home, or during the visit, there is an emergency, then staff must get in touch with the police and any other emergency service as required. If there is a safeguarding concern about the child, must be recorded on CPOMS on return to school and passed onto the school's Designated Safeguarding lead. (See [Child Protection Policy](#)).
- If parents or carers are not at home, a letter will be left to say that staff have tried to visit.

During the visit: (safe and well visit)

- Visits carried out in pairs.
- Staff to knock at a front door where members of the public can see them and stand back so parent/carers can look out of a window to see who is at the door.
- If no answer, staff may want to look through a downstairs window at the front of the house or tap on the window to make themselves heard.
- Staff may call through the letter box stating who they are and saying that they are there to check everyone is safe.
- If no answer still, staff return to school and take the next step in checking on the safety of the child/children: this may be contacting the police.
- If a parent/carers comes to the door, staff to state they are checking on the well being of the child/ren as no contact has been made to explain why they are not in school.
- Staff to listen to parent/carers explanation, if the child/ren is/are well enough to be seen by staff, they may come to the door. Staff not to go into the house unless parent/carers invites them in, and the staff feel safe.

Staff conduct adheres to the following:

- Awareness and respect for differing cultures by complying with appropriate customs.
- Avoid commenting on the child's home or provision so that parents do not feel any judgement is being made on their home or lifestyle.
- Have an awareness of pets and other adults who may be in the home.

Risk Assessment

Staff should continually assess risk during the home visit, making themselves aware of house layout and exit routes. If possible, they should position themselves near exit routes. They should ensure their mobile phone is at hand. Should a member of staff be in a situation in which they feel unsafe, they should ensure they put their own safety first. It is better to leave an unsafe situation and find alternative ways of providing support than to risk personal safety. On return to school, they should discuss any concerns about safety or well-being of themselves or the family with the Headteacher/ safeguarding lead and/or SLT. Staff to update safeguarding records following normal procedures.

After the visit:

- Any information gathered must be filed in the child's file.
- Any incidents must be recorded in the child's file.
- If there is a concern about the child, this should be recorded on Smoothwall and the school's Designated Safeguarding lead informed. (See [Child Protection Policy](#)).

Emergency Procedures

An emergency procedure will come into action when:

- A panic call has been received by the office from a member of staff on a home visit.
- Members of staff have not returned one hour after estimated arrival and have made no contact. (All members of staff are asked to return to school after home visits).
- Members of staff do not turn up at a further appointment and have made no contact.



Organisational procedures:

- The office staff should inform the Headteacher of the phone call and any information received.
- The Headteacher will try to make contact with the member of staff on the mobile phone number left, and on the home number of the property.
- The Headteacher will phone the local police asking them to do a 'safe and well check.'

Appendix iii

Health restrictions (as applicable)

The following are applicable if we believe there are necessary restrictions due to health or infection:

- Staff will continue to make home visits in pairs
- The visit will be a doorstep visit
- Staff will wear masks or face shields
- 2 metre distance will be adhered to at all times
- Any resources that are to be left for the family will be left at the door and then staff will move back

SW has received confirmation from LCC via e mail of the following:

'Schools are under no compulsory obligation to conduct home visits -however we do advise as part of your safeguarding policy to ascertain the whereabouts of a missing child, and this may include conducting a home visit'.

At FOA:

If a child does not arrive at school when expected then school will make contact using given telephone numbers and e-mail addresses provided on the midyear application form.

School will contact previous school to check if any safety concerns, should staff go to the house.

If previous school does state there maybe danger then we will contact the police before doing a safe and well check and get advice.

If previous school suggest there is no danger, then after trying to make contact and still no response, 2 members of staff will do a drive pass to ascertain if the address given looks like it has people living there. If staff feel safe, they may knock on the door, explain who they are and that we were expecting the child/ren today at school.

If staff do not feel safe, they must return to school and school will contact the police.



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