HOME VISIT

POLICY AND

PROCEDURE

Full Name	Position	Signature	Date	Review Cycle
Sandeep Athwal	Director		01.01.2024 V2- 02/01/2025	Annual

Statement of intent

To ensure good working practice and to provide guidelines to reduce risks to members of staff when undertaking home visits.

Relevant legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance

- Education Act 2002
- Working together to safeguard children 2023
- Keeping children safe in education 2024
- Working together to improve school attendance 2024
- Children missing education 2016
- Pupil registration regulations 2006
- Health and safety at work

Relevant members of staff and policy information

Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Suki Gill
Deputy designated safeguarding lead/s (DDSL/s)	Cameron Atwal
Designated Teacher for Children who are Looked After / were previously Looked After	Cavin Wright
Family support worker	Nina Bhambra
Mental health lead	Kyle Cadwallader
School Business Manager (SBM)	Suki Gill
Attendance lead	Simmie Kaur
Attendance officer	Nina Bhambra

Chair of Governors	N/A
Safeguarding Governor	Suki Gill
Policy approved by the governing body	Date: 21/08/2024
Date of policy review	August 2025

Introduction and definition

School of Coding Limited is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Whilst the expectation is that all learners attend school regularly, we recognise that there may be occasions when they may be absent or need to be supported at home and this may require a home visit. Maintaining contact between home and school is an important mechanism for ensuring that a child is able to continue accessing their education and in supporting them to return to school. The safety of our children and our staff is paramount. This policy has been developed to ensure that home visits undertaken are both safe and effective.

A home visit is a visit that requires members of staff to visit the home address of a pupil/student to see the child (as part of absence management or in the case of the pupil being too unwell to attend school); or to speak to a parent, carer, or guardian in an emergency or as part of a plan.

Home visits are important in helping the school to contact new parents/carers/guardians or build relationships where children are finding it difficult to attend school. Home visits are also particularly useful in facilitating contact between some parents/carers/guardians and school staff in circumstances where those parents/carers/guardians are genuinely unable to come into school for health/medical or other reasons.

Home visits have many benefits. For parents/carers/guardians and children, a home visit provides an opportunity to meet a key professional from the school/setting who is able to provide support to the child and/or family in an environment that feels safe, familiar and comfortable for the child/family.

Reasons for home visits

Home visits may be undertaken for a variety of reasons. This could include:

- When all other means of contact with a family has failed.
- When students have failed to attend for a couple days
- Children refusing to come into school.
- To try and establish that a child is safe if they are absent from school; and/or attempts to contact parents/carers/guardians have not elicited a response; and/or the school/setting has any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the child.
- To work with and support parents/carers/guardians in developing strategies to help their child attend school where attendance is an issue.

Home visit procedures

The purpose of a home visit is to see the child **and** to speak to the parent/carer/guardian. Good practice would dictate that parents are always aware of the visit; but there may be occasional circumstances when this is not in the best interests of the child or practicable. All home visits conducted by staff must be authorised by the DSL or a member of the senior leadership team prior to the visit taking place.

Before the Visit

Staff undertaking home visits should:

- Be familiar with the school's policy and procedure for home visits.
- should call the parents, care workers, or social workers to confirm the status and well-being of the individual we plan to visit.
- Follow all health and safety procedures
- Dial-in to the office or designated supervisor at the beginning of the visit to confirm their arrival.
- Assess risks to staff for each home visit. Points to consider include:

  - Is this a 'doorstop' visit or will the member/s of staff enter the home? Two members of staff required to undertake home visits.
  - Is there an allocated social worker or other professionals working with the family
  - Would it be helpful/appropriate/safer to consider a joint visit with another professional working with the family?
    The final decision about a member of staff undertaking a home visit alone must be made by the DSL or a member of the senior leadership team.

- Be clear about the purpose of the visit. Make sure that a home visit is necessary. (If possible and/or practical, arrange for parents/carers/guardians to come into the school).
- Ensure adequate insurance cover is in place for any off-site visits covering any vehicles used and whether staff are covered by their insurance.
- The parent/carer/guardian should be informed of the visit beforehand unless there is a valid reason to undertake an unannounced visit.
- For staff conducting home visits, they must phone to confirm they are outside a family's address and immediately after leaving the address at the end of the visit.
- Consider personal safety of all professionals conducting the visit, for example: valuables, parking.
- Consider what resources (e.g. leaflets, forms, signposting) staff need to have with them when undertaking a visit.

During the Visit

- Having school/setting official ID available when introducing themselves.
- Being clear about and being able to explain the purpose of the visit to the parent/carer/guardian.
  Only speaking to adults with parental responsibility.
- Not entering the premises if a child is found alone unless it is necessary to do so to safeguard a child in an emergency.
- Being clear about procedures for reporting any concerns
- In the event that staff find a child not supervised by an appropriate adult or otherwise at risk of harm, they are expected to quickly assess the situation to determine if the child is in immediate danger.
- Being sensitive to and respectful of the culture and religious beliefs of the parent/carer/guardian.
- Conducting themselves in a professional manner at all times, acting in accordance with school policies with particular reference to the staff behaviour (code of conduct) and child protection policies.
- Remaining in shared areas of the household during visits, only going into a child's bedroom in exceptional circumstances such as the need to see a child who is too unwell to get out of bed and only when visiting in pairs and with the permission of the child and their parents/carers/guardians.
- Terminating the visit and leaving the household immediately if the member/s of staff consider themselves to be at risk or unsafe.

After the visit

- Report back to the relevant professional(s) in line with school policy. This is the DSL (Suki Gill).

- If not returning directly to school, the member/s of staff must telephone the school/setting as soon as they have left the household to confirm that the home visit has finished.

- The member/s of staff should follow up any required actions as soon as possible after the visit, e.g. updating key professionals, updating school records including the safeguarding file as appropriate, debrief with the DSL, a deputy DSL, SLT member or line manager as appropriate.

If a visiting member of staff does not contact the school within the agreed timeframe

- **Initial Attempt to Contact**: As soon as the agreed timeframe has passed, the designated contact person at the school should immediately attempt to reach the visiting staff member by phone.
- **Contact the Supervisor**: If the initial attempt is unsuccessful, the designated contact person should inform the staff member's supervisor or the designated senior staff member about the situation.
- **Emergency Contact**: If there is still no response after 15 minutes, the supervisor should contact the emergency contact provided by the visiting staff member.
- **Inform the Authorities**: If the staff member remains unreachable 30 minutes past the agreed timeframe, the school should inform local authorities (police) and provide them with all relevant details, including the location of the home visit, the time it was scheduled to end, and any known risks associated with the visit.
- **Log the Incident**: Throughout this process, all attempts to contact the staff member and actions taken should be logged meticulously, noting the time and outcome of each action.
- **Review and Follow-Up**: Once the situation is resolved, there should be a review of the incident to identify any improvements to the procedure to prevent future occurrences. This should include debriefing the staff member involved and providing any necessary support.