



HOME VISITING POLICY

We regard home visiting as one of the most vital stages of our induction process. We positively encourage all parents to look favourably on home visits as a non-threatening, positive experience and one that will be beneficial to all parties concerned i.e. the children, parents and staff.

Our policy for home visiting and rationale is briefly explained to all prospective parents by the Home Visitor. If parents do not wish to take advantage of a home visit we would ask them to reconsider and we discuss the advantages before coming to a definite decision, after that we would abide by their decision. An opportunity would be provided for them to meet with the Home Visitor at the nursery prior to the start date to complete the required paperwork.

Aims of a Home Visit

- To build relationships with families - establishing strong bonds between children, parents and the school.
- To develop a partnership between home and school.
- To recognise, value and build upon the principle that parents are the first educators of their child.
- To enable parents to be in control of the situation – lead discussions about their own child in the comfort and security of their own home.
- To nurture a shared commitment to the child's development.

Home Visits Provide:

- an opportunity for both child and parents to meet the Home Visitor in their own homes where they feel comfortable and secure;
- the opportunity for parents to have individual consultation with the Home Visitor to discuss any concerns about their child. These concerns can be very varied in nature and include health or family problems, fears about how the child may or may not settle in school, questions about the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and general Nursery School routine, and about school life. The Home Visitor will also provide information and images to share with the family and child to support their understanding of Nursery School life;
- the child with an opportunity to have individual contact with the Home Visitor and to be able to share whatever is important to them;
- the Home Visitor with the opportunity to gain information which is a vital part of the settling-in process and will help them when working with the child in school, such as likes and dislikes, favourite activities, position in family and previous pre-school experiences.

Timing and Procedure for Home Visits

Parents are notified of the date of the home visit and the child's actual start date. This enables the parents to plan ahead for childminders/carers or notify us of holiday arrangements etc. so that we can alter dates and times to suit the family. It is difficult to give an exact arrival time as the length of each visit can vary, but we will offer a morning or afternoon appointment.

School records are started immediately from the information gathered from the application form, playing with the child and talking to the parent. Medical notes are recorded for all staff to access throughout the year e.g. allergies, asthma, eczema. Photograph consent forms and any other permissions are also completed.

Positive Home Visiting

As a staff team, we all feel extremely positive about home visiting – we give it very high status, prepare and plan well and work hard on collating information gathered at these sessions. We try to be sensitive and diplomatic.

If a child joins the school later in the year a visit will also be provided. Likewise, if a child has had a prolonged period of absence for any reason, a visit might be arranged to help the child return to Nursery. This demonstrates that we do not see home visiting as an annual "one off" process that is only done on entry to the nursery but a continual process of settling our youngest children.

In Preparation for Home Visiting

- We read through the policy, discuss the procedure and any changes in school.

- We prepare all the paperwork.
- We read all information gleaned previously about the family, i.e. application form, Health Visitor referral forms.
- We check we have all the resources we need.

During the visit we ensure we offer plenty of opportunities for parents to talk – and do not see this as an opportunity purely for us to give information. Parents and children may have concerns and anxieties. These need to be listened to carefully so that both feel supported.

We ensure parents know that we are always available to answer further questions and we share information or repeat it. It is so easy for a parent - especially if it is their first experience of a child going to school - to forget, become muddled, or just not understand. We are there to help, support and say things in different ways to aid understanding.

Safe Home Visiting

Staff members conducting home visits will consider their personal safety and make an assessment of the risk. The school will also adhere to the LCC Lone Working guidance- G23.1 WORKING ALONE. This includes completion and annual review of a *G23.2 SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS OF LONE WORKER RISK ASSESSMENT* (see Appendix 1).

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/jobs/manuals/health-and-safety-manual/hazards/working-alone/>

The Home Visitor will gather as much information about the accommodation they intend to visit beforehand. This includes familiarising themselves with the family background, if known to the Nursery School, before conducting any sort of contact, especially if they have just taken over the area or have been on leave. It is a requirement that the Head Teacher is aware of the home visiting schedule.

Ensure that the Home Visitor has:

- A working mobile phone.
- Completed a “Home Visit Schedule” and a copy is displayed for the Head Teacher.

The Home Visitor is responsible for recording information about location and timing, and to make sure it is accurate. They are also responsible for contacting the office if they are significantly delayed. This information is needed so that concerns do not develop for their safety.

The basic information required is:

- Home Visitor’s name.
- Mobile number.
- The family’s name and address.
- Reason for the visit (e.g. routine new starter, unauthorised absences).
- Any identified risk factors.
- Expected time of return.

Where more than one home visit is to be conducted, it is suggested that an approximate time is given as to when each client is to be visited.

- Ensure appropriate footwear is worn (safety shoes).
- Ensure they have a Home Visit Record form.

Assessment of Risk

If any of the following factors are present then the Head Teacher should be consulted before a home visit is conducted:

- Previous Police involvement with the client relating to violence.
- There is a history of violence towards professionals.
- There is a child protection panel in operation.

Where a family is deemed to be high risk because of previous history and experience, the Head Teacher should be notified and one of the following strategies used:

- Conduct the home visit with another member of staff or Local Authority Professional.
- Conduct the home visit with the Head Teacher.
- Conduct a school interview instead of a home visit.

- Collaborate with the External Services or Children’s Centre to provide a secure environment for a meeting to take place.

If the Home Visitor is subjected to any form of violence at work, including threats and verbal abuse, the incident/s must be reported and recorded.

It is very important to do this so that:

- The Home Visitor receives the support they need.
- Any risks in the work environment are monitored.
- Risk management strategies can be improved.

Evaluation

Once the children are settled, parents will receive an Induction Questionnaire. The completed questionnaires will be analysed and the findings discussed by the staff. Any suggestions on ways in which we can improve the process will be taken into consideration for the next academic year.

List of Information/Resources taken on Home Visit

- Completed Application Form.
- Welcome Pack.
- Photograph Consent Form.
- Data collection sheet (if available).
- Nursery Prospectus (if parent did not attend Open Day).
- Samples of uniform - or actual goods if already ordered.
- Photograph album of different areas of the nursery.
- Books/toys/puzzles.

Appendix 1

G23.2 SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS OF LONE WORKER RISK ASSESSMENT

St Giles Nursery School	Home Visitor	Carried out by		Date	
Hazard	Who might be harmed	Existing Controls (or proposed controls in the case of a new activity)	*Risk rating with existing or proposed controls	Are risks adequately controlled Yes/No	If No, what further actions are required to reduce the risks

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***Risk Rating = Likelihood of Occurrence x Severity of Harm (Not essential, can help in prioritising actions)**

Likelihood of Occurrence	1 Rare	2 Unlikely	3 Moderate	4 Likely	5 Almost Certain
Severity of injury	1 Minor	2 Moderate	3 Significant	4 Major	5 Catastrophic