



**Brownhill**  
LEARNING COMMUNITY

## **HOME VISITS POLICY 2021- 2022**

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**Review: August 2022**

### **Aim:**

The aim of the home visit policy is to ensure good working practice and to provide guidelines in reducing risks to members of staff when undertaking home visits.

The Governors and Head teacher of the Brownhill Learning Community acknowledge there may be an increase in potential risks associated with Staff making visits to pupil's homes.

The Governors and Head teacher will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that employees who are required to carry out home visits remain safe and healthy and are at no greater risk than any other employee whilst at work.

### **Rationale**

Teachers and support staff visit pupils in their home for a variety of reasons, such as attendance, behaviour matters and welfare. Some teachers or support staff may choose to visit pupils to keep in touch if they are involved in alternative curriculums. For many of the staff in the BLC home visiting is part of their job description.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers have a duty to safeguard the health and safety of their employees. This duty applies whether the employee is working at the usual workplace or off site. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1998 require employers to assess the health and safety risks faced by employees and take appropriate preventative measures, where necessary.

The main safety risk associated with home visiting is that of violence, although risks may arise through stress brought on by the isolation experienced by some members of staff. All Staff visiting the home have received Safeguarding Training and are aware of the procedure for concerns or disclosures.

### **Undertaking Visits**

**Home visits should not be undertaken by any member of staff without the permission of the senior team.**

The following sets out the guidance to staff on home visiting:

- Where possible and when appropriate, visits should be undertaken by prior arrangement.
- Senior management on site should be informed of any visits taking place and which pupils home is being visited.

- Home visits should be kept to a minimum and all the preparatory steps set out in this document should be followed in full.
- Staff need to feel confident that they are not being placed at risk either of violence or allegations of abuse from pupils or their families, whether home visits take place on an occasional or regular basis.
- Cultural sensitivity/ awareness should be observed during the home visit
- For the majority of staff, it is recommended that, wherever possible, meetings should take place on site.
- It may be possible for visits to be co-ordinated with other professionals such as Education Welfare Officers.
- Staff should ensure they have all relevant paperwork ready prior to the visit
- All communication must be recorded thoroughly. If the visit is unsuccessful, the relevant paperwork should be left at the property; staff must clearly state the reason for the visit and the next course of action. (see data protection information below)
- All copies of any paperwork must come back on site; the visit must be recorded on SIMS.

***The first question should always be “Am I the right person to undertake this visit?”***

#### **Senior staff should consider:**

- Who would be the most appropriate member of staff to undertake the visit. Differences in class, age, colour or sex can provoke behaviour in certain people.
- That there may be a greater risk sending staff on a visit to households where family members are known to be racist or sexist.
- Some staff may have a past history of difficulties with the particular family members. Staff may require additional support in dealing with such situations

#### **Avoiding the risk of Violence**

The Brownhill Learning Community will ensure that staff:

- are fully trained in strategies for the prevention of violence using methods from the Team Teach Model
- are briefed about the area in which they will be visiting
- are provided with all known relevant information on particular pupils and their families, information about pupils with aggressive tendencies, or aggressive pets, or who come from families with a history of violence, which may help stop violent incidents occurring
- Are aware of the need to leave an itinerary with expected departure/arrival times with the admin office at the centre. The worker should be informed how to react if the person has not returned when expected and also to inform colleagues about any possible changes to plans.
- Where possible staff will carry out discussions on the door step rather than entering the property.

**Any cause for concern regarding a staff member's safety on a home visit should prompt a call to the Police giving details of the staff members last known location, intended destination and a description of their vehicle.**

- Have arranged a prior appointment if possible with the parent whom they wish to meet and that they do not enter the house if either the student is at home alone or if the parent whom they have arranged to meet is not there.
- Are aware of the importance of leaving the home immediately if they feel uncomfortable in any way
- Avoid evening visits wherever possible
- Carry a mobile phone or personal alarm
- Carry an identity card which should be shown on each visit
- Do not carry large amounts of cash
- Have access to forms for reporting incidents

### **Data Protection**

Prior to any visit staff should ensure they have the parent/carer correct name and contact details.

Any messages posted through doors will be on headed imprinted sheets and addressed to the parent/guardian by name in a sealed envelope with the school stamp on the rear.

The Brownhill Learning Community will keep an up to date record of incidents reported following home visits and visits will be discontinued where there is a known risk of violence or unacceptable behaviour.

All information received will be used confidentially and stored securely; as per BLC data protection policy and privacy notes.

The Brownhill Learning Community understands that Staff who visit students at home can also be particularly vulnerable to allegations of physical or sexual abuse being made against them.

The measures set out in this Policy will greatly assist in minimising the risks of allegations.

If incidents do occur staff should record all details as soon as possible after the event, before precise recollections of events fade.

All incidents should be reported immediately to the Headteacher and LA.

The Brownhill Learning Community recognises and will facilitate time for staff that may need or wish to meet with their Union Representative as early as possible in the event of allegations.

The Governors and Head teacher will ensure the implementation of the policy and action taken to minimise risks is monitored regularly and will review procedures following any dangerous incidents whilst employees visiting pupils in the home.

