# Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School

## Home Visits Policy and Guidance

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To be a community of learners, believers and friends rooted in the values and teachings of the Gospel. We seek to enable every individual to develop his or her potential in the knowledge that they are uniquely created and loved by God.

**This Policy has been approved and adopted by the Xavier Catholic Education Trust**

**Committee Responsible: Risk & Audit Committee**
**To be reviewed in October 2027**

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**Cardinal Newman School Mission Statement**
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## Context

In accordance with the Xavier Catholic Education Trust's Health and Safety Policy, this policy and guidance is intended to ensure that all staff members undertaking home visits are safeguarded and necessary risk assessments are completed prior to undertaking visits.

All staff undertaking home visits will have had safeguarding training, signed the Xavier Catholic Education Trust's Code of Conduct and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).

All home visits undertaken will be approved by the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead prior to the visit taking place. A risk assessment will be completed before a visit takes place.

Home visits can be necessary in order to develop and strengthen relationships for the best interests of children, to identify needs, provide support and to provide advice and signposting to relevant services. Home visits will only be undertaken when it is considered necessary to do so.

Home visits will be pre-planned and conducted in pairs, wherever possible. Exceptions to this could include where there are safeguarding concerns for a child and parents/carers are not responding to communication from the school.

This document should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies including, but not limited to, the Xavier Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy.

## Reasons for Home Visits

To help children settle into the Early Years classes more easily by providing an opportunity for the new child and their family to meet staff members from the Foundation Stage.

To support engagement for children who are refusing to attend school.

To provide support where there are attendance concerns.

To support engagement for parents/carers when other means of communication have not been successful.

To establish that a child is safe when they have not attended school and there are concerns for their safety and well-being.

To maintain contact with a child who is unable to attend school due to a medical condition.

To provide an alternative venue for parents who are unable to come into school.

Where transporting a child to/from home has been agreed.

To provide support when a referral has been made for involvement by the Home School Link Worker

## Planning for the Home Visit

Ensure you have read and understood the Home Visits Policy and Guidance.

Be clear about the purpose of the visit and confident that the visit is essential.

Prior to conducting a home visit, a risk assessment must be completed. The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify whether it is safe to undertake a visit and to determine if additional members of staff are required for the visit. The risk assessment will also identify any concerns about the intended visit and ensure measures are put in place to minimise any risks identified. Any concerns identified should be discussed with a member of the Leadership Team to ensure a decision to proceed is based on additional measures being put in place to ensure the safeguarding of staff undertaking the visit when a meeting at an alternative venue is not considered an appropriate option.

Ensure you are well informed about the family and are aware of personal circumstances.

Wherever possible, schedule the home visit during or immediately after the school day. Do not schedule visits during the evening.

Write to parents/carers offering an appointment for a home visit, including the purpose of the visit. Accept the parents/carers right to decline a home visit.

If you have any allergies you must check with the home before the visit to ensure it is safe for you to visit.

Arrange for an appropriate member of staff to accompany you (if required) on the visit.

Ensure the visit is recorded in your electronic diary with the time, approximate duration and address of the planned visit.

On the day of the visit, you must ensure you sign in and out of the office and let the Receptionist know the details of your visit.

Ensure your mobile phone is fully charged prior to undertaking the home visit

## Undertaking the Home Visit

Ensure you wear your staff Identification throughout the visit.

Carry a fully charged mobile phone to be contacted or make contact in the event of an emergency.

Park in a well-lit area which does not require you to reverse on leaving.

If undertaking the visit in pairs, ensure both staff are present before you enter the property. Agree a code word with your colleague to alert the colleague if you require assistance or should leave. The same code word could be used if you need to contact school to alert them that you are in danger.

Do not enter the property unless invited to do so by a responsible adult.

Do not enter the property if there is no adult present.

Be sensitive to the culture and religion of the family.

Only speak to an adult who has parental responsibility or who you have consent from the parents/carers to speak to.

Do not go upstairs in a property and do not enter a child's bedroom.

Use common sense, trust your instincts and if a concern arises during the visit, you feel intimidated, threatened or uncomfortable, try to remain calm and leave, making up an excuse to leave if necessary for example, that you are going back to get something from your car.

At the first sign of danger leave the property immediately and report the incident to the Headteacher. If you are prevented from leaving try to stay calm and diffuse the situation by saying you will contact a senior member of staff for them to discuss their concern with or to seek advice from. Use an agreed code word to alert school that you are in danger. If this fails, call 999 if you can do so.

If you consider the child to be at immediate risk of danger call 999.

## After the Home Visit

Return to school and sign in to ensure the school know you are safe. If you are not returning to school after the visit, telephone school to let them know you have finished the visit.

As soon as reasonably possible after the visit, complete a written record of the visit.

Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead upon arrival back at the school or by telephone, after leaving the visit, if you are not returning to school.

Any accidents occurring during home visits must be recorded in writing as soon as possible, while events are still fresh in people's memories.

## Procedure if Staff do not Check In after the visit

If the visiting member of staff fails to return to school or does not make contact within a reasonable timeframe of the end of the scheduled visit (30 minutes) then school will contact the member of staff.

If no contact can be made with the member of staff, a member of the Leadership Team/Headteacher will be informed. The member of the Leadership Team/Headteacher will attempt to contact the member of staff.

If no contact can be then the Leadership Team will contact the staff member's next of kin to check if any contact has been made.

Contact will be made with the family who were visited to identify when the member of staff was last seen and to ask to speak to the member of staff if they are still at the property

If no contact can be made or there is a concern for the member of staff the police will be informed.

**Appendix 1**
**Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School**
**Risk Assessment Template - Home Visit**

All staff undertaking home visits will have completed safeguarding training and signed to say they have read, understood, and will adhere to the Xavier Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy. A written record of the visit will be completed following the visit.
Written consent will be requested if a child is being transported to/from school by a member of staff.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Location of Visit:** | Insert address | **Date of Visit** | Insert Date |
| **Reason for Visit:** | | | |
| **Child/Children's Name** | Insert Name/s of child/children | | |
| **Name of Staff Member/s Undertaking Visit** | Insert name/s of staff | | |
| **Date visit Approved by Headteacher and Designated Lead for Safeguarding** | Insert date | **Signature of Approver** | Insert signature (or name, if by email) |

| **What are the hazards** | **Who might be harmed** | **How might they be harmed** | **Risk level (high/med/low)** | **What can be done to reduce or eliminate the risk** | **How will you know if the measures taken are successful** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aggressive or violent parent/child/adult | Member of staff | Physical injury | Low (if no history of aggression or violence), *could be medium or high based on the history* | - If previous history of aggression is known then the member of staff will not visit alone and will not enter the property<br>- Use of mobile phone<br>- Home Visit Policy is adhered to. | No injury sustained |
| Car Travel | Child<br>Member of staff | Physical Injury if road accident | Low | - Member of staff to drive with care, drive within the speed limits<br>- Car to be in a road worthy condition with valid MOT and Car Tax | No accidents or injury caused by the driver |

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| | | | | - Business use included on car insurance<br>- Member of staff to have no medical conditions, including taking medication) which can impair driving or exclude them from driving<br>- Use of mobile phone prohibited whilst driving<br>- Child car seat requirements adhered to<br>-Remind child of safe travel and expectations | |
| Medical Conditions – Only include, if required.<br>List any medical conditions known for the adult or child:<br><br>Example – food allergy – gluten intolerant | Child<br>Member of Staff<br><br>Child | List potential harm based on known medical conditions<br><br>Harm caused by adverse reaction to products containing gluten. | Low | -If the child has a medical condition that requires additional support/medication, a copy of their Care Plan plus medication will be carried at all times.<br><br>-No food products containing gluten to be given to the child. | No adverse reaction or harm caused. |

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| | | | | - copy of their Care Plan plus EpiPen will be carried at all times. | |
| Attack by an animal | Member of staff<br>Child | Major injury | Low (could be higher if you are aware of any previous incidents). | -check in advance if the family have any pets and ensure they are secure before the visit.<br>- Avoid contact with or startling pets. | No injury sustained |