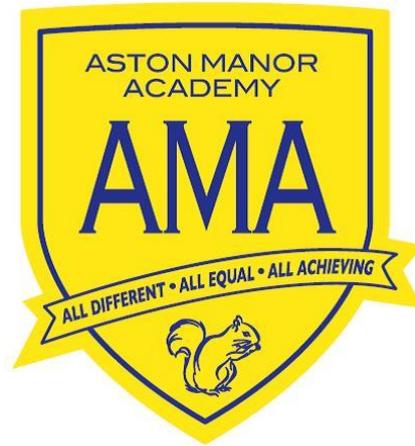


EQUITAS ACADEMIES TRUST



Chilwell Croft
Academy

HOME VISIT POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

Review Date: September 2018
To be Reviewed: September 2019
Agreed: F & GP Board
Policy Lead: Marion Lower / Pravina Patel

HOME VISIT POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

1. AUDIENCE

This policy is to be read and implemented by all staff and Trustees of Equitas Academies Trust.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Equitas Academies Trust will continuously strive to ensure that everyone in its schools are treated with respect and dignity. Each person in the Trust will be given fair and equal opportunity to develop their full potential with positive regard to gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality or disability.

3. AIMS

- To set out guidance to staff making official visits to the homes of referred and registered pupils.
- To ensure the personal safety of staff on home visits.

4. EXPECTATIONS

Staff and pupils have a right to work in a safe and healthy environment, free from abuse or threat of harm.

Staff are responsible for their own safety and are empowered to make professional judgments appropriate to the circumstances they find themselves in.

Before any initial visit is made sufficient background information should be obtained and an initial risk assessment undertaken. Where advice is communicated from any source which suggests caution or states that no individual should visit alone then this advice must be followed.

The safety of school staff is very important. Staff should not take risks. If they have any doubts, they should not go on a home visit.

5. PROCEDURE

Before staff leave to go on a home visit they need to inform the school office and record the following information on a record sheet (appendix B)

- Their car registration number.
- Their mobile phone number if they are not taking the school mobile.
- The address of home visit and whom they are expecting to see.

- The time they are expected to arrive and leave the property.

Staff must telephone the school when leaving each home visit so that the school knows where they are.

If contact has not been made or the member of staff is not back at school within 40 minutes of the visit, the school office will make contact to the mobile number given. Failure to make contact with the member of staff should be reported to the School Senior Leadership Team immediately.

The schools Senior Leadership Team will make a decision as to whether to send another person to the property, wait a bit longer and re-call the member of staff or to contact the police.

7. AT THE HOME VISIT:

- On arrival during the first home visit a risk assessment checklist must be completed (appendix A) and a working together family agreement (appendix B) if the family are deemed as requiring frequent visits. If an alternative agency has completed this already, their risk assessment may be used as a substitute providing the details cover the contents of appendix A. A copy of the alternative risk assessment must be kept on file and obtained prior to any of our staff attending a home visit.
- Staff must wear named photo ID.
- Two members of staff must attend all 1st home visits.
- Staff must remember that they are a guest in someone's home and show respect and courtesy at all times, this may involve removing shoes and covering body parts.
- If staff are asked any questions they cannot answer, they should inform the family that they will seek the answer and will report back to the parent/carer or refer the parent or carer to a senior member of staff.
- Where a home visit is deemed to be of low risk, it is agreed that one person can visit the home (repeat visits, etc.) providing the following steps are taken:
 - Staff must inform their line manager that they are attending appointments outside of school and give the time they are leaving, (allow time to get there safely) and the time the appointment is likely to end. Staff must state the estimated time they are due back at the School.
 - Staff must ask the school office staff to make a call to them during their allotted visit time, this is to check that they are safe and in no imminent danger. The staff member on the visit should use the following code phrases **'I'd like that very much'** which can be used if you feel you are in danger; this will enable the office staff to make a 999 call without alerting the person causing the concern, or **"the file is in the red cupboard"** which can be used to indicate that they do require school back up and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be sent to the address.

In the event of an incident

On returning to the office after an incident the worker must contact their line manager, inform them of the incident and complete an incident report form (Appendix D), making sure that the incident is factually recorded.

Containing Aggression – Some helpful tips/advice for staff doing home visits

- It is important, even if someone is trying to provoke you, not to respond in kind. Meeting aggression leads to confrontation and someone could get hurt.
- Stay calm and speak slowly and clearly. Do not argue, be patronising or try to outsmart the person verbally. Breathe slowly to control your own tension.
- Avoid body language which may be misinterpreted, such as looking down on the aggressor; hands on hips; folded arms; any physical contact. Keep your distance.
- Talk through the problem; suggest going to see a colleague back at the school; suggest a walk or some fresh air, allow aggression to be diverted against inanimate objects, such as banging the table.
- **If you can't deflect or defuse the situation, get away. Make an excuse to leave, e.g. call the office and quote the coded phrase words.**
- **Staff should trust their instincts and do not underestimate the situation. Things can get out of control very quickly.** Whilst talking, assess possible ways you can escape if the situation worsens.
- **Never turn your back**, if you are trying to get away, move gradually backwards. The police must be contacted when any physical abuse/assault /threats has occurred.

If you arrive for a home visit and no one is home:

- Leave a note with the date and time you were there, the school phone number and a time that you can be reached to set up a new appointment.
- Return to the school and try to call the parent/carer. If you are unable to locate the parent/carer at that time, send a note home with the child the next school day, asking the parent/carer to contact you for a time the visit could be rescheduled.
- It is the home visitor's responsibility to ensure that parents/carers are contacted immediately if they are unable to keep the scheduled appointment. If the home visitor cancels a home visit (due to illness) it must be reconvened at a later date.

Good practice indicates that staff should consider:

Their Safety

- Stay alert, sit close to an exit.
- Trust your instincts.
- Dress appropriately, leave unnecessary jewellery at school.
- Wear shoes and clothes that do not hinder movement or your ability to run away in an emergency
- Ensure that your means of communication and any personal alarms are working and accessible.
- Program your phone /school phone with the school number so that it can be rung by pressing one button.
- Travel with another person when possible.
- If driving ensure that you have sufficient fuel and park safely
- Remove yourself from dangerous situations.
- Leave purse/bag at school.
- Carry only items deemed necessary such as cash, keys, and school identification.
- Ask family members to meet you outside if you are uncomfortable with the area.
- Ask the family to secure pets before arrival.
- Keep your mobile phone switched on at all times.

Their role

- Be a good listener.
- Have specific goals or objectives for each visit.
- Realise the limitations of your role, never put yourself in danger, and leave if you feel worried.
- Help parents/carers become more independent.
- Keep language appropriate.
- Remember that small improvements lead to big ones.

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- Be yourself.
- Be confident.
- Respect all cultural and ethnic values.
- Monitor your own behaviour; the parent/carer is observing you.

8. TRAINING

All staff completing home visits will be given some basic training in how to manage their own personal safety and conflict resolution.

Date of next review: September 2019

Home visit risk assessment

Family Name/Child Name	Address		Contact Details	
Names and DOB of other persons living at the home	Names and DOB of other persons living at the home	Names and DOB of other persons living at the home	Names and DOB of other persons living at the home	Names and DOB of other persons living at the home
			Yes	No
Have any risks been identified by any other agencies?				
Are there any dangers/hazards associated with the property/area?				
Is the house easy to find?				
Is access/entrance and exit to the house easy, clear and well lit?				
Is the interior of the house generally safe?				
Is there a possibility of a member of staff feeling threatened by a family member?				
Are you aware of any intimidating/threatening clients, relatives or friends living at or likely to visit the property?				
Are there any pets in the household?				
Is anyone in the household known for violent offences?				
Is anyone in the household known to misuse drugs or alcohol?				
Does the family speak/understand English?				
Are you confident all safety measures are in place?				
Do you think contact should be made outside of the home?				
Areas of concern				
Action(s) to eliminate/reduce risk?			By Whom?	
Date	Manager's Signature	Worker	Worker	

Appendix B

Working Together Agreement

Name of Parents/Carers:

Date of Birth:

Child(ren's) Name:

Date of Birth:

Family Worker:

Family worker agrees to:

- Ensure information is kept confidential
- Share information with professionals who need to know
- Work to Equities Trust policies and procedures
- Home visits will only be at times and days agreed with parents/carers unless in special circumstances
- Give prior warning if family worker has to cancel sessions and re-arrange
- Ensure parents have a contact number (Tel: 0121 464 3402 Chilwell or 0121 0121 359 8108 Aston Manor)
- Provide appropriate information and resources

Parent/carer agrees to:

- Inform family worker in the event of having to cancel appointments
- Give written consent for outreach workers to share relevant information to professionals on a 'need to know basis' 'under the Data Protection Act 1998'
- Be aware that if the family worker has any concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of the child when visiting, or any other children in the family, relevant child protection agencies will be informed immediately
- Sign to confirm that the child protection statement is fully understood

	Signature	Print Name	Date
Parent/Carer			
Family Support Worker			

Incident Report Form

DATE & TIME OF INCIDENT _____ LOCATION _____

DOES THIS INCIDENT INVOLVE: Students? Y N Staff? Y N Other(s)? Y N

NAME OF PERSON(S) INVOLVED: _____

Address _____ Phone _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT (Please include names of individuals involved, the nature of the incident, and a brief narrative of what occurred):

WAS ILLNESS OR INJURY INVOLVED? (If yes, provide details and *attach copy of accident report.*)

FINAL DISPOSITION (how you handled the incident, any next steps required, or likely outcomes):

PRINT NAME OF PERSON SUBMITTING REPORT _____

SIGNATURE OF PERSON SUBMITTING REPORT _____