



HOME VISITS' POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SLT Responsible Person: Mr P Carpenter

Date of Policy: November 2022

Date to be reviewed: November 2023

Approved by: Senior Leadership Team – 24 November 2022

Published: Website/Staff Intranet

To be read in conjunction with:

Behaviour for Learning Policy
Attendance & Punctuality Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Child on Child Abuse Policy
Exclusions Policy

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment – Work Activity: Home Visits

Appendix 2: Awareness of a Staff Home Visit Form

Appendix 3: Home Visit Summary Form

Appendix 4: Home Visit Missed Slip

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Home visiting and lone working during off site appointments is an essential part of support work. Helston Community College (HCC) is committed to ensuring that it does not put any of its staff in a situation of unreasonable risk.
- 1.2 Often HCC staff will either visit homes with colleagues (all HCC home visits must be undertaken with a colleague) or work off site alone. This guidance covers those undertaking:
 - Home visits.
 - Appointments with professionals at parents'/carers' homes/another venue, i.e. schools or Offices.
- 1.3 Working in such a situation may place staff at risk from:
 - Having an accident and being unable to attract help.
 - Aggressive/violent behaviour of another person.
 - The subject of false allegations.
 - COVID 19.
- 1.4 This policy outlines the procedures for undertaking home visits based on best practice.

2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 HCC will ensure that the induction programme for staff includes this policy and discussion about lone working and home visit guidance, where their role may necessitate the undertaking of home visits.
- 2.2 HCC will ensure that appropriate staff receive training and updates when required on the measures in place for undertaking home visits and lone working.
- 2.3 HCC will ensure that all staff undertaking home visits have access to their mobile phone.
- 2.4 HCC has undertaken a generic risk assessment for home visits to reduce risks as far as is reasonably practicable. This risk assessment can be seen in Appendix 1 and will be reviewed at least annually.
- 2.5 HCC will not allow any visits which will place the worker at unacceptable risk levels.
- 2.6 All staff undertaking home visits must take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety. If at any time they feel unsure of their safety, they should remove themselves from that situation as soon as possible.
- 2.7 All staff undertaking home visits must inform HCC of their movements and expected time of return by completing the home visit form (see Appendix 2) prior to conducting home visits and ensure that this is left with a designated member of staff.
- 2.8 Staff will not be asked to undertake home visits outside College hours unless essential for safeguarding purposes.
- 2.9 If appropriate and fully risk assessed, home invigilation may be undertaken by one member of staff.

3 Before undertaking a home visit

- 3.1 Staff should discuss the home visit and rationale with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 3.2 Staff should be aware of any relevant background information before making a visit. This may include who lives at the address, any relevant safeguarding information and any factors that may pose a higher risk to personal safety.
- 3.3 Where possible and appropriate, staff must arrange the visit to an address over the telephone to establish as much information as possible, such as who will be present in the home.
- 3.4 When undertaking a home visit staff should be accompanied by a colleague.
- 3.5 All visits should be logged on the home visits form with times and venues clearly stated.
- 3.6 For pre-arranged visits, if the visiting member of staff finds they are delayed, they should call the parent/carer and let them know they will be arriving later than originally planned.
- 3.7 Ensure appropriate vehicle insurance is in place for transporting parents/carers and their families if necessary when carrying out their day to day duties.
- 3.8 Staff should plan their route in advance and take a map if required, to avoid having to ask for direction in unfamiliar surroundings.
- 3.9 Staff should ensure their mobile phone is adequately charged.
- 3.10 Staff must have a contingency plan in place in case things go wrong, e.g. if the car breaks down or if they get lost.

4 During a home visit

- 4.1 Staff should consider where to park the car and always reverse into a space so it is easy to drive out quickly.
- 4.2 If walking, staff should use well-lit public streets and avoid short cuts.
- 4.3 Staff should ensure their mobile phone is switched on and to hand. Their mobile phone should be on at all times so that they can be contacted for checks or can report issues.
- 4.4 Staff should keep their keys easily accessible.

- 4.5 Staff should avoid carrying valuables or large sums of money.
- 4.6 If, on arriving at a home, staff consider themselves to be at risk, they must decline to enter or make an excuse to leave where necessary, e.g. "I've left the car lights on" or "I've left some papers in the car" and depart. Staff must not attempt to enter what is considered a risk situation.
- 4.7 Staff are advised not to accept offers of food or drink whilst on a home visit.
- 4.8 Staff should speak in a friendly and polite manner whilst maintaining a discrete distance and sit close to the exit where possible.
- 4.9 Staff should not be left alone with any child in a home.
- 4.10 Where possible, conversations should be held in a communal part of the house (e.g. living room, dining room, kitchen). If a child refuses to leave their bedroom, it may be appropriate to hold a conversation through the door, but staff must not enter the bedroom.
- 4.11 If staff are in a situation where they are alone with a child in the room, ensure the door is open and that they can easily be seen and heard.
- 4.12 Staff must always trust their instincts – if they are in any doubt or feel unsafe, they must remove themselves from that situation. Staff should act in a confident manner and terminate the visit apologetically if needed, for example by saying, "I have to be at another meeting which I had forgotten about".
- 4.13 If no contact is made with the parent/carer during the home visit, staff must ensure they leave an official HCC Home Missed Visit Slip (Appendix 4), stating date and time of visit, a brief message and the HCC email address. The carbon copy/photograph should be attached to the HCC Home Visit Summary Form.
- 4.14 If at any time a member of staff experiences any aggression or verbal abuse, or other unwelcome approaches, this should be reported to their Line Manager and/or the Headteacher immediately, when safe to do so. In this instance, staff should leave at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.15 When transporting parents/carers and/or their children, wherever possible staff must ensure they are seated in the rear of the car and wearing appropriate restraints e.g. seatbelt, child car seat.
- 4.16 Staff must not give out personal details, including personal phone numbers.

5 After a home visit

- 5.1 Staff must complete the HCC Home Visit Summary Form on return to College.
- 5.2 Staff must report any trips, falls and accidents and report any abusive or threatening behaviours.
- 5.3 Clear notes of the meeting must be made and filed using the HCC Home Visit Summary Form. This should be added to My Concern.
- 5.4 Staff must not arrange another appointment with any abusive or aggressive person until the case has been reviewed.

6 Home visits - Covid-19 pandemic

- 6.1 When a member of the household is known to have Covid-19, staff should not enter the home, but knock on the door and speak to the parent/carer and/or child from a safe distance, ideally a minimum of 2 metres away.
- 6.2 If a family is self-isolating, staff must view the child through a window and ascertain as best they can that the child is safe and well, e.g. through gestures, thumbs up, waving, lip reading, etc. It is important to physically see the child, even if only through a window.

7 Action to take if you are or feel threatened

- 7.1 If staff are threatened or prevented from leaving they must stay calm and try to control the situation. They should try to appear confident, speak slowly and clearly and not be enticed into an argument, they should try to diffuse situation by saying "I will seek advice from a senior member of staff or colleague".
- 7.2 Staff should keep their distance, never touch or turn their back on someone who is angry.
- 7.3 If staff are working as a pair, they should use the code word (safe word) "*Red folder*" to alert a colleague that they need assistance or they should leave.
- 7.4 The same code word should be used if they contact the College to alert them that they are in danger and need support
- 7.5 Staff must leave the property and reach a place of safety if they have any concerns about personal safety and inform the College immediately.

APPENDIX 1

RISK ASSESSMENT	HELSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	WORK ACTIVITY: HOME VISITS
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Hazards	People	Severity of harm	Likelihood	Risk Level	Controls
Aggressive or violent parent/ student/family member.	Member of staff may be harmed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major injury may occur. 	Remote possibility.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Home Visit Policy. • Risk reduced by informing relevant senior colleagues prior to visit. • Two-person visit if aware of home circumstances. • Inform reception and sign out. • Take mobile phone for communication.
Driving	Member of staff may be harmed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle breakdown. • Accident • Intruder in vehicle when unattended. • Use of mobile phone Fatigue 	Remote possibility.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain vehicle properly. • Belong to a breakdown organization. • Carry torch and phone for emergency. • Advise team or partner where you are going. • Phone in if plan changes. • Do not leave valuables in car (e.g. laptop). • Avoid risky areas.
Movement through public areas e.g. to/from car parks.	Member of staff may be harmed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attack • Theft of property 	Remote possibility.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back down from confrontation. • Call for help. • Keep valuables secure and out of sight or disguised. • Surrender valuables if personal safety is at risk. • Use staff bus or public transport if available. • Post incident support.
Illness or injury/ accident	Member of staff may be harmed or injured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness or injury Take mobile communications 	Remote possibility.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert emergency services if appropriate. • Alert team members if able to. • Ensure access to phone. • Take prescribed medication as directed or as needed. • Complete injury at work form on return.
Attack by dog or other animal.	Member of staff may be harmed or injured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major injury may occur. 	Remote possibility.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid contact with animals. • Seek local advice before entering premises with animals. • Behaviour appropriately near animals – avoid alarming them e.g. sudden movements.

APPENDIX 2

AWARENESS OF A STAFF HOME VISIT FORM

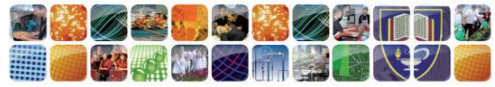
[illegible]

APPENDIX 3**HOME VISIT SUMMARY FORM**

Person Visiting:		
Job Role:		
Visited Home Address:		
Student Name:		Student seen: Yes [] No []
Reason for Calling:		
On (Date):		
At (Time):		
Comments:		
Signed by (Staff Name)		
Signature		
Signed by (Parent/Carer Name):		
Signature:		
Visit Authorised by:		
Date:		
Follow Up Actions:		

HOME VISIT MISSED SLIP

HELSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ASPIRATION · AMBITION · ACHIEVEMENT



Sorry I missed you.

Dear

This is to inform you that I called today in connection with...

Please contact me at school on 01326 572685 or by email.

@helston.cornwall.sch.uk

Please ask for:

Date:

Time:

Signed:

Helston Community College
Church Hill
Helston
TR13 8NR
01326 572685