

Home Visits Policy



HOLY CROSS
CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Living loving learning together.

<u>Agreed On</u>	<u>Signed</u>	<u>Review Date</u>

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Statement of intent

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School firmly believes that regular attendance is essential to the successful academic development of pupils.

The role of the attendance officer is crucial to the overall performance of the school. With this in mind, we have established this policy for attendance officers who make home visits.

An aspect of the attendance officer's time will be spent outside school premises. For this reason, we believe that clear procedures must be in place to avoid misunderstandings or confusion about home visits. **Attendance Officer shall attend homes only when second member of staff is available to accompany them.**

Home visits are a useful way of addressing the problems that lead to poor attendance; however, since the attendance officer is entering private property, it is important that all parties are made aware of the rules and procedures. Attendance officers will maintain the highest professional standards at all times.

A copy of this policy will be made available to parents via [the school website](#).

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date:	_____
_____	Chair of governors	Date:	_____

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'

1.2. This policy is designed to be used in conjunction with other policies such as the following:

- [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Attendance and Absence Policy](#)
- [Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy](#)
- [Positive Handling Policy](#)
- [Children Missing Education Policy](#)
- [Lone Worker Policy](#)
- [Private Car Transport Policy](#)

2. Personal safety

2.1. It is the responsibility of attendance officers to keep themselves safe at all times. They will avoid any situations that may risk their safety.

2.2. The attendance officer will carry out their work in line with the [Lone Worker Policy](#) in order to keep themselves safe from harm while working alone.

2.3. A lone worker risk assessment will be carried out prior to the commencement of any lone working and will be updated in response to any changes in circumstances.

2.4. Attendance officers will carry a mobile phone at all times. The number will be recorded and held by the [headteacher](#).

2.5. Attendance officers will 'check in' by calling the [school office](#) prior to arriving at property and again when leaving property to update the school of their whereabouts.

- 2.6. A home visit risk assessment will be conducted by the **headteacher** prior to a home visit. If a particular home visit poses new risks, the risk assessment will be amended before the visit.
- 2.7. Attendance officers will not enter the home of a pupil unless an appointment has been made and the parent is present. Written confirmation of the appointment will be recorded and held in the **school office**.
- 2.8. Appointment records will include the time and location along with the name of the pupil. Signatures of the parents and the attendance officer will also be kept.
- 2.9. When working alone, the attendance officers will use the electronic '**Lone Alert-Man Down**' system. The device allows the user to alert their employees or the police if they are in danger. Officers will carry the device at all times and log in and check the devices before leaving school premises.
- 2.10. If an officer feels that they are in immediate danger, they will use the alarm system to notify the **school office** who will contact the police.
- 2.11. Details of the vehicles used by attendance officers, including make, model, registration number and colour, will be held by the **SBM**. All vehicles must have the required up-to-date insurance.

3. Training

- 3.1. Attendance officers will be fully trained in safe working practices. The **SBM** is responsible for organising the relevant training.
- 3.2. Before performing their duties, attendance officers will undergo the appropriate training. This includes training related to cultural awareness, diversity and racial equality, specific equipment training, manual handling training, first aid, and training in disengagement techniques.

4. Home visits

- 4.1. Home visits allow the school to learn the underlying reasons behind poor attendance. By opening a dialogue with a pupil's parents, attendance officers can offer the required support.
- 4.2. A list of visits will be compiled on a **weekly** basis. This list will include the name and address of the pupil, the name and contact details of their parents, along with the attendance record of the pupil.
- 4.3. The list will be approved and signed by the **headteacher** before any visits occur.
- 4.4. Home Visit Permission and risk assessment must be undertaken and signed by Senior Manager on duty prior to leaving-
Appendix 1
- 4.5. If the pupil's parents are not present at the arranged time, the attendance officer will wait no longer than **20 minutes**. If the pupil's parent does not arrive, the visit will be cancelled.
- 4.6. If the pupil's parents have given prior notice that they are running late, the attendance officer will not enter the house until they arrive. If they are over **30 minutes** late the visit will be cancelled.
- 4.7. Once in place, appointment arrangements will be adhered to. Notification will be given to the **headteacher** if any changes are made.
- 4.8. Identification cards will be worn at all times. They will be clearly displayed on the front and outside of the attendance officer's clothing.
- 4.9. The attendance officer will not enter a pupil's home should they feel unsafe. If a visit is cancelled because of concerns over safety, the reason for cancelling the visit will be communicated in writing to the **headteacher**.
- 4.10. If there are potentially dangerous animals in the house, the officer will request that they are kept in a separate room. If the parent refuses, or is unable to adhere to this request, the visit

will be cancelled. The reason for the cancellation will be communicated to the **headteacher** in writing.

- 4.11. Before and after the visit, the officer will 'check in' by calling the **school office**.

5. After the visit

- 5.1. Once a visit has ended, any agreements made between the officer and parents will be recorded and kept in the pupil's attendance record. See Appendix 1 feedback section must be completed
- 5.2. Reminder letters will be sent to the pupil's parents if the pupil fails to adhere to the agreements made during the home visit.
- 5.3. A note will be in made in the pupil's attendance record if they fail to follow the agreement.
- 5.4. Continued failure to adhere to the agreement will result in a follow-up visit.
- 5.5. If the pupil's attendance falls below **70 percent** over the course of **three months**, the appropriate authorities will be notified in order for legal proceedings to be considered.

6. Child protection and safeguarding

- 6.1. Attendance officers will carry out their work in line with the school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** at all times.
- 6.2. Prior to an attendance officer is appointed, the appropriate background checks will be obtained. This includes an enhanced DBS certificate and barred list check.
- 6.3. Attendance officers will not be put in a situation where they are alone with a pupil during a home visit – a parent will always be present.
- 6.4. Where an officer is transporting a pupil, driver of minibus and 1 other member of staff will be present.

- 6.5. Physical intervention by staff will be enacted in accordance with the [Positive Handling Policy](#).
- 6.6. Staff will only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and it will be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- 6.7. Physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.
- 6.8. Attendance officers will report any safeguarding concerns to the DSL or a deputy as soon as possible.
- 6.9. Any allegations made against attendance officers will be dealt with in accordance with the [Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy](#).
- 6.10. Any complaints regarding the attendance officer's conduct or the home visit will be raised in line with the [Complaints Procedure Policy](#).

7. Monitoring and review

- 7.1. The [headteacher](#) is responsible for monitoring this policy and procedures and will amend it accordingly following any incidents or concerns.
- 7.2. This policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2023.

Home Visits During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

Since September 2020, all pupils have been required to attend school; however, we understand that the need for the attendance officer to conduct home visits may arise. The arrangements set out in the main body of this policy will be adhered to as far as possible. This appendix has been developed in line with the latest government guidance to set out the additional measures that have been put in place, to ensure the risk of coronavirus transmission is minimised as much as possible during home visits.

1. Deciding when to visit

- 1.1. The attendance officer will consult with the [headteacher](#) about whether any necessary contact with parents can be achieved remotely, e.g. via remote meeting.
- 1.2. Where this cannot be reasonably achieved, a home visit will be considered; this will be approved by the [headteacher](#) prior to the visit.
- 1.3. The attendance officer will not visit the home of pupils who are self-isolating until the pupil's self-isolation period has passed.
- 1.4. Should an attendance officer present with any symptoms of coronavirus, they will not visit the pupil's home and the visit may be delayed until:
 - The attendance officer is substituted by another suitable member of staff who can undertake the visit.
 - The attendance officer has self-isolated for 10 days since the onset of symptoms.
 - The attendance officer tests negative for coronavirus.

2. Infection control

- 2.1. The attendance officer will observe the procedures set out in the [Infection Control Policy](#) in relation to coronavirus at all times during a home visit, e.g. adhering to good hand and respiratory hygiene.
- 2.2. The attendance officer will be required to wear a face covering when visiting a pupil's home.
- 2.3. Face coverings will not be disposed of in a pupil's home.
- 2.4. The attendance officer will not transport pupils in their car at this time unless it is unavoidable to do so or the pupil would be at risk of harm – strict social distancing and infection control measures will be adhered to in this instance.
- 2.5. Where the attendance officer becomes unwell and presents with coronavirus symptoms during a home visit, they will return home immediately and notify the [headteacher](#) as soon as possible.

3. Social distancing

- 3.1. The attendance officer will observe the procedures set out in the [Social Distancing Policy](#) at all times during a home visit.
- 3.2. Where the attendance officer is unable to maintain a two-metre distance from others, they will:
 - Interact side-by-side, where possible.
 - Minimise the amount of time spent interacting face-to-face.
 - Minimise the amount of time spent in close proximity to others.
- 3.3. Any positive handling used during the visit will be enacted only where it is safe and proportionate to do so.

4. Ventilation

- 4.1. Where possible and safe to do so, home visits may be conducted outside.
- 4.2. Where it is reasonable and possible to do so, windows will be opened at the pupil's home to aid ventilation.

5. Monitoring and review

- 5.1. This appendix will be reviewed by the [headteacher](#) in response to changes in circumstances during the coronavirus pandemic.
- 5.2. Changes to this appendix will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.
- 5.3. When deemed appropriate by the [headteacher](#), the contents of this appendix will expire.

Appendix 1- Home Visit Permission and risk assessment

Staff undertaking Visit (must be 2 staff) Name 1 Mobile 1 Name 2 Mobile 2	Name 1 Mobile 1 Name 2 Mobile 2
Visit to home address	Name of child: Name of Parent: Mobile Number for Parent: Address:
Purpose of visit	
Date and Time of visit	
Expected time of return	
Staff member carrying 'Man down emergency device' Is this charged and working?	

Evaluation of visit	
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Nature of Risk- LOW MEDIUM HIGH (Initial visit must be assumed medium risk)

Risk assessment completed and attached YES/NO

See page 2

Form completed by:

Date:

Visit agreed by Senior Manager on duty:

Date:

Home Visits – assessing risks

Points to consider when undertaking home visit

Each home should be treated as a separate risk. Some homes may have risks from more than one area- each one should be addressed

1. *Is there a history of violence in the home? YES/NO*
2. *Are any members of the family using illegal drugs? YES/NO*
3. *Are any staff members suffering from mental illness/epilepsy or other relevant medical conditions? YES/NO*
4. *Are there vicious dogs or other animals in the home? YES/NO*
5. *Is there a risk of infection e.g. sickness in the family that may be infectious or related to adult caring for child? YES/NO*
6. *Have a CPOMs check been carried out to verify some of the above answers? YES/NO*
7. *Have both members of staff read school Home visit risk assessment?*

If the answer to any of these is yes please list any actions you have taken/will take to reduce the risk posed by relevant points above or decision made not to carry out home visit and other means of contact utilised?

Staff should use antibacterial hand wash when undertaking home visits between each visit to minimise the spread of any infections.

Staff must not carry out home visits if they are unwell as they could transmit infection

Signed Attendance officer:

Signed Senior Manager on duty:

