

Date: 17 January 2017
For: Employees



Home Visits Policy

Introduction

Our Entrance, Progression and Exit Policies require a Ride High employee to have met each child or young person (hereinafter together referred to as “young people”) referred to Ride High before (s)he starts attending. Therefore a home or school visit, or a meeting at Ride High (in either case with a parent/carer and/or referrer present), will be arranged once a place is, or is due to become, available for that young person at Ride High so that an assessment of the young person’s strengths and difficulties can be undertaken, and the young person’s parent/carer and/or referrer can highlight any concerns. This will enable Ride High to complete, if appropriate, a risk assessment before the young person starts at Ride High. A preliminary visit or meeting such as this is also helpful in that the young person will then recognise at least one Ride High employee on arrival, and because it enables any questions that the young person or their parent/carer may have about Ride High to be answered.

There may also be occasions during a young person’s time at Ride High when a further home visit is required.

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that appropriate safety arrangements are adopted and adhered to with regards to the undertaking of home visits by Ride High employees.

Procedures

Ideally, no home visit should be made by a sole employee and employees should instead make home visits in pairs. It is recognised however that this is not always possible. In either case however, no home visit should be made without the employee(s) making the visit taking the following precautions:

- They must always telephone or write to the parent/carer to ask if and when it would be convenient to make a home visit, and always make the purpose of the visit clear. A date and time for the visit must be agreed.
- They must ensure that details of the appointment are given to a colleague (“the Designated Person”) and recorded in the office so that their whereabouts are known and the alarm raised if they do not return/make contact at the expected time.

- They must always inform the Designated Person how long they intend to be. They must phone the Designated Person on their return, or if the home visit takes longer than anticipated, phone to say they are running over. They must always inform the Designated Person if they make any other changes to their arrangements or timings.
- They should always take a fully charged mobile phone with them and leave it switched on; and ensure that the Designated Person knows the number.
- They should not visit outside normal working hours unless it is absolutely essential.
- They must have respect for the different cultures and backgrounds they will encounter.
- They must ensure that they will be able to communicate effectively with parents/carers and use an interpreter who will translate if necessary.
- Before visiting any home they should give time to find out as much factual information as possible (for example, checking our records to see if any previous violent incidents or potential hazards (eg a dangerous dog) within the household or the local community have been recorded)
- If they have concerns about their personal safety, they must have worked out a clear strategy for dealing with the visit.
- If they are anxious on arriving at a location and feel that their safety could be compromised, they must not take the risk of proceeding any further. They should phone the house to advise that they are unable to attend, and make alternative arrangements.
- If at any stage during a home visit they feel vulnerable or that a potentially violent or aggressive situation is developing, they should leave immediately.
- **If no parent/carer, pre-arranged other adult/relative or other professional is present, they must terminate the visit immediately.**
- All home visits must be recorded with the reason for the visit, points discussed, agreements reached and any concerns that they may have from the meeting, however trivial they may appear at the time. Clear and detailed record-keeping may prevent problems in the future.

Responsibilities of Children's Manager

The Children's Manager has the following responsibilities in connection with home visits:

- To ensure the visit is necessary and that there is no alternative.
- To ensure that each employee making the home visit is aware of any risk associated with the young person, if appropriate.
- To keep (and also give to the Designated Person if someone else) a record of the details of the visit or trip including: the name of the family and address being visited, the mobile and home telephone numbers of the family receiving the visit, the date, start time and expected finish time of the visit.

- Should the employee(s) making the home visit not call in when expected, the Children’s Manager (or the Designated Person if someone else) will ring them on both their mobile and home numbers.
- If no answer, the Children’s Manager (or Designated Person) will proceed with caution to the site of the home visit and conduct a search with a colleague.
- If the employee(s) still cannot be located, to dial 999 immediately.

Training and awareness

A copy of this Policy will be shown to all employees, and each must sign the list attached to the original to indicate they have read and understood it. It will also be made available to all referrers and members and/or their parents/carers.

Approval and review

This Home Visits Policy was approved at a Board Meeting of the Trustees on 17 January 2017. It will be reviewed each September thereafter, or more frequently if appropriate.

Signed.....

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