



# Harrogate High School

## Attendance Home Visit Policy

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| Adopted:       | 18.01.2021   |
| Last Reviewed: |              |
| Next review:   | January 2022 |

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## Statement of intent

**Harrogate High School** firmly believes that regular attendance is essential to the successful academic development of pupils.

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

A large part of the attendance teams 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.

Home visits are a useful way of addressing the problems that lead to poor attendance; however, since the attendance team will be entering private property, it is important that all parties are made aware of the rules and procedures. The attendance team will maintain the highest professional standards at all times and will expect this of the families they visit. Any aggressive or violent behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated.

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
  - NSAT Private Car Transport Guidance

## 2. Personal safety

- 2.1. It is always the responsibility of staff performing home visits to keep themselves safe. They will avoid any situations that may risk their safety.
- 2.2. CPOMS must be checked before a home visit to ensure no identified risks to staff are recorded. If family is supported by other services due to safeguarding concerns, staff are to contact this service to check if there are any concerns for staff regarding home visits
- 2.3. The attendance team will carry a mobile phone at all times. The number will be recorded and held by the **Assistant Headteacher**.
- 2.4. The Attendance team will 'check in' by calling the **school office** every **two hours** to update the school of their whereabouts.
- 2.5. The attendance team will not enter the home of a pupil unless an appointment has been made and the parent is present.
- 2.6. Details of the vehicles used by attendance team, including make, model, registration number and colour, will be held by the **Finance Team**. All vehicles must have the required up-to-date insurance. The attendance team must ensure their insurance covers them for business use if they are transporting a student in their vehicle.

### **3. Training**

- 3.1. Attendance team will be fully trained in safe working practices.

### **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, the attendance team can offer the required support.
- 4.2. If the pupil's parents are not present at the arranged time, the attendance team will wait no longer than **20 minutes**. If the pupil's parent does not arrive, the visit will be cancelled.
- 4.3. If the pupil's parents have given prior notice that they are running late, the attendance team will not enter the house until they arrive. If they are over **30 minutes** late the visit will be cancelled.
- 4.4. If pupils has an identified attendance or safeguarding concerns the attendance team will perform unannounced visits.
- 4.5. Identification cards will be worn at all times. They will be clearly displayed on the front and outside of the attendance teams clothing.
- 4.6. The attendance team will not enter a pupil's home should they feel unsafe e.g. (not exhaustive) unexpected adults at the home, the presence of alcohol or illegal drugs, if an adult or child appear intoxicated. If a visit is cancelled because of concerns over safety, the reason for cancelling the visit will be communicated in writing to the **Assistant Headteacher**.
- 4.7. If there are potentially dangerous animals in the house, the attendance team 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 **Assistant Headteacher** in writing.
- 4.8. Before and after the visit, the officer will 'check in' by calling the **school office, attendance team member, or line manager**.
- 4.9. Home visits to be booked in on the attendance teams outlook calendar.

### **5. After the visit**

- 5.1. Once a visit has ended, any agreements made between the attendance team and parents will be recorded on our MIS and/or CPOMS.
- 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 on the schools MIS 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 **90 percent** over the course of **three months**, the appropriate authorities will be notified for legal proceedings to be considered.

## **6. Child protection and safeguarding**

- 6.1. The attendance team will carry out their work in line with the school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** at all times.
- 6.2. Prior to the appointment of any attendance post, the appropriate background checks will be obtained. This includes an enhanced DBS certificate and barred list check in line with NSAT guidelines.
- 6.3. The attendance team 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 the attendance team are transporting a pupil, the **NSAT Private Car Transport Guidance** will be followed.
- 6.5. If the Attendance team are threatened in any way they should call 999 followed by 55 'silent call'.
- 6.6. The attendance team will report any safeguarding concerns to a DSL or deputy as soon as possible.
- 6.7. Any allegations made against the attendance team will be dealt with in accordance with the **NSAT Employee Code of Conduct Policy**.
- 6.8. Any complaints regarding the attendance officer's conduct or the home visit will be raised in line with the **NSAT Complaints Procedure Policy**.
- 6.9. The Attendance Team have to right to cancel appointments with no notice if they arrive to a property that does not appear safe to enter.

## **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 on **an annual basis**

## 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 team 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 team will consult with the **Assistant 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 **Assistant Headteacher** prior to the visit.
- 1.3. The attendance team 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 team present with any symptoms of coronavirus, they will not visit the pupil's home and the visit may be delayed until:
  - The member of the attendance team is substituted by another suitable member of staff who can undertake the visit.
  - The member of the attendance team has self-isolated for 10 days since the onset of symptoms.
  - The member of the attendance team tests negative for coronavirus.

### 2. Infection control

- 2.1. The attendance team will observe the procedures set out in the **School Risk Assessment** in relation to coronavirus at all times during a home visit, e.g. adhering to good hand and respiratory hygiene.
- 2.2. The attendance team will be required to wear a face covering when visiting a pupil's home.
- 2.3. Adults and pupils will wear face coverings during the appointment
- 2.4. Face coverings will not be disposed of in a pupil's home.
- 2.5. The attendance team 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.
- 2.6. Where a member of the attendance team become unwell and presents with coronavirus symptoms during a home visit, they will return home immediately

and notify the **Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher** as soon as possible.

### **3. Social distancing**

- 3.1. The attendance team will observe the procedures set out in the **NSAT Social Distancing Procedures** at all times during a home visit.
- 3.2. Where the attendance team are 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.

### **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.