



## CONDUCTING HOME VISITS TO STAFF POLICY

### Policy Statement

There will be times when it is necessary to conduct a home visit to see a member of staff. The individual staff member and York Childcare (YC) have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which a home visit may present.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety, Lone Working, Safeguarding, Safer Driving for Work and Transport & Parking policies.

### Purpose

This policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by conducting home visits and to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation.

### Scope

This policy applies to all York Childcare (YC) staff and Trustees who may be required to conduct a home visit in the course of their work.

### Context

YC recognises that it may become necessary to make home visits to employees in order to conduct employment meetings for numerous reasons.

YC is committed to support staff and managers in establishing and maintaining safe working procedures and practices by recognising and reducing any risks involved in situations where home visits are necessary.

YC is committed to providing appropriate inductions for staff who will conduct home visits.

This policy sets out a clear understanding of responsibilities both for the individual and for the manager and places a priority on the safety of the individuals.

### Definition

Within this document, 'home visits' refers to situations where a meeting with an employee needs to be held but for whatever the reason, the employee is unable to attend the setting in order to participate in the meeting.

### Personal safety

- YC expects in most cases that home visits will be conducted by two members of staff where possible.
- Before visiting any other premises, an assessment of the risks involved should be made. This may be done verbally through conversation with a colleague or line manager or more formally in writing using YC's Risk Assessment form, subject to the severity of the situation and associated risk.
- Staff must inform a nominated work colleague if they deviate from what has been agreed.
- Staff must carry their own mobile phone fully charged, switched on and working at times when they are visiting outside of the setting.

### Assessment of risk

- Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of any employee conducting a home visit, alternative methods of holding the meeting must be arranged.

### Planning

- Staff should ensure someone is always aware of their movements and expected return time. The employee being visited should be in full agreement and aware of what time the member of staff is expected to arrive.
- Before leaving the company premises, the member of staff conducting the visit should familiarise themselves with the area they are visiting and plan their method of travel and route. This information should be shared with a colleague and where applicable with the employee being visited.
- A Home Visit Form should be completed and shared with Head Office and the senior who will be in charge of the nursery when the meeting is taking place.

#### **Practice Guidance**

- Staff should take care when visiting any external premises unknown to them.
- Staff should where possible not attend home visits alone.
- Staff should ensure that items such as laptops are carried discreetly.
- Travel routes should be planned through well populated areas.
- Staff must ensure they are carrying a fully charged, working mobile phone that is switched on and report their arrival and departure to a colleague (who is on shift).
- Notes of any meeting should be taken.
- The attendee should be asked to sign a confirmation statement that the meeting has taken place.

#### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

#### **Buddy System**

YC expects any member of staff conducting a home visit to use the Buddy System.

A '**Buddy**' is defined as - 'a person who is their nominated contact for the period in which they will be working alone'. A buddy system can be implemented as a control measure according to the risks presented and whether this control is required will be determined by undertaking a risk assessment.

Any staff members conducting a visit will use the Buddy system which requires them to:

- Ensure a colleague is aware and has the following information before attending the visit/meeting:
  - Name and address of setting/school/ meeting location
  - Vehicle make and registration (if using)
  - Confirm contact telephone number
  - The time they expect to leave the visit/meeting and phone the buddy
  - Use the Buddy System to confirm they have safely arrived home.
  - On leaving, contact their designated buddy to confirm they have completed the visit/meeting.

Further examples of safe lone-working practices and general advice on personal safety can be found at: [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)