



## 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 YC staff who may be required to conduct a home visit in the course of their work, and to YC trustees in the course of their role.

### 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 supporting 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 of all YC staff, and places a priority on the safety of each individual.

### 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 (for example the person who will be the member of staff's Buddy, as detailed below) 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 should use the Buddy System (detailed below), and should inform the Buddy, during the home visit, 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 other colleagues outside of the setting.

- Staff should ensure that they carry a form of identification with them.

### **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 that their Buddy 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 home visit should familiarise themselves with the area they are visiting and plan their method of travel and route. This information should be shared with their Buddy and where applicable with the employee being visited.
- A Home Visit Form should be completed and shared with Head Office and the senior member of staff who will be in charge of the nursery when the meeting is taking place.

### **Good 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 the appointed Buddy.
- Notes of any meeting should be taken.
- The employee being visited 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, and that the Buddy will be a YC colleague who will be on duty for the duration of the home visit.

A '**Buddy**' is defined as - 'a person who is their nominated contact for the period in which they will be working alone'.

Any staff members conducting a home 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 meeting location
- Vehicle make and registration (if using a vehicle)
- Contact telephone numbers, of the member of staff conducting the visit and the employee being visited
- The time they expect to leave the visit/meeting

The members of staff should then use the Buddy System to:

- Confirm that they have arrived at the visit/meeting point
- Confirm that they have completed the visit/meeting.
- Confirm that they have safely arrived home.

In the event that the member of staff fails to make contact at any of the expected times, the Buddy should take the following steps until contact is made:

1. Contact the member of staff's mobile phone
2. Contact the person being visited to see if they can provide an update
3. Contact the designated next of kin for the member of staff to see if they have heard from them
4. Notify a senior member of staff on the Head Office team and call the police.

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