



Great Horwood Church of England School
Seedlings Nursery & Pre-School



Home Visits Policy

ODBST Level 2 Policy:	ALL Schools require this policy, which may be adapted where identified to suit local requirements and schools may add their own branding. LGBs will note adoption of this locally adapted policy in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
Other related ODBST policies and procedures:	Great Horwood Home Visits Risk Assessment Great Horwood Nash Park Risk Assessment
Approved by:	Great Horwood CE School Local Governing Body
Date Approved:	30 November 2025
Review Date:	November 2028



Great Horwood Church of England School
Seedlings Nursery & Pre-School



Home Visits Policy

Date Approved: 30 November 2025

Review Date: November 2028

Reviewed by: Headteacher and Safeguarding Team

Approved by: Great Horwood Local Governing Body

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to all staff undertaking home visits on behalf of Great Horwood Primary School and Seedlings Nursery & Pre-School.

Home visits are an important part of our partnership with parents and carers, enabling staff to engage with families, support pupils' wellbeing, and ensure the safety of every child.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote consistent, safe, and professional practice during home visits.
- Safeguard both staff and families.
- Clarify the reasons for, and procedures involved in, home visits.

2. Definition of a Home Visit

A home visit is defined as a visit that requires member(s) of staff to enter the home of a pupil, parent, or carer for either an emergency or planned purpose.

All visits must be authorised by a member of the Safeguarding Team before taking place.

3. Aims of Home Visits

At Great Horwood Primary and Seedlings Nursery, we recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators. The aims of home visits are to:

- Build positive and trusting relationships between school/nursery and families.
- Support the child's transition into nursery or school (EYFS home visits).
- Strengthen partnership working with parents and carers to meet the child's individual needs.
- Promote the welfare and safety of children, particularly when there are safeguarding or attendance concerns.

4. Reasons for Home Visits

- Home visits may take place for the following reasons:
- EYFS and Early Years Induction Visits

- To meet the child and family in their familiar environment before they start at Seedlings or Reception.
- To discuss the child's interests, routines, and needs.
- To begin forming positive relationships and ease the transition into the setting.
- Primary and Safeguarding/Welfare Visits
- When a pupil is refusing to attend school or there are concerns about attendance.
- When a child is being educated at home temporarily or long-term.
- When a pupil has been absent and parents/carers have not responded to communication.
- To check on a child's welfare and confirm they are safe when concerns arise.
- To deliver or collect work following a period of exclusion or medical absence.
- To meet with parents/carers who are unable to come into school but need a face-to-face meeting.
- To support a child reintegrating after a long absence.
- To investigate potential unauthorised absences or term-time holidays.

5. Decision-Making: Is a Home Visit Necessary?

Before arranging a visit, staff must consider:

- Purpose: What is the intended outcome of the visit?
- Appropriateness: Is a visit necessary, or could the matter be resolved through a call, message, or meeting in school?
- Alternative agencies: Would another agency (e.g., social care, health visitor) be more appropriate to visit?
- Best person to visit: Which staff member(s) have the most appropriate relationship, experience, or role to undertake the visit?
- Timing: Are there times when the family will be more available? Are there known family circumstances to take into account (e.g., shift work, young children, caring responsibilities)?

6. Risk Assessment and Authorisation

All visits require a completed home visits risk assessment and must be authorised by a member of the Safeguarding Team prior to the visit.

This includes both routine visits (EYFS induction) and specific visits (e.g., safeguarding, attendance, or welfare checks).

The risk assessment should include:

- Details of staff attending the visit.
- Purpose and expected outcomes.
- Location and known risks.
- Time of visit and expected return time.
- Safe word/code in case of emergency.

7. Conducting Home Visits

- Before the Visit

- Be clear about the purpose and ensure authorisation is obtained.
- Arrange a convenient appointment wherever possible.
- Inform the school office or a designated colleague of your itinerary, time, and expected return.
- Carry your school ID (not on a lanyard around your neck).
- Ensure your mobile phone is charged and accessible.
- Do not carry large sums of money or valuables.
- Wherever possible, visits should be conducted in pairs.

During the Visit

- Park in a well-lit, safe location.
- Introduce yourself clearly and show your ID.
- Only enter the home if invited in by a responsible adult.
- Do not enter if a child answers the door unsupervised.
- Keep discussions professional, focused, and time-limited.
- Respect the family's culture, background, and privacy.
- Do not enter bedrooms or other private areas.
- If any concerns arise about a child's safety, contact the Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- If there is immediate danger, call 999.
- Take notes during or immediately after the visit to ensure accurate records.

If You Feel Unsafe

- Leave immediately if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Use your agreed safe word to alert colleagues if in danger.
- Contact the school or emergency services if necessary.

After the Visit

- Contact the school to confirm you have completed the visit safely.
- Submit your Home Visit Form and any relevant notes to the Safeguarding Office or Headteacher.
- Log any safeguarding concerns following the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Reflect on any new risks or learning for future visits.

8. Recording and Confidentiality

A written record must be completed for every home visit and recorded on CPOMS. All notes should be factual, dated, and stored securely in accordance with GDPR and school data protection procedures.

Sensitive information should only be shared with staff who need to know.

Any safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL.

9. Staff Safety and Lone Working

To protect staff:

Staff must always inform the school of their location and expected return time.

- Visits should not normally take place after school hours or in the evening.
- Staff should never give lifts to pupils or family members.
- The safe word system must be used in any situation where a staff member feels unsafe.
- Home visits should be avoided if known risks exist that cannot be safely managed.

10. EYFS-Specific Procedures

For Seedlings Nursery and Reception staff:

- Parents/carers should be informed in advance of the visit purpose, date, and time.
- Visits are to build relationships and gather information about the child's interests, routines, and needs.
- Staff should take age-appropriate materials (e.g., child information forms, welcome packs).
- Two members of staff should attend each home visit where possible.
- Notes from the visit should inform the child's starting points and induction planning.

11. Training and Monitoring

- All staff undertaking home visits must be trained in safeguarding, lone working, and professional conduct.
- The DSL will monitor home visit records termly to ensure compliance and identify any emerging patterns or risks.
- Policy effectiveness will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Team.

12. Related Policies and Documents

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Attendance Policy

Lone Working Risk Assessment

Data Protection Policy

13. Appendices

Appendix 1: Home Visit Risk Assessment Form

Appendix 2: Home Visit Record Form

Appendix 3: Safe Word Protocol