



# Home Visits Policy

**The Kennal Academies Trust**

Version: 1  
Last reviewed: October 2024  
Next review: Autumn 2026

## Introduction

This policy is intended to ensure that all staff members undertaking home visits are safeguarded and necessary risk assessments are completed prior to undertaking visits.

Home visits can be necessary in order to develop and strengthen relationships for the best interests of children; to identify needs, provide support and to provide advice and signposting to relevant services. Home visits are particularly good for relationship building and allaying concerns or worries for children and parents when done as part of the transition process for starting school in the Early Years. Home visits will only be undertaken when it is considered absolutely necessary to do so in other circumstances such as concerns over school absence

Home visits should be pre-planned (exceptions to this could include where there are safeguarding concerns for a child and parents/carers are not responding to communication from the school) and must be conducted in pairs, this can include attending with a non-school member of staff eg. Social Worker, school nurse etc.

All home visits undertaken should be approved by the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead prior to the visit taking place including a documented risk assessment.

This document should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies including, but not limited to, the Attendance Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety, Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy.

## Vision and Values

The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT) aims to foster a culture of the highest professional standards in line with the Trust's purpose, vision and values.

### TKAT - OUR STRATEGY

#### Our Culture

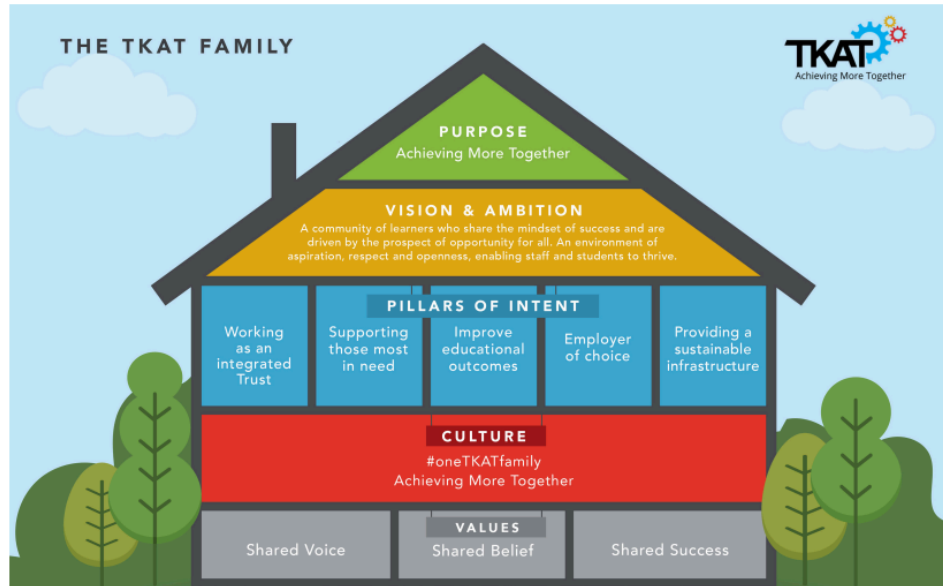
#oneTKATfamily  
Achieving More Together

#### Our Mission

TKAT is a Multi-Academy Trust of 45 primary, secondary and special schools in the South and East of England.  
Our purpose is to work together as a community of schools to ensure that every child, whatever their background, receives a high quality education.

#### Our Values

Shared Voice  
Shared Belief  
Shared Success



### **Definition of a home visit**

A home visit is a visit that requires a school staff member to enter or seek to enter the home of a Parent or Carer in the case of a planned or emergency visit.

### **Aims of Home visit**

The aim of a home visit is:

- To establish a partnership between parents/carers and staff so that all parties share their knowledge about the child to enable the individual needs of the child to be met.
- To build relationships with the child in their own setting and reduce anxiety for those who may not have started school
- To develop and strengthen relationships with parents/carers for the best interests of the child.
- To try and establish that a child is safe if they are absent from school and attempts to contact parents/carers have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the student.

### **Reasons for Home Visits**

Home visits are to be used when:

- Children are due to start school in the Early Years to aid a successful transition and to build important relationships with the family and the child
- Students are refusing to come into school; this can be carried out by school staff when there are attendance issues / concerns.

- To meet with parents/carers to discuss an issue regarding their child where it is in the best interest of the child to have that discussion in their own home rather than at school.
- Where it would be difficult for parents/carers to attend school for a meeting and information needs to be shared in a face-to-face meeting in a timely manner.
- To support engagement for parents/carers when other means of communication have not been successful.
- To maintain contact with a child who is unable to attend school due to a medical condition so that they do not feel isolated from school.
- To provide an alternative venue for parents who are unable to come into school.
- Where transporting a child to/from home has been agreed
- When students are being educated at home including dropping off or collecting work when they are completing schoolwork at home.
- To investigate situations when there are suspicions that someone may be on holiday contrary to earlier indications (for example when a child is not at school and reported as being ill, during the same period for which a request for exceptional leave in term-time had been refused).
- Examination invigilation when correct permissions have been agreed.
- When all other means of contact with a family has failed.
- To establish that a child is safe when they have not attended school and there are concerns for their safety and well-being.

### **Planning for the Home Visit**

- Ensure you have read and understood this policy.
- Be clear about the purpose of the visit and confident that the visit is essential.
- Prior to conducting a home visit, a risk assessment must be completed (See Appendix A). The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify whether it is safe to undertake a visit and to determine if additional members of staff are required for the visit. The risk assessment will also identify any concerns about the intended visit and ensure measures are put in place to minimise any risks identified.
- Any concerns identified should be discussed with a member of the Leadership Team to ensure a decision to proceed is based on additional measures being put in place to ensure the safeguarding of staff undertaking the visit when a meeting at an alternative venue is not considered an appropriate option.
- Ensure you are well informed about the family and are aware of personal circumstances.
- Wherever possible, schedule the home visit during or immediately after the school day. Do not schedule visits during the evening.
- Be clear with parents about the purpose of the visit, especially for home visits as part of the Early Years transition process.
- In some cases it will be appropriate to write to / call parents/carers offering an appointment for a home visit, including the purpose of the visit.
- Accept the parents/carers right to decline a home visit unless it is for safeguarding purposes.

- If you have any allergies you must check with the home before the visit to ensure it is safe for you to visit.
- Arrange for an appropriate member of staff to accompany you on the visit (see risk assessment)
- On the day of the visit, you must ensure you sign in and out of the office and let the Office Staff and your LM know the details of your visit including expected length of visit.
- Ensure your mobile phone is fully charged prior to undertaking the home visit.

### **Undertaking the Home Visit**

- Ensure you wear your staff Identification throughout the visit and state who you are on arrival.
- Carry a fully charged mobile phone to be contacted or make contact in the event of an emergency. Ensure you have all relevant numbers.
- Ensure both staff are present before you enter the property. Agree a code word with your colleague to alert the colleague if you require assistance or should leave. The same code word could be used if you need to contact school to alert them that you are in danger.
- Do not enter the property unless invited to do so by a responsible adult.
- Do not enter the property if there is no adult present unless there are immediate safeguarding concerns.
- Be sensitive to the culture and religion of the family.
- Only speak to an adult who has parental responsibility or who you have consent from the parents/carers to speak to.
- Exercise caution with regard to going upstairs in a property or any other remote or private section of the property and consider the need to enter a child's bedroom. You may be able to talk from the open doorway. If you do enter the bedroom do not close the door.
- Use common sense, trust your instincts and if a concern arises during the visit, you feel intimidated, threatened or uncomfortable, try to remain calm and leave, making up an excuse to leave if necessary for example, that you are going back to get something from your car.
- At the first sign of danger leave the property immediately and report the incident to the Headteacher. If you are prevented from leaving try to stay calm and diffuse the situation by saying you will contact a senior member of staff for them to discuss their concern with or to seek advice from.
- Use an agreed code word to alert the school that you are in danger. If this fails, call 999 if you can do so.
- If you consider the child or anyone else including yourself to be at immediate risk of danger call 999. This includes if a young child (or child without the capacity to care for themselves) has been left alone or locked in alone.

### **After the Home Visit**

- Return to school and sign in to ensure the school knows you are safe.
- If you are not returning to school after the visit, telephone school to let them know you have finished the visit.
- As soon as reasonably possible after the visit, complete a written record of the visit and record on CPOMS.
- Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead upon arrival back at the school or by telephone, after leaving the visit, if you are not returning to school.
- Any accidents occurring during home visits must be recorded in writing as soon as possible, while events are still fresh in people's memories.

### **Procedure if Staff do not Check in after the visit**

- If the visiting member of staff fails to return to school or does not make contact within a reasonable timeframe at the end of the scheduled visit (30 minutes) then school will contact the member of staff.
- If no contact can be made with the member of staff, a member of the Leadership Team/Headteacher will be informed.
- The member of the Leadership Team/Headteacher will attempt to contact the member of staff.
- If no contact can be made then the Leadership Team will contact the staff member's next of kin to check if any contact has been made.
- Contact will be made with the family who were visited to identify when the member of staff was last seen and to ask to speak to the member of staff if they are still at the property.
- If no contact can be made or there is a concern for the member of staff the police will be informed.

## Appendix A

### Home Visit Risk Assessment

Location of visit		Date of visit:	
Reason for visit			
Pupil/s name			
Name of staff visiting			
Date visit approved (HT/DSL)			

What are the hazards	Who might be harmed	How might they be harmed	Risk level (low/medium/high)	What can be done to reduce the risk	How will you know if the measures taken are successful
Aggressive or violent parent / child / adult					
Car travel					
Medical conditions					
Attack by animal					
Environmental dangers eg. unsanitary conditions, illegal substance etc					
Other					