****

****

**Focus 1st Academy**

**Home Visit Policy & Procedure**

**Focus 1st Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment!**

Working in Partnership with North London Schools & Local Authorities since 2000

Accredited Independent School Status 2014 (Registration N0. 308/6003

**Contents**

[Focus Inception 3](#_Toc120889128)

[Focus Ethos 3](#_Toc120889129)

[Home Visit Policy and Procedure 4](#_Toc120889130)

[Home Visit Definition: 4](#_Toc120889131)

[Reasons for home visits: 4](#_Toc120889132)

[Benefits 5](#_Toc120889133)

[Procedures 5](#_Toc120889134)

[Before the Visit 5](#_Toc120889135)

[During the Visit 6](#_Toc120889136)

[After the visit 6](#_Toc120889137)

[Action to take if you are threatened 7](#_Toc120889138)

[After 7](#_Toc120889139)

Focus Inception

Focus 1st Academy was set up in the year 2000 using European Social Fund to provide education and training and to-date has defied all the odds and was awarded the Independent School status in August 2014. This enables us to work in partnership with schools and local authorities to provide an alternative method of education for 14- to 16-year-olds. Our student referrals are some of the most vulnerable young people and it is our duty to ensure that they are equipped with the appropriate skills and qualifications to ensure full participation within the modern workplace. Our team of professionals consisting of tutors, tutor assistance, pastoral support staff and mentors to nurture the students ensuring our work-based-learning approach alongside a variety of techniques are utilised and compatible to ensure the prevention of social and economic exclusion prior to adulthood which is underpinned through the subjects delivered whilst in classroom environment as well as on an individual basis.

Focus Ethos

Our programme fulfils the need of students who are disengaged from academic studies and may be exhibiting behavioural problems as a result. Our hands-on approach to learning creates an inspirational motivation for students wishing to pursue a career via the vocational route. The students are taught methods on how to improve their social skills in preparation for work/apprenticeship schemes and/or further education by learning in real-life situations and participating in sports, art and drama to express emotions. We believe that all individuals have a certain quality, which is sometimes concealed due to lack of confidence, mixed sentiments or disabilities. As such, recognising and coming to terms with barriers is a small part of the conflict, we are certain that all individuals are aware of their own weaknesses; the most vital part is engaging with professionals and adhere to individual training plans set which in turn prepares our students for economic and social integration into adulthood.

At Focus 1st Academy we recognise the moral and statutory responsibility placed on all staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment, underpinned by a culture of openness where both students and adults feel secure, are able to raise concerns and believe they are being listened to, and that appropriate action will be taken to keep them safe.

Home Visit Policy and Procedure

ALL HOME VISITS CONDUCTED BY STAFF MUST BE AUTHORISED BY THE SAFEGUARDING LEAD (OR MEMBER OF THE SAFEGUARDING OFFICE) PRIOR TO THE VISIT TAKING PLACE.

In addition, wherever possible parents/carers/guardians (Ps/Cs/Gs) should be informed of the home visit prior to arrival; there will be exceptions to this, for example a visit to confirm that an absent child is at home when Ps/Cs/Gs are not responding to telephone calls/text messages or emergency safeguarding visits.

Home Visit Definition:

A home visit is a visit that requires member(s) of staff to enter the home of a parent, carer, or guardian in the case of an emergency visit or a procedural visit.

Aims

* At Focus 1st Academy we recognise that Ps/Cs/Gs are our pupils first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.
* *The aim of a home visit is:*
* To establish a partnership between Ps/Cs/Gs and staff so that all parties share their knowledge about the pupil to enable the individual needs of the pupil to be met.
* To develop and strengthen relationships with Ps/Cs/Gs for the best interests of the pupil.

Reasons for home visits:

Home visits are important in helping the school to make contact with new or hard to reach Ps/Cs/Gs. They are particularly useful as they enable the Ps/Cs/Gs to still have contact with the school, but in their own environment.

 *Home visits are to be used when:*

* Pupils are refusing to come into school
* When there are attendance issues/concerns
* When all other means of contact with a family has failed
* To meet with Ps/Cs/Gs 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 or where it would be difficult for a Ps/Cs/Gs to attend school for a meeting and information needs to be shared in a face-to-face meeting in a timely manner.
* To try and establish that a pupil is safe if they are absent from school and attempts to contact Ps/Cs/Gs have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the pupil.
* To work with and support Ps/Cs/Gs in developing strategies to help their child attend school where attendance is an issue.
* To visit a pupil who has been off school for a period of time, for example due to a medical issue, so that they do not feel isolated from school.

Benefits

Home visits have many benefits. For Ps/Cs/Gs and pupils, a home visit gives the opportunity to meet a key person in a setting that they are familiar and comfortable with. Other opportunities are to:

* Establish a positive contact with a key member of staff who is supporting the pupil.
* Meet family members that are important to the pupils.
* Talk about the pupils and their needs.

Procedures

The aim of the home visit policy procedure is to ensure good working practice and to provide guidelines in reducing risks to members of staff when undertaking home visits.

Before the Visit

* Be familiar with the school’s policy and procedure for home visits.
* Be clear about the purpose of the visit. Make sure that a home visit is really necessary. (If possible and/or practical, arrange for Ps/Cs/Gs to come into the school)
* Discuss with the Safeguarding Lead whether it is deemed appropriate for the visit to be made alone or whether an additional person is required to protect professional integrity and ensure staff safety.
* If required, arrange for an appropriate person to accompany you; home visits should be conducted in pairs. Clarify each person’s role.
* Make sure you are well informed about the family and are aware of personal circumstances. (moved)
* Consider who you need to see, e.g. one or both Ps/Cs/Gs, with or without the pupil.
* Wherever possible make an appointment to establish a time convenient to the family and to ensure that everyone you want to see will be present. Either make a phone call or send a letter.

During the Visit

* + Park in a well-lit area and in a position where you do not need to reverse on leaving.
	+ Introduce yourself, have identification available and explain again the purpose of the visit, carry your identification/lanyard.
	+ Do not enter the premises unless invited in by a responsible adult.
	+ Do not enter the premises if invited to do so by a child that is on the premises unsupervised by a responsible adult.
	+ Only speak to an adult with parental responsibility (Ps/Cs/Gs) or another responsible adult whom a P/C/G has delegated to be there in their absence and they have given us permission to speak to about the student for whom we are making the home visit.
	+ Do not go upstairs in a property unless accompanied by a responsible adult and then ONLY if you deem it completely safe to do so and necessary.
	+ Do not enter a child’s/young person’s bedroom.
	+ If you are concerned that a young person is in the home inappropriately alone/unsupervised contact the schools safeguarding team straight away to discuss your observations or to seek immediate advice from them if you are uncertain whether the child is alone/unsupervised. If appropriate the Safeguarding Lead will make a referral to social care.
	+ If you feel that a child/young person is in immediate danger contact emergency services 999.
	+ Assure P/C/G that you will treat anything they tell you sensitively and will only tell the head teacher or other appropriate staff. Explain that you may need to take notes during the meeting. Do not promise not to relay information to school. Remember that under the child protection procedures you must report disclosures or suspicions to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
	+ Be professional; give professional advice and information rather than personal opinions.

After the visit

* + Report back to the Safeguarding Lead, providing details of the visit any agreed outcomes.
	+ If you are not returning directly to school, telephone the school after the visit to say you have left the home visit.
	+ Any Child Protection concerns arising from home visits should be discussed with the Safeguarding team on arrival back to school.
	+ At school do not discuss individual home visits with staff who are not involved with those particular pupils.

Action to take if you are threatened

* + If you are threatened or prevented from leaving stay calm and try to control the situation. Try to appear confident, speak slowly and clearly and not be enticed into an argument. Try to diffuse situation by saying you will seek advice from a senior member of staff or colleague.
	+ Keep your distance, never touch or turn your back on someone who is angry.
	+ If staff attend as a pair wait outside the property until all staff involved have arrived. Consider whether sending out two members of staff may escalate the difficulties.
	+ If working as a pair agrees a code word (safe word) or phrase to alert a colleague that you need assistance or should leave.
	+ The same code word should be used if you contact school to alert them that you are in danger and need support.
	+ Staff must leave the property and reach a place of safety if you have any concerns about personal safety and inform school immediately.

After

Report back in school or if you are not returning directly to school, telephone the school after the visit to say you have left the residence.

If you are concerned about your safety do not visit.

It is strongly recommended that no one makes an evening home visit.

**Please find before and after visit form in *forms>lecturers’* folder**

Date Reviewed: 02/12/2022

Reviewed: September 2023

Reviewed: November 2024

Reviewed: July 2025