The Park Federation Academy Trust

Montem Academy

Home Visit

2026-2027

MONTEM ACADEMY

Home Visit Policy and Procedure

Signed by Chair		
Date of approval		
Date of review	Covid Precautions	July 2020
Date of review		July 2021
Date of review		July 2022
Date of review		July 2023
Date of review		July 2024
Date of review		July 2025
Date of review		July 2026
Date of next review		July 2027

Home Visit Policy and Procedure

ALL HOME VISITS CONDUCTED BY STAFF MUST BE AUTHORISED BY CARMEN NEL (PRINCIPAL).

In addition, wherever possible, parents/carers/guardians 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 parents/carers/guardians are not responding to telephone calls or text messages or emergency safeguarding visits.

Home Visit Definition:

A home visit is a visit that requires members of staff (**at least 2**) to enter the home of a parent, carer, or guardian in the case of an emergency visit or a procedural visit.

Aims

At Montem Academy, we recognise that parents/carers/guardian are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

The aim of a home visit is:

- To establish a partnership between parents/carers/guardians and staff so that all parties share their knowledge about the child to enable the individual needs of the child to be met.
- To develop and strengthen relationships with parents/carers/guardians for the best interests of the child.

Reasons for home visits:

Home visits are important in helping the school to make contact with new or hard-to-reach parents/carers/guardians. They are particularly useful as they enable the parents/carers/guardians to still have contact with the school, but in their own environment. Home visits are to be used when:

- Students are refusing to come into school
- When there are attendance issues/concerns
- When students are being educated at home
- When all other means of contact with a family have failed
- To meet with parents/carers/guardians 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 parents/carers/guardians 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 child is safe if they are absent from school and attempts to contact parents/carers/guardians have not elicited a response, and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the student.
- To work with and support parents/carers/guardians in developing strategies to help their child attend school where attendance is an issue.
- To collect from or drop a child off at home where there are concerns for a child's welfare if they travelled by other means.
- To drop off or collect work for a child when they are completing schoolwork at home e.g. following a fixed term exclusion or medical issue.
- To visit a child 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.
- 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).

Benefits

Home visits have many benefits. For parents, carers, guardians and children, 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 child.
- Meet family members that are important to the child.
- Talk about the child 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 parents/carers/guardians to come into the school)
- Make a written record of the purpose of the visit and the staff members involved.
- 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 subject of the visit. Collect any necessary documentation. Check on the school's policy and practice.
- Consider who you need to see, e.g. one or both parents/carers/guardians, with or without the child.
- Make sure you are well informed about the family and are aware of personal circumstances.
- 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.
- Refer to the school's Home Visit Risk Assessment and inform the school of your intended location before departing for a home visit.

During the Visit

- Park in a well-lit area and in a position where you do not need to reverse on leaving.
- Dress appropriately.
- Ensure that there are no animals in the room where a meeting takes place.
- Introduce yourself, have identification available and explain the purpose of the visit again.
- Carry your identification; do not use a necklace 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 (parents/carers/guardians) or another responsible adult whom a parents/carers/guardians 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 speak to siblings other than to ask if their parents/carers/guardians is available. Do not discuss the purpose of the visit with siblings or any other unknown young person or adult at the premises.
- Do not go upstairs in a property unless accompanied by a responsible adult, and then **ONLY** if you deem it completely safe and necessary to do so.
- Do not enter a child's/young person's bedroom.
- If you are concerned that a child/young person is in the home inappropriately alone/unsupervised/in danger, contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputies straight away to discuss your observations or to seek immediate advice from them if you are uncertain whether the child is alone/unsupervised/in danger. 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 parents/carers/guardians that you will treat anything they tell you sensitively and will only tell the Principal 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 (Jenn Devine)
- Be sensitive to the culture, religion, etc. of the home.
- Be professional; give professional advice and information rather than personal opinions.
- Be sympathetic, but remain neutral. Don't get personally involved. Be discreet but assertive about the direction of the conversation; do not gossip about the school or staff.
- Do not stay too long. Keep to the point.
- Do not carry large sums of money when making a home visit.
- Complete Home Visit Form to evidence visit.

After the visit

- Report back to the school; if possible, give written feedback to the appropriate staff in line with school policy.
- 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Director of Inclusion (Jenn Devine) on arrival back.
- At school, do not discuss individual home visits with staff who are not involved with those particular children.

Home Visit Form

- It is essential that staff write a short report on every visit they make.
- If an incident does occur, the visitor should record all details as soon as possible after the incident, before precise recollection of events falls from their memory.
- If an accusation of abuse is made against the visit/visitor, advice should be sought from the Principal as soon as possible.

Making Safe Home Visits:

Summary Before

- Be clear about the purpose of the visit.
- Arrange for an appropriate person to accompany you.
- Be well informed about the subject of the visit.
- Always make sure that the school knows where you are going.

During

- Carry a mobile phone with you.
- Consider who you need to see.
- Make a prior appointment to establish a time of visit.
- Carry identification; do not wear it on a necklace lanyard.
- Do not stay too long.
- Introduce yourself.
- Be professional.
- Don't carry large sums of money.

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 the 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, agree 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.
No home visits will be made in the evening or without the Principal's permission.