



## Home Visiting Policy

Reviewed September 2023

### **Introduction**

Portman Nursery School, believe that, home visits play a crucial role when a child begins nursery as they establish a foundation for a collaborative and supportive partnership between educators and families. These visits provide a unique opportunity for educators to gain insights into the child's home environment, family dynamics, and cultural context. Understanding a child's background enables educators to tailor the nursery experience to align with the child's individual needs, fostering a smoother transition.

Additionally, home visits promote open communication, allowing parents/guardians to share valuable information about their child's preferences, routines, and any specific considerations. This exchange of information helps build trust, ensuring that the child's overall development is approached holistically, with the combined efforts of both the nursery and the family. Ultimately, home visits contribute to a seamless integration of the child into the nursery setting, creating a supportive and enriching early learning experience.

This policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for home visits.

### **Purpose:**

The primary purpose of home visits, is to enhance communication between parents/guardians and educators, foster a supportive learning environment, and ensure the well-being of each child.

#### **1. Scheduling and Frequency:**

Home visits will be scheduled in advance at mutually convenient times for parents/guardians and educators. Visits will usually occur at the very beginning of a child being enrolled into nursery. Additional visits are available upon request or as deemed necessary by the school or family.

#### **2. Participants:**

Home visits involve the child's primary caregiver(s) and two educators from our nursery staff team. The goal is to create a collaborative and comfortable atmosphere for discussing the child's development, learning experiences, and any concerns or questions.

#### **3. Agenda:**

During home visits, educators will discuss the child's development, interests, communication and generally nursery life. Parents/guardians are encouraged to share insights into the child's home life, preferences, and any relevant information that can contribute to a holistic understanding of the child. Often, families will be presented with forms to complete as part of the enrolment process into nursery.

#### **4. Confidentiality:**

All information shared during home visits is confidential and will only be used to support the child's development. Educators are committed to respecting the privacy of families and will not disclose personal information without explicit consent. If any safeguarding concerns arise this will need to be shared with the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL). In this instance, families will be informed of all necessary action and steps being undertaken by the DSL.

#### **5. Safety and Comfort:**

The safety and comfort of the child and family are of utmost importance during home visits. Educators will adhere to any safety guidelines provided by the family and maintain a respectful and non-intrusive presence in the home environment.

#### **6. Documentation:**

Brief notes will be taken during home visits to record key discussions, completion of necessary forms, and action items. This documentation is meant to support ongoing communication between educators and parents/guardians.

#### **7. Feedback and Follow-up:**

Following each home visit, educators will provide feedback to parents/guardians and address any questions or concerns. A follow-up plan will be established, outlining any recommendations or strategies to support the child's development.

#### **8. Flexibility:**

The nursery recognises the diversity of family structures and schedules. Efforts will be made to accommodate individual family needs and preferences when scheduling and conducting home visits.

To ensure that this important element of work is carried out as safely as possible these guidelines must be followed by all practitioners working within the nursery.

- Mobile phones must be carried at all times and numbers logged with the receptionist at Portman. Phones must be switched on for the length of the visit.

The below details of visits must be given to the receptionist

- Purpose of visit
  - Time of visit
  - Predicted length of visit
  - Address of family being visited
  - Telephone of family being visited
  - Names of members of staff visiting (2 members of staff to conduct home visits)
- If, following the visit, the staff member is not returning to Portman all staff must ring and confirm the safe completion of the visit.

If at any time during the visit the staff member is threatened or considers the situation to be unsafe the visit should be terminated immediately. On return to nursery, the nature of the threat or perceived threat, should be reported to a member of the leadership team. The incident will be recorded together with any action taken. No further visits to the family will be made without a thorough review of the risk and the endorsement of any re-visit by a member of the leadership team. By adhering to this home visiting policy, we aim to strengthen the partnership between educators and families, ultimately contributing to the optimal development and well-being of each child in our care.