

Home visit policy

1. Purpose

Sir William Romney's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students. Home visits form part of the school's safeguarding, attendance, and pastoral responsibilities and are used to maintain contact with families, assess welfare concerns, and support students who are educated off-site. Home visits are conducted as part of the school's in-year admission process. This policy outlines the circumstances in which home visits will be undertaken and the expectations for staff conducting them.

2. Statutory and Local Frameworks

This policy is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

National Statutory Guidance

- *Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004* – Duties to safeguard and promote welfare
- *Education and Inspections Act 2006* – School responsibilities for behaviour and attendance
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* – Statutory safeguarding guidance for schools
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)* – Multi-agency safeguarding expectations
- *School Attendance Guidance (DfE, 2022 and updates)* – Requirements for monitoring and responding to absence

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) Frameworks and Procedures

This policy aligns with:

- Gloucestershire County Council Attendance Guidance (including expectations for monitoring persistent absence, welfare checks, and escalation routes)
- Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) Procedures (including thresholds of need, early help pathways, and multi-agency safeguarding processes)

- GCC Children Missing Education (CME) Protocol
- GCC Alternative Provision Guidance (including expectations for monitoring students placed in AP)
- The Athelstan Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- The Athelstan Trust Staff Code of Conduct

The school follows GCC's escalation routes, referral pathways, and reporting expectations when concerns arise during home visits.

3. Safeguarding Obligations

Sir William Romney's School has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

Staff conducting home visits must:

- Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- Follow the Athelstan Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.
- Record all visits, observations, and outcomes on the school's safeguarding system.
- Contact emergency services if immediate risk is identified.

Where concerns meet GCC's threshold for referral, the DSL will follow the GCC pathway for Early Help, MARF submission, or escalation to Social Care.

4. Welfare Checks for Non-Attendance

- Attendance is monitored daily in line with GCC Attendance Guidance and DfE statutory requirements.
- If a student has not been seen in school for 3 consecutive school days, and:
 - contact with parents/carers has been unsuccessful, or
 - the explanation for absence is insufficient, or
 - safeguarding concerns exist,

the school may conduct a welfare home visit.

Where a student's attendance falls below 50%, the school will conduct a home visit and risk assessment.

The purpose of the welfare check is to:

- Confirm the child's safety and wellbeing.
- Establish the reason for absence.
- Offer support to improve attendance.
- Determine whether escalation to GCC services is required (e.g., CME team, Early Help, Social Care, Gloucestershire Education Inclusion).

If no contact is made at the home, staff will follow GCC CME procedures and safeguarding escalation routes.

- If a child has not been seen in school for 10 consecutive days, the school may conduct a welfare home visit.

5. Home Visits for Students in Full-Time Alternative Provision

Some students engage with full- or part-time Alternative Provision (AP). These students remain on roll at Sir William Romney's School, and may not be expected to attend school in person. In line with GCC and DfE AP expectations:

- The school may complete half-termly welfare checks for all such students. These welfare checks will be conducted in person at the family home. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for welfare checks to be conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams.

The purpose of these visits is to:

- Maintain regular contact with the student and family.
- Review wellbeing, attendance, and engagement with the AP provider.
- Ensure the student continues to receive suitable education.
- Identify any emerging needs requiring Early Help or safeguarding intervention.

Records of these visits will be shared with the AP provider and stored securely.

6. Pre-Arranged and Unannounced Visits

Visits will usually be pre-arranged to support engagement and transparency. Staff will inform the DSL of any home visits before completing them, to ensure appropriate risk identification, assessment and planning.

Unannounced visits may be conducted, particularly when:

- a. safeguarding concerns exist,

- b. attempts to contact the family have failed, or
- c. a welfare check is required due to prolonged unexplained absence.

Staff will always carry school identification and will not enter the home unless invited and it is safe to do so. Staff should not enter properties where there is a potential, perceived, or real concern about safety, which could include:

- The behaviour of adults or children at the property
- The behaviour of animals at the property
- The upkeep/state of repair of the property
- Risks from previous visits

If the member of staff is in any doubt about their safety, the home visit should immediately end, and the member of staff should leave the property.

7. Conduct and Expectations During Home Visits

Where possible, visits should be conducted by two members of staff. If this is not possible, staff will:

- Inform a colleague via telephone when they arrive at the property, along with an estimated length of visit. Visit lengths should not be longer than necessary.
- Inform a colleague via telephone when they leave the property
- Remain in contact with a colleague during the visit

If communication ceases, or there are concerns about the safety and/or wellbeing of the visiting member of staff, a member of SLT must be informed immediately.

Staff must:

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Respect the family's privacy while fulfilling safeguarding duties.
- Avoid entering the home unless invited and safe.
- Record the visit promptly and accurately.

Staff must not:

- Transport students without prior authorisation, appropriate safeguarding checks and insurance.
- Engage in discussions beyond their professional remit.

8. Recording and Follow-Up

All home visits, including doorstep visits, must be logged on the school's safeguarding system.

Follow-up actions may include:

- Additional visits
- Referral to GCC Early Help or Social Care
- Attendance support plans
- Escalation to GCC CME team
- Multi-agency meeting

All records must be stored in line with GDPR and the Athelstan Trust Data Protection Policy. Staff must be mindful not to leave confidential information in the home, transport or public places.

9. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance or GCC frameworks change.

Appendix 1 – Home Visit Form



Sir William Romney's School
Striving for Excellence Together

Record of Home Visit

Child's Name	
Date of visit	
Parent present	
Child seen (Tick)	
Child's voice	
Expected return date	
Reason for absence	
Any concerns/notes?	

Members of staff completing visit:

1.

2.

Appendix 2 – Calling Card



Sir William Romney's School
Striving for Excellence Together

Sorry to have missed you!

We called today to complete a welfare check for:

Please contact me at school as a matter of urgency on 01666 502378

Signed:



Home Visit for In-Year Admission

Mobility/Mobility +

Name:	DOB:
Address:	Telephone: Email:
Family Information:	Previous School: Reason for leaving:

Attendance: %
Reasons for periods of absence:

What do you enjoy about school?

What extra-curricular activities do you do?

Reasons for choosing SWR:	Do you know any current students at SWR?
What do you feel/hope will be different about SWR compared to your previous school?	Are there any other agencies currently working with the family or young person?
Do you have any questions or concerns about joining SWR?	
Additional Information:	
Next steps (staff use)	



Sir William Romney's School
Pupils not attending school full time



Individual Pupil Risk Assessment

Pupil Name:

Date of birth:

Year Group:

Agreed with parent(s)/Carer(s) on:

Parent(s)/Carer(s) agreement:

Name:

Date:.....

Signature:

School agreement:

Name: Position:

Signature: Date:

The school reviews home risk assessments on an annual basis, or when circumstances significantly change.

Context of risk assessment

In this box you should give context as to why this risk assessment is necessary. Is this child on a part time timetable? Has this been attached? Are they on AP? How much time are they spending at home? Etc.

RISK REDUCTION	
The following potential risks should be discussed with parent/carer and the young person.	
Potential area of risk	Proactive intervention to reduce/prevent risk
Supervision and contact Who is in the home with this young person during the school day? When this young person is at home during the school day, who is supervising them? If unsupervised, is the house secure?	
Online Safety Does this young person access the internet? Are parental controls activated on devices? Is their internet use monitored?	
Emergency procedure What will this young person do in the event of an emergency? E.g. Fire? Injury?	
Harmful behaviour If this young person is known to engage in harmful behaviour? is an appropriate safety plan in place? E.g. Medication/sharps locked away/counted.	
Animals Does this young person share the house with an animal that could pose an additional risk?	
Smoking Does anyone smoke in the home?	
Cooking How is lunch prepared? Does the young person use the kitchen to prepare lunch?	
Alcohol/Drug misuse Does anyone in the home have issues around substance misuse?	
Additional risks in the home Are there any additional risks? How will these be reduced or prevented?	
Interventions to respond to adverse outcomes	

Parent/Carer declaration

I understand my child (*Tick those that apply*):

- ☐ Has been placed on a reduced timetable for a limited period of time.
- ☐ Has a current attendance that causes significant concern.
- ☐ Spends time at home during the school day due to engaging with Alternative Provision

I have discussed the matter fully with the school and agree to:

- Take full responsibility for my child during the hours when not attending school or alternative provision
- Ensure there is supervision of schoolwork during those hours
- Take full responsibility for the health and safety on my child when they are not in school or alternative provision
- Agree that I will contact Dr Dillon at Sir William Romney's School if there are any changes to this risk assessment

Parent(s)/Carer(s) agreement:

Name: Relationship to child:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Relationship to child:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

If applicable, during the period of the reduced timetable the school and/or alternative provision (as appropriate) will:

- Monitor the effectiveness of the part-time timetable
- Hold a review on the agreed date

School agreement:

Name: ... Position:

Signature: Date: