



Home Visits Policy

This policy was updated: **February 2019**

This policy will be reviewed: **February 2021**

Statutory policy? **Yes**

Source: **Alternative Provision**

Introduction

This policy is designed to protect the safety of all Nulogic staff carrying out home visits. Where home visits take place, a risk assessment should be completed in advance. This will identify any concerns about potential risks and appropriate measures to be taken. If specific information is known about families, this should be added to the risk assessment.

Nulogic's home visits will always take place with staff in pairs or with a member of the local authority. Home visits can only take place when the policy and protocols are fully met. Policy and procedures must be consistently applied.

Rationale for Carrying Out Home Visits

There is a unanimous feeling within Nulogic that the home visits which staff undertake have huge benefits. The insights that staff have gained into each learner's home and background greatly helps them to assess their level of need at our provision and prepare for the learner's entry into the setting. Another major benefit is that the home visits are the start or the continued building of the relationship with parents which is vital if we are to be successful in providing for the needs of the child. It also shows parents that the Nulogic respects them and wants to share their knowledge, which puts the relationship on a more equal footing.

Meeting each child in his or her home environment has proved invaluable for:

- 1) Parents and learners: a visit gives them the opportunity to meet their tutor in a safe environment, where they feel confident and at ease.
- 2) Nulogic staff: a visit provides the opportunity to:
 - Establish early, positive contact.
 - See learners in their own familiar settings.
 - Meet other family members, people and pets who are important to the learners;
 - Understand the problems that learners might encounter in a school setting.

This all helps to get a more complete picture of the learner. Nulogic staff can gain much from observing a child where he or she feels settled and in control.

Guidelines for Staff

Structure of Nulogic's Home Visits

The class tutor and a Learning Support Assistant make each visit together. As well as the obvious safety implications, this allows one to talk to the learner's parents/guardians and the other to focus solely on the learner. This can be the beginning of the relationship between the tutor and the child, especially as staff have been invited into the learner's home. It also means that the parent has focused time with the Tutor or Learning Support Assistant. Thirty minutes is the standard period of time devoted to each home visit. Parents are always telephoned in advance to confirm the appointment.

Equipment Needed

All visits need careful structuring and prepared resources. Visiting staff members will take an information pack with them when visiting a learner and their parents/guardians in their home. This would usually contain course content and the kinds of activities the learner will be participating in. All staff should carry their lanyard with their photo and DBS number on that is visible. Staff should also take a mobile phone for safety reasons, a map to locate addresses or Sat Nav.

Before the Visit

- Show respect for Parents/Carers as equal partners.
- Be a good listener.
- Make appointments in advance and offer alternative dates/times.
- Ensure that parents know when you will arrive, how long you will stay, what will happen, what kinds of questions you will be asking and what information you will bring (Appendix 2 – parents' information sheet).
- Ask them to think about the information they need from you in advance of the meeting.
- Accept the right of a family not to want a home visit.
- Confirm Parents/Carers actual name and title and keep on record. Do not presume that there are two parents with the same surname as the child.
- Do not assume that all Parents/Carers are literate.
- Make sure you consider diversity of social, cultural, racial, religious and sexual orientation.
- Familiarise yourself with the route/ location, parking restrictions etc. before you leave
- Leave details of your visiting schedule with another member of staff

During the Visit

- Be aware of pets and other adults who may be in the home.
- Sit near a door or exit and if you feel uneasy or worried at any time, make an excuse and leave.
- Staff should avoid commenting on a child's home or provision so that parents do not feel that any judgement is being made on their home or lifestyle.
- Staff should demonstrate an awareness and respect for differing cultures.
- They should comply with appropriate customs such as removing shoes, wearing modest clothing etc.
- Staff should remain aware of time constraints on both themselves and parents.
- Return to the Nulogic office or phone in when you have completed visits and are back at home.

Specific Protocols for All Home Visits

Risk Assessment:

- Check records to see what is known and information available.
- Talk to other professionals who may already have had contact or involvement with the family.
- Obtain information about the location of the home visit. For example, does the area have a reputation for being unsafe, isolated or poorly lit?
- Discuss strategies to adopt when working with a potentially challenging Parent/Carer/Family with your line manager.
- Where potential risks are identified, arrange an alternative meeting environment

Health and Safety:

- Inform your line manager when you are leaving for a home visit.
- Leave the details of the home visit schedule with a member of staff. Include a list of visit addresses and times including family name, child's name, address, telephone number, purpose of visit, and time due back at base.
- You must inform the nominated person if there is a cancellation or alteration to the time.
- Carry with you and show the parent some form of identification.
- Demonstrate normal courtesy – wait to be invited into the home.
- If a child answers the door, ask if an adult is present in the house before entering. Do not enter if an adult is not present.
- If the Parent/Carer appears at all uncomfortable about the visit continuing, staff should offer to leave, offer to continue the contact with a telephone call and give the Parent/Carer the telephone number of the Nulogic Academy Centre's phone.