



# **Caterpillars Pre-School**

## **Staff Safety & Home Visit Policy**

February 2021



## Policy statement

We hope by providing home visits for new children, this will benefit them in meeting in a home environment where parents/carers will be able to discuss any concerns they may have and give staff valuable information about the child's home life which we can use to help settle them in.

## Procedures:

### General

- All staff in the building early in the morning, or late in the evening, ensure doors and windows are locked.
- Where possible, at least the first two members of staff to arrive in the building arrive together, and the last two members of staff in the building leave together.
- Where it is necessary for staff to work alone (without children present), an assessment of risks should be made. When working alone a colleague should be notified of their movements, and staff should be vigilant when entering or leaving the building.
- Visitors are generally only allowed access with prior appointments and only admitted once their identity has been verified.
- Minimal petty cash is kept on the premises.
- When taking cash to the bank, members of staff are aware of personal safety. Managers carry out a risk assessment and develop an agreed procedure appropriate to the setting, staff and location.
- Members of staff make a note in the diary of meetings they are attending, who they are meeting and when they are expected back.
- Managers have good liaison with local police and ask for advice on safe practice where there are issues or concerns.

## Home Visits

When parents start their child at Caterpillars they are asked if they would like a home visit.

Home visits will normally be booked in on a non-pupil day before the start of term, but if a child is starting mid term, they will be carried out close to their planned start date.

Home visits will usually last around half an hour.

The following procedures will be applied to all home visits.



- All home visit appointments are written down stating Child and Parent/Carers name, address, phone number and time of appointment.
- Prior to a home visit the key person and manager undertake a risk assessment that is specific to the visit being undertaken.
- Staff alert an agreed contact person in the setting when they are leaving to do the home visit and advise of their expected time of return.
- Two staff members will attend the home visit one being the Manager/Deputy and the other, the child's key person.
- Whilst at the home visit the staff member keeps a mobile phone with them which other staff who have remained at the setting can contact them on.
- The Manager/Deputy will fill out the necessary registration form and getting to know you form whilst the key person interacts with the child.
- If there is any reason for staff to feel concerned about entering premises, they do not do so, for example, if a parent appears drunk.
- Staff identify an emergency word/phrase, which is made known to all staff in the setting, so that if they feel extremely threatened or in danger on a home visit they can covertly alert other members of staff via a telephone call to the situation. Use of the agreed word/phrase will initiate an immediate 999 call to be made.
- If staff do not return from the home visit at the designated time, the contact person will attempt to phone them and continues to do so until they make contact.
- If no contact is made after a reasonable amount of time has passed, the contact person rings the police.

### **Home Visit Procedure during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

- During the Covid-19 pandemic, social distancing rules may not make it possible to undertake home visits before a child is due to start at Caterpillars. Managers will contact parents in advance of the child's start date and agree how the home visit/settling-in process can be undertaken in line with the social distancing measures in place at that time.

### **Dealing With Agitated Parents in the Setting**

- If a parent appears to be angry, mentally agitated or possibly hostile, two members of staff will lead the parent away from the children to a less open area, but will not shut the door behind them.
- If the person is standing, staff will remain standing.



- Members of staff will try to empathise and ensure that the language they use can be easily understood.
- Staff will speak in low, even tones, below the voice level of the parent.
- Members of staff will make it clear that they want to listen and seek solutions.
- If the person makes threats and continues to be angry, members of staff make it clear that they will be unable to discuss the issue until the person stops shouting or being abusive, while avoiding potentially inflammatory expressions such as 'calm down' or 'be reasonable'.
- If threats or abuse continues, members of staff will explain that the police will be called and emphasise the inappropriateness of such behaviour in front of children.
- After the event, details are recorded in the child's personal file together with any decisions made with the parents to rectify the situation and any correspondence regarding the incident.

This policy was adopted by Caterpillars Pre-School Management Committee

in

February 2021

Date to be reviewed

February 2022

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Cerise Upham

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

Chair of the Committee