

Parent Partnership Warrington & Halton Home Visiting and Lone Working Policy

Introduction

- Parent Partnership Warrington & Halton has produced this document to set out the personal safety policy guidelines for staff. It provides specific advice and guidance for staff. It provides specific advice and guidance for staff and outlines mandatory requirements needed to comply with duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 and the Reporting of Injuries and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.

Safety Equipment and Procedures

- The Parent Partnership Officer has been issued with a mobile telephone. The PPO must ensure that the mobile telephone is taken out on all visits, kept in working order and fully charged.
- Any violent incidents must be reported in accordance with the Council's violent incident reporting procedure that is completion of a violent incident report form. This should be completed for any employee who is subject to physical or verbal abuse whether or not an actual injury occurs.
- Following a violent incident, an investigation must take place, which may result in a change to procedures for visiting a particular client.

Whereabouts/movement diary

- In the PPS office, the PPO's whereabouts are on the outlook calendar, which can be accessed by the Parent Partnership Administrator. It displays the following information: client name, address of meeting place, time of appointment, estimated time of return, or expected time of finish of each appointment.
- Parent Partnership Administrator can also contact the PPO via their mobile phone.

- Also displayed in the PPO office is the make, model, colour and registration number of the vehicle.

Assessment of risk status

- This should be carried out prior to any visits being made based on the information available. If the PPO has any concerns, they will discuss them with their line manager prior to the home visit. Strategies for reducing risks are included in Appendix 1 of this policy.
- If there are continued anxieties over a home visit, the PPO may contact the school, other colleague(s) who know the service user to discuss the potential risk.

Transport

- Vehicles used by PPS staff must be insured for business use. Insurance documentation and driving licences will be copied for Human Resources. Staff must be sure that there is sufficient fuel in their vehicle to complete the journey.

Smoking

- Parent Partnership staff will not: -
 - Smoke in any Council buildings or vehicles
 - Smoke in their own vehicle when carrying passengers
 - Smoke when visiting people in their own homes
 - Smoke during working hours
 - Smoke in the presence of young people under 18
- When visiting the public in their own home, staff may ask them to put out cigarettes, cigars or pipes.

Working Time Regulations

Staff undertaking lone working or on site conducting visits must comply with the Working Time Regulations, for example take ½ hour break when working more than 6 hours.

Appendix 1

Strategies to prevent or diffuse situations posing risk to personal safety

It is important to think about practice and strategies to prevent or diffuse difficult situations before they might be needed. The following strategies might be useful.

- Where possible deal initially with service users by telephone
- Visit only in daytime
- Invite the service user to meet with you at your office location to discuss the matter in hand
- If service users are unable to meet in a Children's Services location try and meet in venues other than their homes, for example other Council accommodation, libraries or Children's Centres.
- If on arriving at a service user's home you consider yourself to be at risk, decline to enter or make an excuse to leave where necessary.
- Arrange to be accompanied by another officer or person. This could be another member of the PPS team, or a colleague from another agency also involved with the case.
- Make sure you have read the case referral thoroughly before going out on a visit. If you have agreed to bring any documents or information check you have it with you.
- If service users have a dog, which is making you feel uncomfortable, ask them to put it in another room during your meeting with them.

Appendix 2

Do's and Dont's

Do's	Dont's
Prepare and plan correctly. Check records and speak to colleagues.	Don't give out personal details.
Keep your office informed of your whereabouts.	Don't use official language, or act in an officious manner.
Plan your route in advance. Avoid known unsafe areas.	Don't just visit; make sure you have prepared correctly.
Take a colleague if possible. Meet parent/carers during daylight hours.	Don't forget your mobile phone.
Be professional.	Don't look down on people.
Carry a personal alarm and mobile phone.	Don't forget to let your colleagues know where you are and ring in on a regular basis.
Keep a physical barrier between you and the client and stay close to exits.	Don't forget to keep your car well serviced and have a contingency plan should things go wrong.
Remove expensive jewellery.	Don't take anything for granted.
Avoid dangerous areas.	Don't appear nervous.
Do stay alert. Appear confident.	Don't forget body language is important.
Do speak in a friendly and polite manner.	Don't forget to plan your visit.
Do report any incident.	Don't park near to unlit and dangerous areas.