



LONE WORKING POLICY

Family Liaison

Definition of a Lone Worker

Lone workers are defined by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as “those employees who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”. In reference to our school this relates to staff who are:

- undertaking home visits;
- attending late meetings or evening training;
- maintaining the site, or opening/ closing premises.

Risk Assessments

The key to maximising Health and Safety wherever lone working is being considered is the performance of a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

A risk assessment specific to Lone Working will be carried out and will be read, approved and signed by the Headteacher. The risk assessment will identify who is at risk and from what, deciding if the current control measures for lone working are adequate or if more needs to be done to ensure that the person is not at a greater risk than any other employee. If they are, the employer has a responsibility to eliminate or reduce that risk as far as reasonably practicable.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher will establish and supervise safe systems of work to ensure compliance with safety rules, provide and ensure that employees have received appropriate training where needed and ensure that policies and procedures are followed.

All employees are required to comply with the Councils Risk Management policies and attend training as required.

Lone workers should not be at more significant risk than other employees but may require extra control measures. Precautions should take account of foreseeable emergencies and normal work.

The lone worker must be aware that their safety is the priority and that they must leave any situation in which they do not feel safe as soon as reasonably possible.

PROCEDURES

- directly relating to **'Family Liaison' (home visits)**

The lone worker will adhere to all aspects of the risk assessment at all times. This will be reviewed six-monthly.

The lone worker will only visit families during the working school day between the hours of 7:30-4:30.

The lone worker will operate within a 'Buddy System' - a nominated contact will be aware of the Lone Workers whereabouts and movements whilst they are away from the school premises.

The lone worker will minimise risk by only visiting 'low risk' households, as identified by the school. Any individual known to be high risk will not be visited by a Lone Worker. Any individuals who are known to be abusive or threatening will not be visited

Buddy System

To operate the Buddy System, a Lone Worker must nominate a 'buddy'. This person will be their nominated contact for the period in which they will be working alone. A nominated buddy will:

- be fully aware of the movements of the Lone Worker;
- have the contact details of the Headteacher (who will have all necessary contact details for the lone worker, including personal contact details - such as next of kin, car make/model/reg number;
- contact the lone worker, if they do not contact the buddy as agreed;
- follow the agreed local escalation procedures for alerting their line manager or the police, if the lone worker cannot be contacted, or if they fail to contact their buddy within agreed and reasonable timescales.

Essential to the effective operation of the 'Buddy System' are also the following factors:

- The 'buddy' must be made aware that they have been nominated and what the procedures and requirements for this role are: and
- Contingency arrangements should be in place for someone else to take over the role of the 'buddy' in case the nominated person is called away to a meeting, for example.

Buddy System Procedures

The lone worker will complete the Booking in/out sheet prior to all visits and pass this to their buddy giving the address of where they will be and expected time of return.

The lone worker will contact their buddy on arrival at the venue to let them know they have arrived safely.

At the end of the visit the lone worker will call or text their buddy to let them know that the visit has been completed.

The lone worker will let the buddy know as soon as possible if the visit is to take longer than anticipated.

If, for any reason, the buddy is unavailable at any time then responsibility and information should be passed to someone else who ensures the lone worker returns safely.

The lone worker will let the buddy know when they arrive safely back at school or home.

If there are any problems (e.g. car breaks down), the buddy will be contacted.

Escalation procedures (for the buddy):

1. The lone worker and designated 'buddy', will agree a safe word (e.g. a colour) that if used, either in a text message or direct call, would alert the buddy to the need for immediate help and support;
2. Allow quarter of an hour after expected time of contact and then call the lone worker. If no reply, wait for five minutes before taking the next step (in case they are driving and have to stop before they can use their mobile phone);
3. If the lone worker has missed making either of the calls from the venue (arrival or departure), try the number of the venue to check the situation with them first;
4. If you still have no news, contact the Headteacher.

Post-incident Reporting

All incidents, accidents, etc which occur during lone working must be recorded and reported immediately to the Headteacher.

Since it is impossible to guarantee safety, post incident support will be available to anyone who does become a victim of violence. Such services ensure the organisation is able to respond in terms of providing support, practical help and access to sources of specialist help if required.

Monitoring

Lone worker and Headteacher to meet regularly to discuss visits undertaken and identify any further risks. The effectiveness of the buddy system will be reviewed and amended as necessary to ensure this is as effective as it can be at keeping everyone safe. Any updates to mobile phone numbers should be passed on immediately to ensure the correct phone numbers are used.

Agreed by Governors:

Date on review: