

Lone Worker Policy



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Contents

General statement 3

Categories of lone workers 3

Definition of Lone Working 3

Legal position..... 3

Risk reduction 3

Control Measures..... 4

First Aid 5

Unacceptable Lone Working 5

Training..... 5

Line Managers 5

Lone Worker Duties 5

.....

General statement

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring staff, volunteers and contractors enjoy a safe working environment. It is recognised that there are occasions when teaching, support, administrative, grounds, caretaking/cleaning staff may be required, or choose, to work alone or in isolated situations. This however may introduce risks for a normally non-hazardous work activity.

Categories of lone workers

A lone worker will most probably fall within one of the following categories:

- Staff that are required to work alone for all or most of the time, such as cleaning staff working in the evening or early mornings.
- Staff staying on to finish work after others have left, or those who regularly work late or start early, before anyone else gets into the building
- Staff who are key-holders or who are left to turn out the lights, set the alarm and lock up the premises after everyone has gone home.

Definition of Lone Working

Where staff are engaged in work (either outdoors or indoors) where there are no other people who could reasonably be expected to come to their immediate aid in the event of an incident or emergency.

Legal position

Our duty to both assess and control any risks from lone working is governed by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA). S.2 requires us to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of our employees. Similar duties are owed to other workers, such as agency temps under s.3 of the HSWA. This will be achieved by carrying out risk assessments in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended).

Risk reduction

Our risk assessments will cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed), where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong. Once all job roles involving lone working have been identified, the following factors will be considered:

- Risk of violence - All jobs involving an element of lone working will be assessed for a risk of verbal threats, or violence. The priority will be those involving face-to-face dealings with members of the public and/or cash handling.
- Plant and equipment - The plant and equipment used by lone workers will be assessed to ensure that it is suitable for use by one person.
- Work at height – working at height must not be undertaken when working alone.
- Chemicals - Any existing, or planned use of chemicals will be considered with regards to their suitability for use by those working alone, in conjunction with a risk assessment and material safety data sheet.
- The worker - The medical fitness of each worker to continue working alone will also be assessed. Any concerns will be referred to their GP.
- Access and egress - Some lone working may require access to locations which are difficult to access or exit. Where this is the case, an assessment will consider whether this type of task is suitable to be carried out by only one person.

Control Measures

In order to manage the risks identified, we have introduced the following control measures:

Risk of violence

- All key holding staff are required to lock themselves in the buildings when lone working.
- Staff are required not to arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working. All meetings must be arranged during main school occupancy times or when there is more than one member of staff on site for the duration of that meeting.
- Staff are required not to handle cash when lone working.
- Late meetings must be arranged so as to finish promptly and so as not to leave one member of staff alone on site.
- Staff are required not to approach or let into the buildings unauthorised persons when lone working.
- Deliveries must not be accepted when lone working.

Communication

- Staff are first required to avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group. This must always be arranged by means of staff meetings before weekends and holiday periods and will only be with the agreement of the Principal.
- All lone working must be pre-arranged and the site manager informed.
- All staff are required to sign in and off the site when lone working
- Staff are required to have access to a school phone or carry a personal mobile phone at all times when lone working and must be aware of the Site Manager's direct line **01423 714108**.
- Staff are required to let someone know they are coming into work, how long they are expected to be on site and when they are expected to leave site. But always within the agreed opening times of the school
- Cleaning and caretaking staff not working together are considered to be in isolation for example, during holiday or weekend periods. Two- way radios will be used and regular contact initiated.

Key Holders:

Key holders may need to attend premises outside of normal business hours. This may be to carry out normal work activities or following the activation of an intruder alarm or because of some other emergency that might have occurred.

Key holders information is registered with Chubb Security.

Good practice dictates that at least three key holders should be appointed in order to cover holidays and sickness etc.

It is the responsibility of all school personnel and contractors to adhere to the lone working procedures and to report any difficulties, failure of equipment or general concerns on health and safety to the bursar. If members of staff fail to follow procedures designed to protect their safety, this could result in a disciplinary matter as they will have contributed to their injury and any compensation claims for damages or unfair dismissal may be reduced accordingly.

Staff should be proactive in bringing to the attention of the Principal or Business Manager any aspect of work related risks which may occur when lone working. The bursar and the governor with the responsibility of Health and Safety will regularly monitor the implementation of these procedures. Following any incident an investigation will be carried out and its findings used to inform change to procedures and working practices.

First Aid

For those working on our premises, first aid kits can be found at the following nearby locations:

- Kitchen
- Staffroom
- Science Classrooms (which ones)
- PE Office
- First aid Room
- Site Manager's Office
- Reception

Emergency procedures

In the event that a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone/ school phone to call the relevant emergency services.

Access and egress

Staff are required to consider weather conditions before coming into and while at work.

Unacceptable Lone Working

The following activities are not to be carried out by lone workers under any circumstances:

- Any working at height.
- DT Machines must not be used when lone working
- Manual handling of heavy or bulky items.
- Transport of injured persons must only be undertaken by emergency services.
- Use of the kiln is prohibited when working alone.
- Use of the kitchen deep fat fryer is prohibited when working alone.
- No person is to respond to the school security alarm without police support.
- Access to the loft area and boiler rooms is prohibited when lone working.

Training

Where necessary, all lone workers will be fully trained in the safe working practices to be adopted in order to carry out their tasks safely. This will apply to employees and other workers where applicable, such as agency staff and contractors.

Line Managers

It is the responsibility of individual line managers to monitor the tasks being carried out by their staff. In particular, they are responsible for ensuring that any tasks described in section 6 are not carried out by one person alone. If the nature of the tasks change in any way, the manager must ensure that a new risk assessment is carried out. They also need to ensure that any lone worker follows good working practices and safe systems of work.

Lone Worker Duties

All lone workers are expected to co-operate fully with any instructions giving by their managers. They are also expected to follow the Organisation's safe systems of work and any associated procedures. Failure to do so, may be a disciplinary offence

