



Lone Working Policy

Policy Reviewed by:	Suzy Hollett (HR Manager)
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Policy Verified by:	Sara Llewellyn (School Leader-CEO)
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General Policy Statement

Lone Workers as defined by the Health and Safety Executive are, "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision."

As part of the Management structure, it is the duty of care for all Managers and Senior Leaders to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all their staff, as it is also the employee's responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by their work activity.

Maple Haven recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of its employees whilst working alone. This policy sets out our approach in both identifying these risks and adequately managing them. Any questions regarding its operation should be addressed to the School Leader.

Aim

To ensure adequate control measures are put into place to safeguard all employees who work alone at any point during their contractual duties.

Definition of lone workers

For the purposes of this policy, a lone worker is an individual who spends some or all of their working hours working alone. This may occur.

- during normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace
- when working on site outside normal business hours
- Working off site i.e. home visits or trip out etc.
- Working from home
- Driving vehicle as part of work

People working alone or in isolation from others may be at particular risk either because of circumstances of their day to day working or because an emergency may occur. They may be at extra risk if they are not in regular contact with others and are not kept informed of any changes that may affect them. Lone workers should not be at more risk than other employees. This may require extra risk control measures. Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents.

Examples of lone workers

The list of lone workers may include:

- Site staff including Site Manager, Caretakers, cleaners and Grounds staff
- Kitchen staff both early morning before site opening times and delivering offsite
- Admin staff in early ahead of site opening times
- Staff working on site late
- Residential night waking officer
- Staff working off site such as home visits or working from home
- Staff following late meetings when others have left site
- Outreach service staff making home visits
- Staff working at offsite provisions such as Project Search and ST2

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership / Manager Responsibilities

- Ensure that this policy and all other relevant policies and procedures are disseminated to staff
- Identify all staff who are lone workers, based on recognised definitions
- Provide safe systems of work for all staff.
- Ensure that there are appropriate security systems in place to secure the building.
- Provide security devices for members of staff when they are working in the office or out in the community, if assessed as appropriate.

- Ensure that a proper lone working risk assessment is conducted (in consultation with the relevant staff) to ensure that all risks from lone working are identified and that proper control measures have been introduced to minimise, or mitigate the risks before staff enter a lone working situation
- During one-to-one sessions, discuss the control measures that are in place to ensure they are still adequate or discuss amendments.
- Identify any training needs and ensure these are met.
- Set up an adequate system for recording home and out of office visits. Ensure this is kept up to date daily, for example: staff reporting to the office; their location and general movements for the day, where this is required as part of the risk assessment.
- Ensure systems are agreed on how to raise the alarm and copies of the procedures are given to all relevant staff.
- Ensure that anyone who cannot raise the alarm is not left alone.
- Ensure that during induction all procedures are discussed, a copy of relevant information is obtained, and a training plan is agreed by both the staff member and the manager.
- Ensure that the staff members are suitable to be left working alone.
- Ensure that your procedures allow for lone workers to request additional support when they feel vulnerable.
- Discuss this policy on a regular basis during team meetings, and especially if an incident has occurred.
- Provide practical support when needed.
- Report any incidents to the school leader.
- Record and monitor all accidents and incidents and report findings to the school leader.
- Where someone has been assaulted, ensure that the individual is properly debriefed, undergoes a physical assessment, any injuries are documented, and they receive access to appropriate post incident support

Staff Responsibilities

Staff members have a duty of care for themselves and anyone else who could be affected by their actions. Therefore, they have a responsibility to ensure that they:

- Are aware of and follow all policies or procedures.
- Plan to minimise risk.
- Are fully aware of the risks when working alone and comply with risk assessment.
- Do not put themselves in potential avoidable danger.
- Ensure that they have made themselves aware of the nearest place of safety.
- Be aware of the on-site security procedures.
- Ensure that access is available to personal alarms/mobile phones or some form of personal communication.
- They should seek advice from their line manager, action guidance, procedures and instruction to avoid putting themselves or their colleagues at risk
- Must report all incidents where safety was compromised including 'near misses' to enable appropriate follow up action to be taken
- It is the employee's responsibility to attend any training specific to them, requested by their manager.

Risk Management

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment will be written for all roles where someone undertakes lone working, where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong. The person writing the risk assessment should consider all appropriate areas.

Risk Assessments should be in place for all anticipated risks and should be reviewed on a regular basis, especially if there is a change in situation, a near miss has occurred or an accident or incident has taken place.

Risks Associated with Violence – Red file protocol

The Health and Safety Executive's definition of work-related violence is: 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work'.

Below are some indicators that may make violence more likely, and should be taken into account in staff risk assessments. Staff may need to consider if the people they are providing a service could:

- Threaten violence
- Be a menace with weapons
- Bear grudges
- Feel victimised
- Harbour a grievance
- Suffer from mental health issues
- Have a dependency on drugs or alcohol
- Associate with violent people

At Maple Haven, this is most likely to affect lone workers who make home visits

As such we have put in place the Red File protocol. This allows a colleague to call for help in a way that would not be immediately apparent to someone with them and safeguard them from risk. It is a safeguarding measure that triggers a series of actions designed to extract the staff member from an escalating situation where they do not feel safe.

Prohibited lone working activities

There are some high-risk situations where lone working is illegal or may be considered inappropriate e.g.

- Confined space working
- Work on live electricity supply
- Working at height, depth or near water

- Oxygen deficiency or explosive atmospheres
- Emotive or potentially violent reactive situations.

Control Measures

Listed in the sections below are various control measures that can be put into place to reduce the risk to staff when working alone. Not all measures will be applicable as circumstances vary in different situations; therefore, the controls need to be re-evaluated for each individual occasion to ensure that the correct measures are in place to reduce the risk to its lowest level. Staff need to consider the person or persons that they may be visiting or attending to alone, and the risks involved in each situation.

- Buildings are required to be secure when staff are lone working.
- Staff must not arrange on site meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working. All meetings must be arranged during occupancy times or when there is more than one member of staff on site for the duration of the meeting.
- Late meetings must finish promptly and not leave one member of staff alone on site.
- Staff must not approach, or let into the buildings, unauthorised persons when lone working.

Communication

Staff are advised to:

- Avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.
- Sign in and off the site using electronic entry system
- Always carry a mobile phone when lone working.
- Let someone know you are coming into work, how long you expect to be and when you are leaving.
- Comply with fire evacuation procedures and attend fire assembly points, ensuring
- that you are cleared to leave the site in the event of an incident.

Emergency procedures

If a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone/ school land line phone to contact the School Leader/Deputy School leader/Member of Site Team. Please ensure that you have access to contact numbers and these can be found on the School Emergency Plan. All lone working staff must be aware of where the School Emergency Plan can be found as it provides contact information relevant to a wide range of emergency scenarios and protocols of how to address them.

Training

Depending upon the staff member's job role, a Training Plan targeting relevant Lone Working needs should be prepared and introduced through induction. This should cover all aspects of lone working and ensure that the staff member is able to safeguard their welfare whilst alone on premises. All new staff who will be lone workers will read 'Protecting Lone Workers- How to manage the risks of working alone' HSE.

First Aid Requirements:

First aid for travelling remote and lone workers: employers are responsible for meeting the first aid needs of their employees working away from the main site. The assessment of first aid needs should determine whether those who travel long distances or are frequently mobile should carry a personal first-aid box; and whether employees should be issued with personal communicators/mobile phones.

Reporting of Accidents and Incidents:

- Any accidents, incidents or near misses must be recorded in the accident book.
- If an accident happens and causes either a major injury or the loss of over 3-days work or unable to carry out normal duties for over 3-days, then a report must be completed by the Health and Safety Lead in accordance with Reporting of Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995.
- Specific note must be made in the report of how the Lone Working policy has been applied and adhered to.

- The school leader is to be informed of any significant incident including involving violence, verbal abuse, physical assault and property damage.

Monitoring and Reviewing:

All accidents, incidents or near misses should be logged and monitored by Site Team of the school. The Site Team should then be looking for trends and seeing if a review should be carried out on any of the Risk Assessments due to the outcomes. These should also be reported back to the school leader, so that they are aware of any situations that may have arisen and reported to Governors as appropriate. The effectiveness of this policy will be determined by the analysis of adverse incident reports raised in response to lone worker safety issues.

Monitoring of stress and well-being for lone workers

Lone working can cause work related stress and affect people's mental health. It is important that lone workers receive proper support and have good relationships with other workers.

Managers will ensure that there are systems of support in place that enable direct contact with lone workers so that they can recognise signs of stress as early as possible.

Lone workers are encouraged to read the stress management policy. All employees of Maple Haven School can access additional support through the employee assistance programme.