



Lone Working Policy 2021

St Laurence's Primary School

Definition of Lone Working

The purpose of this guidance is to help the school protect the safety of staff who work alone unsupervised, namely those people who work out of sight and hearing range of someone who could assist directly in the event of an incident or illness. This could include people who carry out visits externally or staff working late within the school.

The fact that someone works away from sources of support must not mean that their health or safety is placed at greater risk than someone else who does not work alone.

Lone workers face the same types of hazards as other workers, yet the control measures chosen to prevent these hazards may need to be slightly different because of their isolation.

Examples of hazards associated with lone working are:-

- violence and aggression against the member of staff
- the outbreak of fire
- accidents and health emergencies affecting the member of staff
- inadequate provision of rest, hygiene and welfare facilities
- travelling

Due to the variety of risks affecting lone workers this guidance should be read in conjunction with the other potentially relevant Handbook sections, for example Fire Safety, Violence at Work, First Aid, Manual Handling.

Restrictions on Lone Working

Four types of work must not be carried out by a Lone Worker –

- Work at height e.g. on a ladder or scaffold
- Work in a confined space e.g. in a manhole
- Work at or near exposed live electricity conductors
- Work in the health and social sector with unpredictable client behaviours and situations.

Permissible Types of Lone Working

Generally speaking there are three occasions when lone working occurs: -

- People who work in a room separated from other occupied areas of the premises
- People who work away from their normal workplace e.g. a member of staff who visits a pupil's home
- People who work alone in the premises or outside of school hours e.g.; caretaker

School policy does not allow teaching staff to work in school after 6pm or during weekends and holidays.

Assessing the Risks of Lone Working

The establishment should firstly identify all the lone workers, their tasks and the locations in which the work is done.

The education establishment has to then determine whether the planned work can be done safely by a lone worker or not, i.e. Carry out a risk assessment.

To answer whether the risks of the job can be adequately controlled, three aspects of the planned work need to be addressed: -

- The lone worker
- The task
- The environment

The Lone Worker

Is the person medically able to work alone? For example, is the person epileptic, or is their hearing impaired to a level which they could not hear a fire alarm? Persons with medical conditions may be able to work alone if the appropriate controls are put into place.

Is the person experienced in conducting the work or likely to need advice or supervision from a colleague to do the work safely, especially if they are using machinery?

Is the person sufficiently experienced and adequately trained to undertake lone working?

The Task

Does the task involve work that could injure the lone worker, for example, work with electrical equipment? Or does the task require manual handling that poses a significant risk?

Does the task require the lone worker to speak face to face with members of the public e.g. the parents of a pupil, and does this run the risk of physical violence or verbal abuse?

The Environment

Is the lone worker able to summon help in the event of an emergency, e.g. fire, assault or medical emergency?

Does the environment allow for adequate supervision of the lone worker? The level of supervision will depend on the lone worker's level of competence and needs to be determined as part of the risk assessment.

Does the environment allow for communication with the lone worker? Can their safety be visually checked on a regular basis or can they be phoned on a regular basis to check upon their well being?

The answers to these questions will be different depending on the nature of the work, the person doing the work and the location of the work. So the measures chosen to eliminate or diminish these hazards will be a different mix for each lone worker situation.

Training

Lone workers must have-

- Adequate information, instruction and training so they can recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks of lone work.
- Training in how to implement risk control measures for the task
- Training in what to do in foreseeable emergencies such as fire

The school Health and Safety Policy provides personal safety training which is made available to lone workers.

Risk Assessments for Lone Working

No one risk assessment can cover the variety of lone working conditions. However, broadly speaking, there are two lone working situations common within education.

Risk Assessments for Lone Workers within a Building

The school will include the following in their assessment –

- Who will check the lone worker, how and when will they do this?
- Has the lone worker been adequately trained to use the equipment/machinery?
- Is the lone worker able to lock doors to keep out intruders whilst allowing them to exit easily?
- Are routes outside well lit with any vegetation well trimmed back?
- Are there parking facilities close to the building?
- Is there an agreed means of raising the alarm and an agreed response to it?
- Does the lone worker know where the first aid is and have easy access to it?
- Does the lone worker know what to do in the event of a fire?
- Does the lone worker know who to contact in an emergency and have their contact details?

Risk Assessments for Lone Workers at Unfamiliar off Site Venues eg. Home Visits

Three aspects of this work need to be considered; how to safely get there, how to safely conduct the task when there and what to do after the visit.

The school will include the following in their assessment –

- Could the meeting be carried out at the school controlled by the employer
- Has the lone worker seen all relevant information on the client prior to the visit? This may include information from other relevant agencies e.g. social services and will allow the lone worker to decide whether the visit can be safely undertaken.
- Is there a system for home visits which is understood by the lone worker and on which they have been trained
- Lone workers must have a written record at school which includes; the address(es) that they will visit, the names of the people they will visit, times of arrival and departure from the venues.
- Has the lone worker been trained in how to recognise and de-escalate potentially violent situations.

Getting to the visit venue

- Has the route to the meeting place been planned?
- Has the visit been planned to take place in daylight hours where possible? - Is there parking near the venue which is in the open and well lit?

At the visit venue

- Is there a means of communication and agreed code words that can be used in emergencies
- Is there a system for regularly checking the well being of the lone worker

After the visit

- Lone workers should report to base at the end of their visit
- An agreed procedure should be available to follow if the lone worker does not check in after the completion of the visit.

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