



New Forest Small School

LONE WORKING POLICY

Member of Staff Responsible	School owner
Regularity of Review	2 yearly

RATIONALE AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1 Employers have a general duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees whilst they are at work and to those who may be affected by their activities.
- 1.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Health and Safety at work act 1974.

Employers have a duty to:

- assess the risks to health and safety
 - apply the principles of prevention to protect health and safety
 - ensure employees are capable of carrying out their tasks
 - provide health and safety training as necessary
 - take extra steps to protect young people
 - tell employees about the risks to their health and safety
 - take the necessary preventative and protective measures
- 1.3 Other aspects of lone working that give cause for concern are sudden illness, security breaches, incidents that cause injury to the person. Some employees are inevitably placed in a position where they do not always know in advance that they could face a potentially dangerous situation, particularly when they are dealing with someone accessing our services for the first time, so it can be difficult to make the decision not to work alone. It is essential however that employees do not work alone when there is a known risk or threat to a solitary worker. In those cases they should always be accompanied by another member of staff or other suitable arrangements must be made that will ensure their safety is maintained.

PRACTICE

- 2.1 The best way to determine whether someone working alone will be safe in their job is to carry out a risk assessment of their planned activities. Once a protocol for lone working has been adopted within a departmental team it must be followed precisely by everyone involved so as to maintain continuity.
- 2.2 Where a risk assessment has identified a work-related hazard the first task should be to try and eliminate it at source by avoiding it completely or doing it another way. Where this is not possible control measures should be introduced to minimise the risk

- 2.3 There may, in some lone working situations, be some residual element of personal danger despite all the best efforts to eliminate or minimise risks shown in the assessment. In those cases it will be necessary for us to introduce preventative and protective control measures to further reduce those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 2.4 Such control measures may include instruction, training, supervision or protective equipment and will require the development of robust monitoring procedures for employees.
- 2.5 HSE recommends a five step approach should be followed for effective risk assessments:
- look for the hazards
 - decide who might be harmed and how
 - evaluate the risks and decide what needs to be done
 - record the results of the assessment in an action plan
 - review and revise the assessment and actions taken
- 2.6 The risk assessment should identify those areas where we are not doing enough to address problems and those where problems might arise.
- 2.7 A lone working risk assessment should include:
- the degree of isolation of the employee
 - the known or expected features and layout of the intended workplace
 - any previous knowledge of potential behavioural problems amongst client groups or their family and friends including known threats of violence
 - particular risks to women, young or older persons, or people who may be vulnerable on account of a protected characteristic (e.g. disability or gender confirmation status) working alone
 - the nature and degree of exposure to any biological or chemical agents
 - the form, range and use of any work equipment and the way in which it is handled
 - the degree and type of supervision that is required
 - the method to be adopted for obtaining assistance if required
 - monitoring arrangements for lone workers
 - the extent of health and safety training provided, or found to be necessary
- 2.8 The state of health of employees must be a consideration when making arrangements for them to work alone.
- 2.9 There are some high risk activities where at least one other person may need to be present and the assessment should indicate whether the job can be adequately controlled by one person.
- 2.10 If, as a result of the conclusions of the risk assessment, there is a significant risk to employees carrying out a specific task or undertaking a workplace activity alone, the Headteacher must prohibit them from doing it and make arrangements to provide help or back-up.
- 2.11 Once risk assessments have been carried out, and lone workers have been identified, the risks to employees should be categorised as being low, medium or high. Control measures should reflect these categories of risk as follows:

Low Risk employees might need –

- personal safety awareness training,
- simple control measures such as a booking in/out system.

Medium Risk employees might need –

- personal safety awareness training
- additional training in handling aggression/violence
- inclusion in a monitoring system
- means of emergency contact (eg. discrete alarm or programmed mobile telephone)

High Risk employees should not be carrying out their duties alone.

PROCEDURES

3.1 The Headteachers are expected to make suitable arrangements so that all employees receive appropriate induction training immediately they commence employment. New employees, and particularly young persons, should not commence any duties or workplace activities unless they are suitably supervised by a competent person.

3.2 All employees who will be lone working must receive instruction and have a full understanding of the lone working arrangements that apply to them. Such instructions should indicate the limits of what can/cannot be done while working alone. The level of training should be appropriate to the needs identified in risk assessments. Records should be kept by the Headteacher to show what training individual staff members have received together with any outstanding training needs they might identify.

3.3 All employees have a general duty to take care of their own health, safety and welfare and to ensure that they don't put themselves or others at risk.

Employees must cooperate with managers by:

- attending relevant training courses
- using recommended control measures, such as safe systems of work, which have been designed for their safety
- reporting any concerns regarding their health and safety or equipment to their manager
- being a supportive member of the team they work in
- reporting any medical conditions or health problems (temporary or otherwise) that could affect their ability to work safely
- reporting all accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences in line with departmental procedures.

3.4 The Headteacher must provide an appropriate level of supervision where any work-related activity or task has been categorised as lone working and the risk assessment indicates a need for supervision. The higher the risk the greater the level of supervision may need to be. In all cases the person appointed to provide supervision must be competent in all aspects of that supervision. Although lone workers cannot always receive constant supervision, their supervisor can provide guidance in difficult situations, so they should make themselves available, so far as reasonably practicable, by using telephone or similar contact arrangements.

3.5 Supervisors will need to monitor by such means as:

- observing employees when working alone to check good practice
- making arrangements for keeping in contact by telephone
- using a monitoring system that meets the needs of the situation
- having a check that the employee has returned to their base or home on completion of their task

MANAGEMENT

4.1 To comply with this guidance procedure the following standards must be met. Managers must ensure that:

- they or other suitable persons are competent to carry out the range of assessments needed
- they nominate a staff member who is suitably trained to take a lead on lone working issues
- they carry out risk assessments to identify potentially hazardous situations where employees might work alone
- they identify any potential signs of lone working problems by monitoring incidents in the workplace and gaining employee feedback
- they assess the likelihood of harm occurring to an individual through their activities at work where they might work alone
- they decide whether possible control measures are within their area of influence and if they are, take action, (eg. reorganisation of task where appropriate) and if not, inform their line manager of the problems being experienced and needing action
- appropriate information, instruction and training is provided, as required, for all people who need to take action to protect themselves in a lone working situation
- they ensure that any employees who work alone are aware of their own responsibilities with regard to their own health and safety
- they provide any protective equipment that may be necessary for safe lone working
- there is adequate support for employees, so far as is reasonably practicable, during periods of lone working
- they make use of monitoring system for lone workers, ensuring everyone participates properly
- they develop response plans to manage alarm calls/emergencies (eg. missing persons)
- they evaluate the effectiveness of any control measures put in place to manage lone working and review them whenever working practices change, or after a serious incident involving a lone worker
- when they are unsure about the nature or results of a risk assessment they seek help and advice from the Headteacher.

MONITORING

The Headteacher will meet with the Site Assistant to review the instances where staff are working alone on the site. All staff will sign in during holiday times should they wish to work in school. The effectiveness of this policy and any breaches of the policy are reported to the Headteacher on an annual basis.