



Thameside Primary School: Lone Worker Policy

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Policy reviewed by:	Sophie Greenaway
Key Changes:	• Updated lone working arrangements to introduce a consistent school-led procedure for staff working alone on site. • Added clear check-in, check-out and missed-contact procedures. • Updated associated cross-references and risk assessment documentation.

Introduction

The Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary.

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 also state that employers must ensure that employees, working in the premises of other organisations, receive comprehensible information on the risks and safety measures at that site.

The Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 place a general responsibility on employers to provide appropriate first aid facilities. Lone workers may be able to use a first aid box or phone for help if any injury is minor, however if the risk of serious injury is foreseeable other arrangements must be made.

Definition of Lone Worker

“Any work which is undertaken in isolation from another member of staff. The term includes those who might work only for a short period of time each day on their own and those who work whole shifts unaccompanied on a regular basis” (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)

They can be found in fixed establishments where:

- Only one person works on the premises e.g. the caretaker, headteacher, school business manager
- Staff that work separately from others e.g. in schools (out of hours)
- Staff that may work outside normal office hours, e.g. cleaners
- Alternatively, mobile workers working away from their base eg teachers on home visit



People at Risk

At Thameside Primary School people at risk may include anyone who works beyond the times the caretaker opens and locks the school (7.30am and 6:00pm unless cleaners are still on the premises) and anyone who comes into school alone during the school holidays. This is most likely to be the Head, School Business Manager and Caretaker (who are key holders). Any member of staff planning to lone work needs to consider the associated risks; for the Lone Working risk assessment template, see Appendix 4.

Hazards

These may include:

- A potential for violence or threatening behaviour towards an individual carrying cash or high value equipment
- The use of machinery, electrical or other equipment or chemicals
- Working in remote areas, particularly after dark and outside normal working hours.
- Encountering intruders
- Working at heights, using ladders and lifting
- Competency, ability and medical condition of the individual

This is not an exhaustive list, individuals will be expected to report all situations to the Headteacher or health and safety representative which leave them open to any health and safety issues, the risk can then be assessed and control measures applied where necessary. Through the risk assessment process, existing control measures will be assessed for their effectiveness.

Control measures

- All staff must use the in/ out board so that staff working late are identified
- All staff leaving after 6:00pm, or whenever the caretaker locks the building, must report to the School Business Manager, Head or Deputy as they leave so that the last person on site is aware that they are lone working
- At the end of evening Governing Body meetings, a governor or the Deputy should remain with the Head while the building is secured
- Staff wishing to work during school closures must agree dates and times beforehand with the Head, ensuring that the caretaker and/ or school business manager is on site or have been informed



- Lone workers must ensure the front door is secure and the key pad is used to lock the building
- Money should not be counted by lone workers
- When taking money to the bank the employee must vary the day, time of day and route and must carry money in a bag that is opaque and secure if possible
- When working alone away from the main building, the caretaker must make his whereabouts known to either the school business manager, admin staff or the Head and advise them on his return
- The caretaker must adhere to the 'working at heights' advice when working alone
- Staff on home visits e.g. Foundations stage staff or the Family Hub Lead, should visit in pairs (see Appendix 1)
- Lone workers should carry a mobile phone – school phones can be made available for staff without their own
- Lone workers should be aware of the siting of first aid kits
- Key holders attending an alarm call out should wait for the security firm to attend if possible. If the alarm needs to be disabled, they should only enter the building if there is no sign of a break in and it can be reasonably assumed that the alarm is a false one. Please see appendix 3.
- Staff should not be alone in a car with a pupil without a risk assessment and prior agreement with the head teacher and parents
- For staff travelling alone by cars please see appendix 3.
- Cleaners should work within the terms and conditions set by the contractor.

Lone Working on School Premises

Where a member of staff is required or permitted to work alone on the school site, appropriate arrangements must be in place to reduce the risks associated with lone working.

Before commencing lone working, the member of staff must:

1. Ensure that a member of the Senior Leadership Team, School Business Manager or other designated person is aware that they are working alone, including their expected arrival and departure times.



2. Ensure that the designated person knows where they will be working and how they can be contacted.
3. Carry a mobile phone and ensure that it is charged and readily available.
4. Follow the school's agreed check-in and check-out arrangements.
5. Ensure that external doors and other access points are secure where appropriate.
6. Avoid undertaking high-risk activities while working alone. This includes working at height, using hazardous equipment or substances, or undertaking any task where immediate assistance may be required.
7. Not enter or remain in an area where there are signs of an intruder or other immediate danger. The member of staff should leave the premises, where safe to do so, and contact the appropriate emergency services or designated school contact from a place of safety.
8. In the event of a fire or other emergency, leave the building immediately by the safest available route and contact the emergency services where necessary.

Check-in and Check-out Arrangements

The lone worker must confirm with the designated person when they have arrived on site and when they have safely finished working and left the premises.

If a lone worker fails to make contact at the agreed time, the designated person should:

1. Attempt to contact the lone worker by telephone.
2. If contact cannot be made and there is a concern for the individual's immediate safety, take appropriate action based on the known circumstances.
3. Where there is an immediate or significant concern for the safety of the lone worker, contact the emergency services.
4. Record and report any incident or concern in accordance with the school's relevant procedures.

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Appendix 1

Guidance for home visits

- All home visits will be undertaken by staff working in pairs e.g. teacher plus early years' practitioner. Under no circumstances will home visits be undertaken by lone workers
- Parents should volunteer for home visits. No parent will be visited without their consent. There must be written confirmation of appointments.
- Before visits take place a schedule of times and addresses must be drawn up and approved by the Headteacher. This list must be drawn up with information known about the families in mind. A copy of this list must be given to the admin staff before the visits take place. Lists should record the following information:
 - Name of child, home address and telephone number
 - Approximate arrival time and estimated length of visit
 - Mobile phone numbers of both members of staff
 - The driver's car make, model and registration number
- Ensure your phone is fully charged
- Notify the school office of any change to the plan
- Report in at regular intervals (in person or by phone)
- Always wear Thameside Primary School identity lanyard
- Don't go into a home if you feel insecure
- Leave if you are worried about your own safety or if you see signs of illegal activity. Notify the school and the police
- Where there are large dogs, parents will be asked to remove them to the garden or behind a closed door before you enter the houses
- Staff should not be left alone with a child
- Please read appendix 2 re travelling by car



Appendix 2

Guidance for staff travelling by car

- The following list of 'do's and don'ts' is intended to assist you, not so much in your role as a driver, but as an individual who may be at risk of assault or theft, particularly when driving a car or minibus without passengers or a second person.
- Always carry an up to date map and know where you are going before setting off. This avoids the need to ask directions from strangers
- Never give lifts to strangers.
- Beware of other drivers signalling faults on the vehicle to you. This may be a ploy to get you to pull over. Drive on slowly until it is safe to stop and check yourself.
- If you think you are being followed, do not make eye contact. Slow down, lock your door and shut your windows. Drive to a police station or a busy area with lots of people.
- Keep the driver and passenger doors locked in town, especially when travelling alone. When on open roads, unlock these doors so that in the event of an accident, it would be easier for helpers to get into the vehicle if you were unable to open the door.
- Where possible, travel on main or well-used roads and by day. If you have to make a journey after dark, try to tell someone of the destination and estimated time of arrival.
- Try not to park in poorly lit streets, and always as close to your destination as possible. In a multi-storey car park, find a place close to the exit, near the ground level and away from pillars. When returning, have your keys ready so that you can get in quickly.
- Never put a bag, handbag or valuable goods on the passenger seat when travelling in town, you could have it snatched at traffic lights.
- If you are a woman driver, try not to advertise this. Put bags, etc out of sight before vacating the vehicle.
- Always lock the vehicle. When returning to it, have your keys ready. Check inside the vehicle, especially in the back and leave as soon as possible.
- When returning, look around the vehicle from a suitable distance to ensure that no one is hiding behind it.
- If the vehicle does start to play up, stop in a busy, well-lit area, near a phone box.
- Never try to make it home if it involves travelling on a motorway or a major road or in the country.



- If you see another driver in difficulty, do not stop. Drive to the nearest telephone and report what you have seen to the police.

Appendix 3

Guidance for key holders attending alarm calls after hours

1 Background

Most building/establishments are fitted with burglar alarms. A keyholder is usually nominated to attend call outs for that establishment. The police will not automatically attend an alarm if there is a history of false calls. The main causes of false alarms are user error or electronic faults. Assume that the police will not respond to an alarm at your establishment.

Thameside Primary School has a security company that should attend alarm calls. The key holder should wait for this company where possible before entering the building.

2 Guidance for attending an alarm

- Do not attend an alarm call out alone, where reasonably practicable.
- Do not enter the building if you are alone.
- Look out for corroborative evidence of intruders.
- Take necessary action; e.g. call police.

3 What to Take

- Identification of who you are, for example an employee badge. This helps if police do attend the scene or are later called to the scene.
- A torch of a reasonable size and power.
- A basic plan or diagram of the building. This does not have to be a very detailed site plan but it would be useful to show:

-Basement areas;

-Entry/exit points for people and vehicles;

-Areas where computers/valuables are located.

This is useful for the police if they are required to attend the scene. If possible, for purely practical reasons, laminate the plan or place in a plastic wallet pack.

-A mobile phone is useful to summon assistance in an emergency without having to enter the building.

4 Risk Assessments

On attending the site key holders must be mindful of and protect themselves against the worst-case scenario, that is, an intruder who may still be on site. Initial arrival should be to the front of the building main entrance. If an intruder has not already left on hearing the alarm, your arrival may disturb them. Your main priority is your personal safety. If you disturb an intruder, attempt to



withdraw to a safe point. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO APPREHEND. If possible, and if safe to do so, observe the intruder. Any details will be useful for the police.

Once on site, proceed with extreme caution. Your priority is to systematically check for corroborative evidence of an intruder. Any search of the premises, if you are accompanied, should be carried out together.

5 What to Check

- Suspicious/unfamiliar vehicles parked in the immediate area.
- The outside of the building for sign of forced entry; e.g. broken glass, prised doors, windows, etc.
- Evidence of flash lights being used or other lights left on within the building.
- Noise from within the building or outside.
- If at any stage there is evidence of an intruder, IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAW and contact the police. Where reasonably practicable, do not enter the building to use the telephone. If necessary, drive to a nearby call box and make an emergency call to the police, via 999 system.
- Where there is no evidence of an intruder from the outside, enter the building:
- Check the inside of the premises to eliminate signs of a forced entry.
- Switch on appropriate lights and proceed to re-set the alarm.
- If evidence of an intruder is discovered, withdraw and contact the police.
- Try not to disturb the scene.



Appendix 4

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR:	LONE WORKING working in school alone / in isolated locations	
Establishment: Thameside Primary School	Assessment by: Headteacher	Date: July 2024

Hazard / Risk	Who is at Risk?	How can the hazards cause harm?	Normal Control Measures	Are Normal Control Measures Y/N/NA	
				In Place	Adequate
Lone working working in school alone / in isolated locations	Staff Colleagues	Accident / injury, delayed assistance in emergency Physical assault / verbal abuse Cuts / abrasions, muscular skeletal and other physical injuries	- Only agreed risk tasks to be undertaken, Avoid high risk activities (e.g. working at height); - Mobile phone available - Notify head teacher / manager of intention to work outside regular hours. - Reduce time spent working alone so far as is reasonably practicable. - Ensure a colleague, partner, friend etc is aware you are working alone and who to contact in the event of overdue contact. - Notify staff on site of location / estimated duration of task if working on site remote from others. - Adequate security in place. - Access to site controlled e.g. through coded doors etc. - Use of visitor badges / signing in book - Ensure all external doors / windows secured to prevent unauthorised access. - Do not allow access to unknown callers. - External lighting adequate - Key holders should be strictly controlled and numbers kept to a minimum.		



Additional Control Measures <i>(to take account of local/individual circumstances including changes such as working practices, equipment, staffing levels).</i>	Action by Whom <i>(list the name of the person/people who have been designated to conduct actions)</i>	Action by When <i>(set timescales for the completion of the actions – remember to prioritise them)</i>	Action Completed <i>(record the actual date of completion for each action listed)</i>	Residual Risk Rating
Consideration given to staff at increased risk i.e. new or expectant mothers, inexperienced staff etc. and lone working activities avoided where practicable.				
DATE OF REVIEW: <i>July 2024</i>	COMMENTS: <i>(Record any comments reviewer wishes to make. Including recommendations for future reviews)</i> <i>None at this time.</i>			

RESIDUAL RISK RATING	ACTION REQUIRED
VERY HIGH (VH) Strong likelihood of fatality / serious injury occurring	The activity must not take place at all. You must identify further controls to reduce the risk rating.
HIGH (H) Possibility of fatality/serious injury occurring	You must identify further controls to reduce the risk rating. Seek further advice, e.g. from your H&S Team
MEDIUM (M) Possibility of significant injury or over 3 day absence occurring	If it is not possible to lower risk further, you will need to consider the risk against the benefit. Monitor risk assessments at this rating more regularly and closely.
LOW (L) Possibility of minor injury only	No further action required.