The Dales School
North Yorkshire

Health & Safety Lone Working policy and procedures Appendix 6

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Health & Safety Guidance
Lone Worker
Appendix 6

1. General Statement

This School recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of its employees whilst working alone. For this reason, we have devised a policy which sets out our approach in both identifying these risks and adequately managing them. Any questions regarding the operation of this policy, should be addressed to the Headteacher.

2. Definition

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 (1) during normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace, (2) when working outside normal business hours. (3) when working in an isolated location offsite e.g. home visits.

3. 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).

4. Risk Assessment

Our risk assessments will cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed to be), 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 will 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.
- **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.

5. Control Measures and procedures

Identified regular lone workers

- NYC Cleaners - they should make their line managers aware of their hours and have a plan in place in event of emergency. It is recommended that family members or line managers have the contact details of at least one keyholder

- Site Manager – family member should be aware and have contact details of SBM

In practical terms, key holders are the personnel who are most likely to be undertaking lone working and should consider the following each and every time they undertake lone working:

Risk of violence:

- All 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. Where late meetings are conducted, staff should consider relocating their cars to the main car park, so not having to walk in dark areas alone.
- Staff are required not to approach or let into the buildings unauthorised persons when lone working.
- Staff attending alarm activations must carry out an outside check of the premises to ascertain if entry has been gained before entering the school. If there is sign of an entry police support must be gained before entering the school.

Communication:

- Staff are required to avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.
- Staff are required to carry a mobile phone or two way radio at all times when lone working.
- 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 leaving site. All staff lone working must comply with the schools fire evacuation procedures and attend the fire assembly points, ensuring that staff are cleared to leave the site.

Non-keyholders lone working

Occasionally, other staff may be affected by lone working and will need to be aware of the above procedures, eg during the school holidays, the Site Manager, or other keyholder may unlock the site but then may not be on site at all times. On these occasions, staff must:

- Have agreed with LMT that it is appropriate for them to attending site during the holiday period to enable them to risk assess planned works.
- Liaise with the Site Manager prior to attending the site to ensure that the school will be open.
- Sign in and out of school.
- Have the keyholders number in their phone in case of emergencies.

A further example of lone working for a non-keyholder, may be at the end of the school day when a member of staff may choose to work late when a key holder is not present. In the event of this, staff should consider the above but also be aware that their swipe access only operates between the hours of **7am and 6.30pm**, so are in danger of being locked inside the school.

Working outside of these hours is discouraged and can only take place when approval from a member of LMT has been provided, so that necessary safeguarding measures can be taken to reduce risk.

Offsite working, such as Outreach provision or visiting a family house, is also considered lone working and those staff should follow the same principles of safety. In addition the following safety measures should be considered:

- Ensuring that school knows where they are going and estimated arrival and departure times. Where a member of staff is due to go straight home following a visit, particularly for one off visits, they should phone the office to advise that they have left and now heading home.
- Ensure that their mobile phone is charged
- When in the property, ensure that they know how to get out and where practical position themselves close the exit so that can make a quick egress if necessary
- To complete a dynamic risk assessment when attending the property and not to enter if they feel unsafe for any reason.
- That they follow best practice at all times and only undertake tasks for which they are trained and feel confident to do.
- That they have researched the location of where they are going to avoid getting lost on route
- To ensure that they have vehicle business insurance
- To support a safer and rapid egress, where staff are travelling by car, they should reverse park.
- To report any concerns/accidents/incident they have and take immediate actions to keep themselves self.

First aid:
For those working on our premises, first aid kits can be found in the office.

Lone workers must assess their ability to access a first aid kit as it may be necessary for them to provide their own.

Emergency procedures:
In the event that a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone/ school phone as provided. The main point of contact with those allocated phones is the staff member's nominated person and emergency services.

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

6. Unacceptable Lone Working

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

- **Any working at height.**
- **Manual handling of heavy or bulky items.**

- **Transport of injured persons must always be undertaken by more than one member of staff.**
- **Except for maintenance, access to the swimming pool area is strictly prohibited to all staff and pupils.**

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.