



THE PILGRIM SCHOOL

Lone Working

POLICY

School Lead: School Business Manager

Governor Lead: Resources

Last reviewed: 5th October 2017

Date of next review: October 2018

Signed by Chair of Governors: _____ Date: _____

Signed by Chair of Committee: _____ Date: _____

LONE WORKING POLICY

The purpose of this document is to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. This includes a duty of care to reduce, as far as reasonably practicable, the risks associated with lone working both on and off the school premises.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

This can be split into two main groups

- People who work in fixed establishments e.g. staff working after normal hours.
- Remote Workers working away from fixed base e.g. 1-1 teachers, RSOs etc.

There is no general legal prohibition on lone working, however the employer must identify the hazards, assess the risks involved, and put measures in place to avoid or control the risks. If the risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, then other arrangements need to be put in place.

Copies of the following sections of Lincolnshire County Council's Health and Safety Manual are available to staff on request:

Working Alone
Violence at Work

A copy of the Suzy Lamplugh booklet 'Working Safely in other people's homes' is made available to teachers and support staff working in the community.

You may also wish to refer to the school's policies for Drug Incidents, Critical Incidents and Health and Safety.

Finally, in Appendix 1, there is a Lone Worker Protection Aide Memoir to which staff should refer before any Lone Working is undertaken.

NB: In order to protect staff, no teaching sessions or meetings should take place in the home of a member of staff. No teaching should occur out of normal term and school day times. To disregard this may invalidate insurance.

The school works proactively to reduce the need for lone working through the use of the school's main bases for teaching sessions and meetings. Only where it is clear from medical evidence that the child or young person is unable to leave the home should visits and teaching take place there.

Principles

Staff should not put themselves at personal or professional risk as a result of doing their job. However, from time to time, staff will need to make professional judgements about the wisdom of particular situations and it is important they feel able to do this taking account of the context in which we work. Staff should feel confident that professional behaviour would have the support of managers and governors of the school. If in doubt, seek the advice of colleagues (e.g. Case Managers, teachers from the child's own school or health staff).

The guidelines for assessing risk below should be followed.

ASSESSMENT OF RISK

Employees involved in lone working must have access to all available relevant information in order to make a reasoned judgement of any potential risk.

The following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

- The environment – location, security, access
- The context – nature of the visit, special circumstances, likely outcomes
- The individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk
- Any other special circumstances

Identifying unsafe settings

- Background information should be obtained before any initial visit is arranged and a risk assessment carried out. On receipt of a new referral, any history of challenging behaviour (i.e. a potentially violent parent) will be investigated. A member of the leadership team will contact the school or other professionals who may have had some involvement with the child or young person as part of this risk assessment.
- Any information regarding known triggers must be recorded
- If you feel uncomfortable about making a home visit, arrange with your manager to take a colleague with you. Do not visit unaccompanied if you feel uncertain about the situation.
- If you feel the environment or behaviour you encounter is not appropriate, relay your concerns to the Headteacher and Case Manager.
- Should a member of staff find themselves in an uncomfortable or potentially unsafe situation in a home, they must apply professional judgement. Help may be sought from other adults in the home or it may be preferable to leave the premises.
- In the case of potentially infectious/contagious illnesses, please seek advice from the Headteacher.
- Show identification on first meeting.
- Do **not** enter a house until you know there is another responsible adult present.

At Work Bases

Increasingly, teaching sessions are taking place in a range of alternative settings each of which will require a separate risk assessment by the teacher. The following should be considered:

- There must always be another adult within easy access.
- If in a room alone with a young person, position yourself so that you can see anyone entering the room and ensure you can be seen by others.
- Familiarise yourself with the emergency procedures pertinent to the building.
- Report any health and safety hazards to the agency responsible for the building and to the Headteacher.
- Make yourself aware of the location of the first aid supplies

Incidents and Accidents

Following the Children Act (1989) there has been an increase in young people, particularly those who are distressed or emotionally disturbed, making false accusations against professional staff. It could also happen that parents who are distressed, angry, frustrated or

emotionally fragile could make an accusation or complaint. It is essential to minimise the chance of such accusations.

- The references at the beginning of this policy provide helpful advice on how staff should communicate with pupils and adults and practise effective listening skills.
- If there has been a difficult situation or uncomfortable incident or accident, staff should contact their Case Manager or Headteacher.
- Staff should always write notes after each visit. These serve a number of purposes:
 1. Teaching and learning record
 2. Evidence, if necessary, should a complaint be lodged
 3. Assist reflective practice
 4. Evidence for Performance Management

See the Local Authority policy for Dealing with Accusations against Staff and Volunteers.

Confidentiality

- No information about a pupil or family should be disclosed to anyone without the parent/carer's consent (see exceptions to this in the school's Safeguarding Policy). Parents will be asked to sign a consent form giving permission for professionals to liaise with one another on a 'needs to know' basis.
- Keep pupil records in a safe place – consider accessibility by other parties.
- Be cautious about giving your own personal details (e.g. telephone number) to families/pupils.
- Where there is cause for concern, staff should ensure a colleague knows **where you are, where you are going and what time you intend to return.**
- Assess the risks when travelling to and from outreach venues.

Training and Information

Training to ensure competency is particularly important where assistance is limited, and may be critical to avoid panic reactions in unusual situations.

Lone workers need to be sufficiently experienced to understand the risks and precautions fully. Governors and Head Teachers need to set limits on what can and cannot be done when working alone and staff must be competent to deal with circumstances that should arise.

Personal safety training available to staff lone working covers:

- Advice and guidance not to go into a situation if they feel at risk.
- The use of conflict resolution or defusing techniques. These include being aware of non-verbal communication; how to behave in a non-confrontational way; the importance of empathy; being polite; and listening.
- To be aware of surroundings, your own actions and how others may perceive you.
- Dynamic risk assessments

Conclusion

It is very important to be cautious, sensible and professional while being mindful of the sensitive nature of the pupils and families with whom we work. It is possible to worsen a situation by over dramatising or becoming too formal. Stay relaxed, low key with a positive attitude about recovery and stay outside the dynamics of the family which can be extremely complex. These guidelines should minimise the risks inherent in the work we do.

APPENDIX 1

Lone Worker Protection Aide Memoir

Before any Lone Working Undertaken

All lone working should have a risk assessment, and any staff identified as risk should undertake relevant training.

Head Teachers should hold a record of all lone working staff including photograph, personal details (inc Next of Kin) and vehicle details.

Prior to a visit

Check the following:

- Schools prior experience
- Any other known source of information

Do:

- Let someone know that you are going out.
- When you expect to return
- The location and work to be undertaken, including who you are going to meet.
- How to contact you
- Ensure any lone worker protection procedures are in place and working

Working outside the school

On arrival at the property or in a lone working situation you should undertake a dynamic assessment of the risk this need NOT be documented.

Factors such as unexpected visitors, strange behaviours, layout of the area or any other factors that give rise to your concern

Ensure lone working monitoring systems are not too obvious but readily accessible and operational e.g.
mobile telephones / radios

If you are uncomfortable or have concern for yourself or others safety, use the skills taught (eg. Conflict Resolution skills) to try and diffuse the situation.
If in doubt make an excuse to leave e.g. need to contact school

If you are at risk call for assistance immediately and remove yourself from the area by any safe means.

Contact your Head Teacher /Police (if not already done) / report the incident and raise an immediate violence and aggression report.