

Ashleigh Primary School and Nursery, Wymondham

"We are all stars, Ashleigh makes us shine"



LONE WORKER POLICY

Persons Responsible – Inclusion Manager

Date of Policy: March 2018

Next Review Due: March 2021

Adopted by Full Governing Body

Signed

Date

Chair of Governors

Due consideration has been given to all children/adults/stakeholders with regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Lone Worker Policy

Ashleigh Primary School & Nursery recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of its employees whilst working alone. This policy sets out the governing board's approach in both identifying these risks and adequately managing them. Any questions regarding its operation should be addressed to the Headteacher.

Definition

'Lone working' refers to situations where, in the course of their duties, staff work alone in the school and are physically isolated from colleagues, possibly without immediate access to assistance. Due to the possibility of buildings creating isolated areas, it is possible for a staff member to be 'lone working' with other staff members in the building.

This may occur:

- during normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace
- when working outside normal business hours eg cleaners
- Only one person is working on the premises, e.g. caretakers.
- People work separately from each other, e.g. in different locations.

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).

Risk Assessment

Our risk assessments will cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed to be alone), 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;
- Risk of accusations against staff member, particularly regarding safeguarding issues
- Plant and equipment - 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 workers working alone will be assessed;
- Access and egress - some lone working may require access to locations which are difficult to access or exit. Assessments will consider whether these tasks are suitable to be carried out by one person.

Physical restraint and use of force

In the very unlikely event of being required, this must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in our 'Behaviour Management and Positive Handling Policy', and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort.

Control Measures

In order to manage the risks identified, we have the following control measures:

Risk of violence

- staff are required to lock themselves in the buildings when lone working;
- Meetings or sessions with children will not be held in remote or secluded areas
- staff must not arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working; all meetings must be arranged during school occupancy times or when there is more than one member of staff on site for the duration of the meeting;
- staff are required not to handle cash when lone working;
- late meetings must finish promptly and not leave one member of staff alone on site;
- staff must not approach, or let into the buildings, unauthorised persons when lone working;
- staff should have another adult with them if transporting children in their own vehicle, or in the school minibus
- all staff are required to give 24 hours notice to the Headteacher before lone working, either after hours or through holiday periods; the school will be locked during these periods;
- staff attending alarm activations will only attend either with police support or in pairs. An outside check of the premises must be carried out, 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 advised to:

- avoid lone working where possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group;
- inform another staff member that you are working alone with Child X; and the nature of the work eg involving Thrive or ELSA work. The door should be left open if possible when conducting one-to-one sessions;
- inform another staff member if you are meeting with parents in a room alone, eg for parents' meetings, SEND meetings;
- sign in and off the site;
- have good channels of communication in case of an emergency;
- carry either a mobile phone or school telephone at all times when lone working;
- let someone know you are coming into work, how long you expect to be and when you are leaving;
- comply with fire evacuation procedures and attend fire assembly points, ensuring that you are cleared to leave the site in the event of an incident;
- report any incident or concern, including incidents of verbal abuse, and all incidents where staff feel threatened, to the Senior Leadership Team;

- If a child becomes distressed or angry, the staff member will seek assistance, and it will be reported to a senior colleague, with a record kept of the staff member's concerns;
- Our policy for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in our 'Allegations made against School Staff (NCC) Policy'.

First Aid:

- for those working on our premises, first aid kits can be found in the staffroom and kitchen, and in all classrooms.

Emergency procedures:

- in the event that a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone/ school phone to contact the Headteacher, the staff member's nominated person or the emergency services.
- parents/ carers would normally take their sick child from school to hospital themselves. Staff should normally never transport a child on their own. In an absolute emergency, a staff member may have to take the child in their own vehicle, with another adult if at all possible. They should know beforehand that their motor insurance covers this eventuality.

Access and egress:

- staff are required to consider weather conditions before coming into and while at work.

Training

Lone workers will be trained in safe working practices. This will apply to employees and other workers where applicable, such as agency staff and contractors.

Unacceptable Lone Working

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

- working at height
- manual handling of heavy or bulky items

Line Managers

It is the responsibility of Headteachers to monitor the tasks being carried out by staff. In particular, they are responsible for ensuring that any tasks described in section '*Unacceptable Lone Working*' are not carried out by one person alone. They also need to ensure that any lone worker follows good working practices and safe systems of work.

Lone Worker Duties

All lone workers are expected to co-operate fully with instructions given by the Headteacher. They are also expected to follow the school's safe systems of work and any associated procedures. Failure to do so may be a disciplinary offence.