



LONE WORKING POLICY

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	3
2.0 DEFINITION.....	3
3.0 POLICY	3
4.0 RISK ASSESSMENT	3
5.0 PROCEDURES.....	4
6.0 FURTHER INFORMATION.....	5
7.0 SUPPORT & TRAINING	5
8.0 DISSEMINATION.....	5
POLICY HISTORY	5

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Trust recognises that there are occasions when teaching, support, administrative, caretaking, cleaning or other school or central team staff may be required to work alone or in isolated situations. This may mean an increased risk to the health and safety of that individual. This policy sets out the approach to identifying these risks and managing them.

2.0 DEFINITION

A lone worker is someone who spends some or all their core hours working alone, without close or direct supervision. They may be directly employed or self-employed working under your direct control. This may occur during normal working hours at an isolated location within a school, working from home or working outside normal school or office hours. Lone working is deemed to be working in a situation where there are no other people who could reasonably be expected to give immediate assistance in the event of an accident or emergency.

3.0 POLICY

The policy of the Trust is that lone working should be avoided whenever possible. There are however, certain roles within the Trust that may make the need for lone working more likely (this may include cleaning, site management, those that work from home and central team functions that are more peripatetic in nature).

4.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

Within the school environment, the Headteacher or their designated person will ensure that an annual Lone Working Risk Assessment is undertaken and that relevant members of staff are aware of the content. Within the central team, the Line Manager is to assess whether a Lone Working Risk Assessment is required for any individuals working within their area of work, seeking advice from the Health and Safety Advisor if necessary. The following factors are taken into consideration:

- Risk of violence - all lone working situations are assessed for the risk of physical or verbal threats.
- Stress and mental health or wellbeing – lone working can cause work-related stress and affect people's mental health. Poor contact may lead to workers feeling disconnected, isolated or abandoned.
- A person's medical suitability to work alone – consider routine work and potential emergencies. Get medical advice if you are unsure whether an individual can safely work alone with their health condition.
- The workplace itself – the same health and safety responsibilities apply whether the work is working from the school, other locations or even from home.

- The work activity – certain activities are not considered safe for a lone worker. High risk activities such as operation of dangerous machinery, working at height and working near electricity could require at least one other person to be there in a rescue role.
- First aid and emergencies – consider whether first aid equipment is required, and what contact details are required for emergency situations.
- Supervision – determine the level of supervision required. The higher the risk, the more supervision will be needed.

5.0 PROCEDURES

In order to minimise the risks from lone working, the following measures are to be taken:

- All school staff members are to seek the permission of the Headteacher or their designated person before working alone on the school premises outside normal school hours.
- All central team staff members are to seek the permission of their Line Manager before lone working. Staff members are not to arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when working alone. Meetings must be arranged during school or office occupancy times, or when there are other members of staff on site.
- Staff members are to ensure that someone is aware that they are working alone and either give them an expected time of return and contact their line manager when clear of the building.
- Mobile phones can provide a level of security and peace of mind but are not solely relied upon. If carrying a mobile phone, then regular checks are to be made of the battery charge level and signal strength.
- Lone workers are to check that all external doors are kept closed and locked.
- If leaving the building at night after a meeting or function, staff members are to leave in groups or with others.
- Lone workers are not to confront or challenge unauthorised persons or intruders unless they are sure it is safe to do so.
- If there are any signs of unauthorised access or unauthorised persons on site then the Police, Headteacher/or their designated person and/or a senior member of staff should be contacted.
- Line managers to put in place procedures that enable direct contact with their lone workers and ensure regular dialogue with staff to raise any concerns regarding lone working.

6.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on lone working can be found in the HSE publication INDG73 (rev4) – Protecting Lone Workers.

7.0 SUPPORT & TRAINING

Where deemed necessary by the individual lone worker risk assessment, training shall be provided in subjects such as personal safety or violence prevention. Managers may require training in stress awareness to enable them to recognise signs of stress in lone workers as early as possible. First aid training may be required for lone workers, including how to use first aid on themselves.

8.0 DISSEMINATION

This Policy is available on the Reach South Academy Trust website. A paper copy is also held in school and central team offices. It will be made available to supply teachers, temporary staff, parents, LA, OFSTED and others working for the Trust as required.

POLICY HISTORY

Date	Summary of change	Contact	Policy Implementation Date	Review Date
October 2024	Policy Implementation	Operations	October 2024	October 2025
October 2025	Reviewed. No change.	Operations	November 2025	November 2026