



**“Let your light shine brightly.”**

Matthew 5:16

## **Lone Working Policy**

<b>Policy accepted by SLT on:</b>	15/6/2020
<b>Next review:</b>	Autumn 2022
<b>Signed (Headteacher):</b>	<i>R. Kaye</i>
<b>Statutory policy:</b> Yes/No	<b>On school website:</b> Yes/No

# **LONE WORKING POLICY**

(This policy is based on procedures and guidance published on The Key.)

## **1. Introduction**

“Lone workers”, as defined by the Health and Safety Executive, are “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.”

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers who – because they travel and/or work remotely and/or work lone – may be at particular risk if they are not in regular contact with others and are not kept informed of any changes that may affect them. As lone workers, they are at extra risk either because of the circumstances of their day-to-day activity or because an emergency may occur.

All leaders at Christ Church C of E First School and Nursery have a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and volunteers, as it is also the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by their work activity.

## **2. Aim**

To ensure adequate control measures are put into place to safeguard all employees and volunteers who work alone at any point when carrying out duties on behalf of Christ Church C of E First School and Nursery.

## **3. Identifying and mitigating risks**

Lone workers should not be at more risk than other employees or volunteers. This may require extra risk control measures. Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents.

Leaders should identify situations where people work alone and ask questions such as:

- (i) Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- (ii) Is there a safe way in and out for one person?
- (iii) Can all the plant, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
- (iv) Consider whether the work involves lifting objects too large for one person or whether more than one person is needed to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment.
- (v) Is there a risk of violence?
- (vi) Does the person have any medical condition that may affect their suitability to work alone?
- (vii) What happens if the person either becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency?

There are various work activities that result in employees/volunteers working alone.

For example:

- (i) Staff who are required to work alone for all or most of the time, such as cleaning staff working at night or early morning.
- (ii) Staff staying on to finish urgent work after others have left, or those who regularly work late or start early, before anyone else gets into the building.
- (iii) Staff who are keyholders or who are left to turn out the lights, set the alarm and lock up the premises after everyone else has gone home.
- (iv) Peripatetic workers whose work involves travelling or home visits to service users.

Many lone workers could come into more than one of the categories below. These categories can be split into levels of risk as follows:

- Category One: Staff working in offices or other secure locations outside of normal (school day/term-time) working hours or who routinely work in these locations on their own.
- Category Two: The site manager/caretaker and cleaning staff who have to work out of normal (school day/term-time) working hours.
- Category Three: Keyholders on a call-out.

#### **4. Responsibilities of employees and volunteers**

Employees/volunteers have a duty of care for themselves and anyone else who could be affected by their actions. Therefore, they have a responsibility to ensure that they:

- are aware of and follow all policies or procedures;
- always plan ahead;
- are fully aware of the risks when working alone;
- do not put themselves in potential danger;
- have made themselves aware of the nearest place of safety;
- are aware of the on-site security procedures;
- have access to personal alarms/mobile phones or some form of personal communication.

#### **5. Risks associated with violence**

Below are some indicators that may make violence more likely, and should be taken into account in your risk assessment. You may need to consider if the people you are providing a service to could:

- threaten violence;
- be a menace with weapons;
- bear grudges;
- feel victimised;
- harbour a grievance;
- suffer from mental health issues;
- have a dependency on drugs or alcohol;
- associate with violent people.

## 6. **Control measures**

Listed in the sections below are various control measures that can be put into place to reduce the risk to employees/volunteers when working alone. (Not all measures will be applicable as circumstances vary in different situations; therefore, the controls need to be re-evaluated for each individual occasion to ensure that the correct measures are in place to reduce the risk to its lowest level.)

As well as considering the guidance contained in this policy, there are some specific activities which should be avoided when lone working. These include:

- working at height;
- work in confined spaces.

When considering what control measures can be put in place to keep the lone worker safe, you should also take into account any medical conditions the employee may have that could put them at more risk. The easiest way to reduce the risk is to carry out any hazardous activities during normal (school day/term-time) working hours and lower-risk activities when lone working.

Some other examples of control measures that can be adopted to reduce the risks identified above may include the following:

- Only use equipment provided by the employer.
- Follow guidance for “keyholders” (see sections 8 and 9, below) in this document when checking security of building or site.
- Ensure any procedures are known and followed for relighting the boiler after a period of shutdown.
- Ensure employee is adequately trained for the required task.
- Check weather forecasts and put grit on hazardous pathways before ice or snow forms.
- Ensure access and egress from site are free from defects and well lit.
- Carry a fully charged torch when attending site after dark.
- Carry out “manual handling” risk assessments to ensure that loads are not too heavy for one individual. Also ensure that the employee has had manual handling training.
- Ensure the front doors by the main school office are never propped open and unattended at any time. (It is everyone’s responsibility to keep the school building secure – *before, during and after* the school day.)

## 7. **Threats to employees/volunteers**

Very occasionally employees/volunteers may find themselves, through the job they carry out alone, the subject of threats from children, parents, carers and other family members, and, very occasionally, members of the public. The following actions and options should be considered where employees/volunteers are the subject of threats or acts of violence when working alone:

- Report the threat to the police and seek their advice.

- Vary personal routines and travel routes.
- Use an alternative entrance and/or exit to and from the place of work.
- Carrying a personal attack alarm (ensure this is charged; carry spare batteries).
- Accessing personal safety training.
- Reporting whereabouts to the office at all times when changing venues or set up a buddy system.

## 8. **Keyholders**

Keyholders may need to attend premises outside of normal (school day/term-time) working hours. This may be to carry out normal work activities or following the activation of an intruder alarm or because of some other emergency that might have occurred.

Keyholders should be registered with the alarm company and/or the Police in case there is an out of hours emergency. This is essential when the building is protected with an intruder alarm system. Good practice dictates that at least three keyholders should be appointed in order to cover holidays, sickness, etc.

Keyholders that are just carrying out normal work activities should be following the general lone working guidance in this policy.

## 9. **In the event of intruder alarm activation**

Keyholders that are attending the premises in the event of intruder alarm activation should use the following procedure:

- On receiving a telephone call notifying of intruder alarm activation, confirm the identity of the person making the call, i.e. Police Officer's name and number or alarm company operative's name.
- Use telephone numbers previously obtained, call back and verify the detail.
- Arrange with either a member of their family or other responsible person to call the Police to the premises if they have not heard to say that all is well. This call should be made between 30 to 45 minutes after the estimated time of arrival.
- On arrival at the premises:
  - (i) If the Police are in attendance, ensure they check all sides of the building.
  - (ii) Then enter with the Police and check all areas.
  - (iii) If the Police are not in attendance, drive slowly round as much of the premises as possible (using public roads if necessary) checking for signs of entry, including the roof and walls. If in any doubt, leave the site and call the Police by dialling 999.
  - (iv) If all appears to be quiet, enter and check premises. If there are signs of a break-in leave at once and call the Police.
  - (v) If in doubt, leave the site immediately, even if you have the use of a mobile phone.
  - (vi) Arrange to meet the Police nearby. This is for your own safety.

- On entering the premises:
  - (i) Carefully note all information displayed on the alarm controls. Take no action at the control panel beyond unsetting the protected areas.
  - (ii) Check that the telephones are in working order. If the telephones do not work, it is likely that the lines have been cut by intruders who have, or who may try again, to attack the school. If the Police are in attendance, they should be made aware of the telephone not working.
  - (iii) If alone and, at any point, it is suspected there has been a break-in, then leave the premises and call the Police.
  - (iv) If there has been a break-in, re-enter the premises and check carefully with the Police and follow their instructions. Please note that a crime reference number will be required for insurance purposes.
  
- After checking the premises:
  - (i) If there is no apparent break-in, the alarm company should be called to arrange for an engineer to attend. Obtain his name and estimated time of arrival.
  - (ii) Notify the member of family or other responsible person who is expecting to be contacted, to let them know that all is in order.
  - (iii) Consider arranging to make further calls if appropriate.
  - (iv) Check identification of alarm engineer on arrival; call the alarm company to verify details if necessary.
  - (v) Insist on a complete repair of alarm system if reasonably practicable. Only agree to part of the system being disconnected if a fault is identified and it cannot be corrected within a reasonable time (keyholder must understand insurance requirements that apply).
  - (vi) Never leave the premises unprotected. If necessary, arrange for other employees/volunteers to join you or relieve you as appropriate.
  - (vii) If you are not responsible for opening the premises at the start of the next day, leave a note for the person who will be undertaking this responsibility; advising them of the problem and instructing them to liaise with the alarm company for further engineer attendance, if this is necessary.
  - (viii) Ensure that all written logs detailing what has occurred are correctly completed by both the keyholder attending and the alarm engineer.
  - (ix) Advise the Headteacher and other employees/volunteers as necessary.
  - (x) Arrange for any emergency repairs to be made so the premises can be secured.
  - (xi) Secure the premises and set the alarm system.
  - (xii) On your next return to the premises, advise the relevant employees/volunteers about the situation.

#### **10. Site manager/caretaker**

The site manager/caretaker is more likely to be lone working and is a keyholder, responsible for opening and locking up the premises. They are also the person who

would attend the premises when there has been a suspected break-in; if this is the case, then they should follow the guidance given in this document for “keyholders” (see sections 8 and 9, above).

## **11. Hazards**

You need to think about if there are any risky activities which your site manager/ caretaker may be undertaking whilst working alone. Areas you should think about may include:

- checking security;
- turning the heating back on after a break;
- laying grit and clearing paths in icy and snowy weather;
- locking up after events;
- patrolling or visiting the site after the hours of darkness;
- opening the building first thing in the morning;
- changing light bulbs;
- using hazardous chemicals;
- manual handling.

## **12. Lone working with pupils**

Refer to the school’s *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* to ensure that guidelines for appropriate working are followed at all times. It is important to *do the right thing* and *to be seen to do the right thing* – as this protects children from possible abuse and protects employees/volunteers from malicious allegations.

### **12.1 Lone working with pupils during school hours on school site**

- Make sure other employees/volunteers around the school site know you are working alone with pupils.
- Check location of telephone, panic buttons, closest adults and exits.
- Prior to the activity, familiarise yourself with and consider:
  1. behaviour plans;
  2. medical needs of pupils and yourself;
  3. physical needs of pupils and yourself.
- Individual pupil/adult risk assessment.
- Consider safety for yourself and pupils when working in a confined place, e.g. toilets, changing rooms, clear floor area and storage of bags.

### **12.2 Lone working without pupils during school hours on school site**

- Make sure other employees/volunteers around the school site know you are working alone.
- Check location of telephone, panic buttons, closest adults and exits.
- Prior to the activity, consider your own medical and physical needs.

### **12.3 Lone working without pupils out of school hours on school site**

- Make sure you have informed a reliable person that you are working alone and where you are working.
- Have a phone at hand.
- Arrange regular communication at set times.
- Keep rooms secure to prevent unwelcome access.
- Prior to the activity, consider your own medical and physical needs.

### **12.4 Lone working without pupils during school hours off school site**

- Ensure you have informed a reliable person that you are working alone, the time you depart, where you are going and the time expected to return.
- Arrange regular communication at set times.
- During school holidays, arrange regular communication with agreed person to ensure safe working practice.

### **13. First Aid requirements for travelling, remote and lone workers**

Employers are responsible for meeting the First Aid needs of their employees working away from the main site. The assessment of First Aid needs should determine whether those who travel long distances or are continuously mobile should carry a personal First Aid box; and whether employees should be issued with personal communicators/mobile phones.

### **14. Risk Assessments**

Risk Assessments should be in place for all anticipated risks and should be reviewed on a regular basis, especially if there is a change in situation, a near miss has occurred or an accident or incident has taken place.

### **15. Reporting of accidents and incidents**

- Any accidents, incidents or near misses must be recorded in the accident book.
- If an accident happens and causes either a major injury or the loss of over three days' work or an inability to carry out normal duties for over three days, then an **F2508 form** must be completed and sent to the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).
- The Headteacher is to be informed of any incident involving violence, which includes verbal abuse, physical assault and property damage.

### **16. Monitoring and Reviewing accidents, incidents and near misses**

All accidents, incidents or near misses should be logged and monitored by the School Business Manager, who should then look for trends and see if a review should be carried out on any risk assessments due to the outcomes. These should also be reported back to the Headteacher so that she/he is aware of any situations that may have arisen and need to be reported to the governors.