



Lone Working Policy

Review Summary

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| Adopted: | <i>January 2017</i> |
| Review Cycle: | <i>Bi-annual</i> |
| Last Review: | <i>June 2021</i> |
| Next Review: | <i>June 2023</i> |

1. Policy Statement:

- 1.1. The Trust recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of employees when working alone. This policy has been established to identify risks and manage them accordingly.
- 1.2. The Trust has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees.

2. Definition:

- 2.1. Within this policy, 'lone working' refers to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) definition of lone working: "Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision."
- 2.2. This includes situations where staff, in the course of their duties, work alone in the school and are physically isolated from colleagues, possibly without immediate access to assistance. It is possible for a staff member to be 'lone working' when there are other staff members in the building due to the nature of the building creating isolated areas.
- 2.3. Where associated tasks require staff to work alone, both the individual staff member and the Trust have a duty of care to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents. While many hazards at work are relatively easy to identify and control, other health and safety aspects are less easy to define.

3. Scope: Identifying Lone Workers:

- 3.1. Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, either employees who work separately from others in an establishment, or mobile workers who work away from a fixed base are classed as lone workers.
- 3.2. Working alone is not in itself against the law and it will often be safe to do so. However, the law requires employers to consider carefully, and then deal with, any health and safety risks for people working alone.

Examples of employees who may be classed as lone workers include:

- Staff with responsibility for opening up and closing buildings;
- Staff working outside normal working hours, i.e. between 16.00 – 08.00;
- School staff working during holiday periods;
- Staff working in an isolated part of the building;
- Staff working in an isolated environment away from the school.

(This list is by no means exhaustive)

3.3 Consideration therefore needs to be given to the potential risks faced by lone workers, as follows:

- commitment to supporting staff both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices;
- recognising and reducing risk by adopting a systematic approach to undertaking regular risk assessments extending to regular reviews;
- a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff;
- a clear understanding of responsibilities;
- the priority placed on the safety of the individual;
- a commitment to providing appropriate training for staff;
- provision of equipment such as mobile phones, personal alarms, etc.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

4.1. As the employer, the Trust has ultimate responsibility for the Health and Safety of all employees.

4.2. The Local Governing Body has responsibility under the relevant legislation for ensuring that there is due regard to matters of health, safety and environmental matters within the Academy.

4.3. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of the Lone Working Policy and for encouraging staff to implement lone working arrangements. The Headteacher has primary responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the objectives set out in this policy.

4.4. Employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of all their workers. They also have responsibility for the health and safety of any contractors or self-employed people working for them.

4.5. These responsibilities cannot be transferred to any other person, including those people who work alone.

4.6. Workers have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work activities and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

5. Risk Assessments:

5.1. The employer has a duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary. The Devon County Council Risk Assessment available via OSHENs must be completed for each Academy.

5.2. The risk assessment must be completed and the resultant controls implemented, which must then be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

5.3. This must include:

- involving workers when considering potential risks and measures to control them;
- taking steps to ensure risks are removed where possible, or putting in place control measures, e.g. carefully selecting work equipment to ensure the worker is able to perform the required tasks in safety;
- instruction, training and supervision;
- reviewing risk assessments periodically or when there has been a significant change in working practice.

5.4 There are some high-risk activities where at least one other person may need to be present. Examples include:

- working at height;
- excessive manual handling;
- working with substances that are hazardous to health including flammables;
- working in a confined space, where a supervisor may need to be present, along with someone dedicated to the rescue role;
- working with electricity including near exposed live electricity conductors and undertaking Portable Appliance Testing;
- dealing with unpredictable pupils and other stakeholders.

5.5 Personal safety is very important, points to consider in a risk assessment are:

- who knows where employees are and whom they are with? Identify a designated member of staff to inform i.e. Line Manager.
- are there suitable lines of communication between the lone worker and a designated person? Ensure regular contact/communication throughout the day.
- are there procedures in place if contact with the lone worker cannot be established, as required. Regular communication networks should ensure appropriate contact and wellbeing of the lone worker.
- can employees in isolated areas summon help or raise an alarm? Ensure employee has direct access to either a departmental phone, radio or mobile phone.
- ensure the Caretaker is informed when staff leave the premises to avoid the situation of staff being locked in school at the end of the day. Staff should be aware of any fixed closure times.
- staff should inform their Line Manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person and the Caretaker if appropriate when leaving the building
- employees should ensure they understand their lone working risks and procedures, and agreed these with their Line Manager.

- it is the responsibility of the individual concerned to ensure all necessary precautions and methods are adhered to at all times.
- a robust system is in place for signing in and out within the main office, and staff should follow these procedures.
- where staff work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, procedures should be in place for regular contact between staff, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.
- where staff are issued with mobile phones; they are responsible for ensuring that the phone is charged, in working order, and with sufficient credit remaining. Personal alarms may also be considered.
- any person who becomes aware of circumstances involving lone working, where the existing control measures may not be fully effective, must inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) or the Director of Operations as soon as possible.

6 Control Measures

6.1 In order to manage the risks identified, the following control measures should be considered as part of a risk assessment:

Risk of violence/medical incident/allegation

- staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.
- staff should not arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working.
- meetings should 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 should not be required to handle cash when lone working.
- late meetings must be arranged to finish promptly and not to leave one member of staff alone on site.
- staff are required not to approach or let into buildings unauthorised persons when lone working.
- deliveries should not be accepted when lone working
- staff must ensure they are not exposed to allegations when lone working with pupils, particularly those that are vulnerable or have challenging additional needs.

Communication

- staff are first required to avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.

- the Site Team must be informed of staff working patterns and when a member of staff may be lone working
- staff must always sign in and out
- the Site Team must check that all staff are signed out before they lock up for the day to ensure no one is left in the building.
- the Site Team must periodically walk the corridors in order to monitor lone workers.
- two-way radios should be used for caretaking staff who regularly work in isolation.

Working from home

- staff working from home should take precautions to ensure their home address and personal contact numbers remain confidential
- staff should agree an appropriate and regular reporting-in approach with a line manager or other designated person if lone working at home for extended period.

7 Incidents:

- 7.1 Should an incident occur the lone worker must report this to their Line Manager and a de-briefing should follow any incident.
- 7.2 Any incidents or concerns in relation to lone working should be reported to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator. Staff should ensure they are aware of who the Health and Safety Co-ordinator is as part of induction.

8 Monitoring and Review:

- 8.1 Having undertaken appropriate risk assessments and implemented all necessary controls, it is important that all lone working situations are monitored and continually reviewed.
- 8.2 Schools Health and Safety Co-ordinator's are responsible for monitoring the risk assessments and following any incidents or concerns.
- 8.3 Lone working and risk assessments should be reported to the Local Governing Body
- 8.4 Staff with a concern should ensure the issue is discussed with their Line Manager.

9 Circulation:

- 9.1 All new staff will be made aware of the Lone Working Policy during the induction period.

- 9.2 This Policy will be published on the Trust's website and included in the Trust's Policy Monitoring Schedule
- 9.3 This Policy will be circulated to every Trustee, Local Governing Body and Leadership by sending an email to the link on the Trust's website.
- 9.4 The Trustees, in consultation with the Local Governing Bodies, are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of this policy.

Adoption of the Policy

This Policy has been approved and reviewed by the Trustees of the Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust.

Signed

ARMulcah

(Chair of Trust)

Date: 23.06.21