

# Lone Working Policy



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## 1. Aims

KWS aims to:

- › Provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment.
- › Establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff, pupils and families when off site or lone working.
- › Have robust procedures in place in case of emergencies

KWS recognises that some members of staff are required to work by themselves in the community without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or during out of office hours. KWS acknowledges that these workers and volunteers are potentially at risk and that these risks must be minimised as far as reasonably practicable. As such standard procedures have been developed and set out within this policy, and these should be followed and adhered to at all times, prior to or when working alone. It is important that all staff are aware of the definition of a Lone Worker (see Section 2 below) as they may find themselves, or those under their direct supervision, falling within the definition of a Lone Worker irregularly or infrequently and need to be able to recognise this situation and act appropriately to mitigate the risks.

## 2. Definition of Lone Workers

For the purpose of this policy Lone Workers are defined as anyone who works alone, whether they are within a KWS site or delivering a service out in the community and as set out below:

Those working at their main place of work where:

- Only one person is, at a given time, working on the premises
- People work separately from each other, e.g. in different locations
- People are working outside normal office hours (with prior permission from line manager) e.g., working in the evening, during weekends and bank holidays. Those working away from their fixed base where:
  - One employee is visiting another agency's premises or meeting venue
  - One employee is making a home visit to an individual
  - One employee is attending an external meeting
  - One employee is transporting a student to an activity.

## 3. Legislation

KWS has a duty of care to advise and assess the risk for all workers under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Our duty to both assess and control any risks from lone working is governed by the Health and Safety at Work Act which 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. This will be achieved by carrying out risk assessments in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and the Health and Safety Executive guidance on lone working.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### 4.1 The governing body and SLT

The Trustees and Senior Management team have overall responsibility for Health and Safety for all employees, workers, volunteers and trustees and for ensuring mechanisms are in place for the overall implementation, monitoring and revision of the policy. The Management also have a responsibility to ensure that all employees are able to implement the aims and objectives of the policy and that certain arrangements exist for the provision of safety systems and procedures. The Management are also responsible for reviewing and updating the policy and procedures following recommendations from line managers and for obtaining approval for an updated Lone Worker Policy from the Board of Trustees.

### 4.2 Line Managers

It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure:

- The Lone Worker Policy is brought to the attention of all new members of staff in their inductions and reiterated to staff under their supervision through team meetings and 1:1s;

- That their staff attend training events on health and safety, lone working and risk management as appropriate;
- That staff are aware of their own responsibilities with regards to lone working;
- A risk assessment is undertaken by each community-working employee before they attend an off-site visit. Systems are put in place to ensure staff who work alone are safe;
- All lone work activities are identified and recorded on public folders or other local arrangements where applicable;
  - All assessment and safety measures identified are recorded;
  - All incidents relating to lone working are reported and recorded in line with KWS's Incident Reporting Procedures;
  - An investigation is carried out regarding any incident involving a lone worker and recommendations made to prevent a reoccurrence; and
  - If a risk cannot be made safe two workers must carry out the task, or if not practical to do so the service should be withdrawn

#### **4.3 Individuals' Responsibilities:**

All lone workers have a responsibility to:

- Read and comply with the Lone Worker Policy and follow safe working procedures as set out in the policy;
- Attend any relevant training at the request of their line manager;
- Follow procedures introduced for Lone Workers including notifications to their Line Manager or 'Buddy'
- Ensure they inform their line manager of each off-site visit and record full address and postcode details of the location of these on the public folders, together with a client's or contact's telephone number or other local arrangement where applicable;
  - Undertake telephone or site based risk assessments prior to making any off-site visits and be involved in the process of identifying safety measures;
  - Avoid situations with significant risk, as far as is possible and take care of their own and other people's safety;
  - Report any incidents as soon as possible in line with KWS's incident reporting procedures; and
  - Ensure their line manager approves any hours worked outside of their standard working hours or the core business hours of the organisation before they are worked.

#### **4.4 Contractors**

Contractors will agree health and safety practices with the headteacher before starting work. Before work begins the contractor will provide evidence that they have completed an adequate risk that covers lone working.

### **5. Lone Working Procedures**

While many of the same health and safety risks affect both Lone Workers and other employees, there are other potential risks which are more likely to affect lone workers. These risks should be taken into consideration by all staff (line managers, employees and volunteers) prior to lone working taking place and the following procedures and guidelines have been developed to ensure that systems are put in place to assess and minimise any potential risks.

#### **5.1 Risk Assessments**

The crucial element in ensuring the safety of lone workers is the risk assessment. The main aims of the risk assessment are to find out:

1. Whether the work can be done safely by a lone worker
2. That the lone worker is not put at any greater risk than those who would do the job with another person
3. If any jobs are too difficult or dangerous for a lone worker to carry out.

Risk assessments assist line managers and lone workers to establish the right level of supervision and control measures required when lone working occurs. For example, some activities may be deemed high-risk and, if appropriate, may require at least two people present. Other activities may need to be referred on to an appropriate external service or agency.

Procedure-

There are two stages to the risk assessment process:

Stage 1: Identifying risks

Stage 2: Assessing any risk/s identified.

The risk assessment procedure involves firstly identifying any potential risks by using the Risk Assessment and support Plans on POD and this must be undertaken prior to any community or home-

based visit throughout all operational schemes, to ensure all associated risks have been identified as far as reasonably practicable.

Here are some of the questions that will need to be asked:

- Does the individual have any issues highlighted as part of EHCP process e.g. a known mental health problem or a history of violent or aggressive behaviour?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Is there known substance or alcohol use both historical and current?
- Full address details of the location and contact details
- Useful information regarding the accommodation and locality
- Will the individual be alone or will anyone else be present, and if so whom?
- Does anyone else live or have use of the property and if so whom?
- Details of animals / pets in the house.

## 5.2 When a risk is identified.

Where a risk is identified, the individual should discuss this with their line manager. It is important to be clear about the basic ideas underpinning the notion of risk. Risk relates to a negative event (i.e. violence, absconding) and covers a number of aspects:

- What exactly is the risk – or risks – to be prevented?
- How severe will the outcome be if it does occur?
- How likely is it that the event will occur? When a risk/s is identified it is important to get as much information as possible about the risk/s so a more detailed risk assessment can be carried out using the EHCP and Risk Assessment. Collecting more information from other services and/or parent/s /carer/s about the risks identified should be the first step. The following control measures to be discussed and implemented if deemed necessary:
  - Visit takes place with at least one other individual (for home risk assessments or one off visits) • Risk assessment information shared with all persons who may also be at risk
  - Visit postponed until further risks are
  - Visit postponed / cancelled and referred on to an external agency or statutory bod.

Risk Assessments should be carried out before any lone working or home visits. Details should be added onto POD with each student and should include information relating to the date, the member of staff's name and details of the risks highlighted. Risk assessment information on POD should be reviewed weekly with keyworkers..

## 5.3 Monitoring staff movements

To ensure that the KWS is always aware of staff, workers and volunteer's whereabouts, local reporting systems should be put in place for each individual attending an off-site appointment. All employees are required to update their calendars and/or public folders where applicable with all off-site appointments ensuring the records also state the location and date/time of any visits or events they will be attending away from their standard place of work. Full addresses, postcodes and contact telephone numbers must also be recorded for each off-site visit. For employees and volunteers who work out of office hours, either in the evenings or weekends, there must be an agreed local protocol in place for informing line managers of their whereabouts.

## 6. Office Based Lone Working

Staff based in school can also work alone from time to time and should therefore also be aware of lone worker procedures. It should be encouraged, where possible, to standardise working hours and patterns to try and avoid one person either opening up or locking the office alone. Where this is not possible, the following steps should be taken:

- You should inform and seek approval from your line manager if you are likely to be staying late or make it known to the last person to leave the office before you;
- If you are one of only a few people in the office at the end of the working day you should advise remaining staff when you leave, this is especially important if not all working areas are visible to staff from all desk locations;
- Do not turn lights off in central areas if there is someone else in another part of the office as this is a Health and Safety risk;

- Do not let anyone into the building whilst you are lone working, unless you are satisfied that they do not pose any risk. In buildings where AUKH staff are working and have no control over who enters the building staff should use any security measures which are in place, i.e. key pads which limit access to offices;
- Ensure that no one else can enter the building (making sure that this does not compromise evacuation in the event of an emergency);
- You should contact a family member or colleague when you are leaving the building so that someone is aware you are on their way home;
- Whilst travelling to and from work areas and across car parks, you should remain alert and observant; and
- You should familiarise yourself with the location and general office instructions to ensure that you are aware of any office closing procedures if you are the last person in the office.

## 7. Incident Reporting

All incidents in relation to lone working should be reported through POD on either a behaviour incident or a safeguarding slip. Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or unsafe are reported through this system. Risk assessments and support plans must be reviewed after such incidents.

## 8. Training

KWS has various training courses available for employees and volunteers including mandatory health and safety training. During induction and 1:1s staff training needs should be identified with their line manager and appropriate action taken.

## 9. Guidance for Lone Workers

The following constitutes general guidance to familiarise yourself with in the event that you are lone working.

- Ensure you have read the lone working policy and procedure
- Keep to your schedule of work, if you are delayed for any reason let the office know
- Make sure you have all of the emergency phone numbers you need on your phone preferably on 'speed dial'
- Make sure you attend any training sessions the organisation provides to keep you safe when working alone

Driving to an off-site appointment.

- Avoid parking in a deserted place or where there is poor lighting;
- Secure the vehicle when you leave it and ensure that you do not leave belongings on show in the vehicle;
- Remember to charge and take your mobile phone with you, if you have one; and
- Ensure you fill your car up with fuel before your journey, if you are running low.
- Keep all valuables in your car out of sight

During a lone working visit

- Ensure that you have the correct address for the person/organisation that you intend to visit;
- Report into school after the visit;
- Ensure that you are wearing your ID/name badge (if applicable) and that your telephone or communication equipment is within easy reach;
- If you reach the site/location and feel at risk or uncertain then do not enter the premises. Tell the client that you have received a phone call requesting that you return to school immediately and that you will call to reschedule the appointment as soon as possible. Apologise for any inconvenience and leave;
- Always follow the person you are visiting into the house/building rather than leading the way yourself;
- Be aware of all exit routes in case you need to leave in a hurry; and
- If there is an animal/pet at the site request that it is put into another room, or secured for the duration of the visit. The animal/pet may have to be moved a number of times if you are visiting more than one room at the site.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) when this has been provided for you.

## 11. Links with other policies

This health and safety policy links to the following policies:

- First aid policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Risk assessment policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Accessibility plan
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Educational visits policy.
- Behaviour management policy
- Working together to safeguard children 2023
- Keeping children safe in education 2021