



WyreForestSchool

Communication Specialist

Lone Working Guidance Policy

Date of last review:	2023	Review period:	2 Years
Date of next review:	2025	Written by:	Rebecca Garratt
Type of policy:	Non-statutory	Committee:	Staffing & Resources
Signature:			

Introduction

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW) and The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MUSW):

Wyre Forest School has a responsibility for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees and the health and safety of those affected by the work such as visitors, contractors and self-employed people who employers may engage. These responsibilities cannot be transferred to people who work alone. It is the employer's duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

Definition

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

Safe Working Arrangements for Lone Workers

Although there is no legal reason to prevent persons working alone, the general requirements of the HSW Act and MHSW Regulations still apply. A risk assessment should be undertaken by the Head of Department/Line Manager and the relevant controls implemented.

The following should be considered when undertaking the risk assessment:

- Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?
- Lone workers should not be exposed to significantly higher risks than others who work together. Precautions should take account of normal working and foreseeable emergency situations, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents.
- Will situations which are legally prohibited arise (see Appendix 1). Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker? For example, it is not generally reasonable for staff or students to work alone with dangerous machinery.
- Is there a safe access and exit for that person? In the evenings, and at weekends, many doors, which provide an exit from the buildings during normal working hours, are locked for security reasons. Has the lone worker been made aware that aspects of his/her route out of the building in an emergency may be different?
- Can one person safely handle all plant and equipment needed? It may be heavy, awkward, unstable, large, etc. More than one person may be necessary to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment.
- Can all the substances and materials involved in the work be handled safely by one person? Hazardous substances (e.g. substances which are subject to the COSHH Regulations, or flammable), must be considered carefully. These are substances that have, for example, the potential to cause severe injury, either alone or as a component of a reaction, to cause burns, or to affect the respiratory, cardiovascular, or central nervous system.
- Will cash be handled and will there be a risk of violence? All movement of cash requiring members of staff should be risk assessed to make sure staff are not put at risk.
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are young workers especially at risk if they work alone?

Medical Fitness

It is essential that lone workers have no medical conditions which make them unsuitable for working alone. Consideration must be given to both routine work and foreseeable emergencies which may impose additional physical and mental burdens on the individual.

Training

Training is particularly important where there is limited supervision in order to control, guide and help in situations of uncertainty. It may be critical to avoid panic reactions in unusual situations, and lone workers, therefore, need to understand fully the risks involved in the work, the necessary precautions and be sufficiently experienced. Departments should, therefore, establish clear procedures to set limits as to what can and cannot be done whilst working alone, and, where appropriate, when to stop the work and seek advice.

Supervision

- Although lone workers are not subject to constant supervision, there is still a duty on the School to provide appropriate control of the work.
- The extent of the supervision required depends upon the risks involved and the proficiency and experience of the person carrying out the work to identify and handle safety issues. Persons new to a job, undergoing training, doing a job which presents special risks, or dealing with new situations may need to be accompanied at first.
- Supervisors should provide guidance in situations of uncertainty.
- The extent of the supervision is a management decision.

Illnesses, Accidents and Emergencies

- Lone workers should be capable of responding correctly in emergency situations. Emergency procedures should be established in departments and the appropriate persons given clear and concise training and instructions on how to implement them. Similar information should be given to contractors or service engineers who may be working alone.
- Lone workers should have access to adequate first aid facilities.

Procedures for Lone Workers at Wyre Forest School

- Staff must ask permission from the Headteacher to work alone in the building out of school hours.
- Staff must only carry out tasks for which they have been trained and which are safe for one person to undertake.
- Tasks must be agreed by the Headteacher. Lone workers should not undertake activities that involve the handling of money, working at height or any other tasks which are potentially hazardous.
- Staff must not enter the premises if there are signs of intruders and should call the police immediately.
- Staff must carry a mobile phone or work in an area where there is access to a phone.
- If working alone, staff must **NOT** use the lifts.

- All lone working staff should establish their own checking in and out system with family, friends or colleagues and the phone number of the Headteacher or member of the Leadership Team should be given to the family/friend in case the lone worker fails to arrive home at the expected time.
- In a situation where 2 or more people work in isolated areas of an otherwise unoccupied building they should keep each other informed about their movements.
- A lone worker should ensure they have access to first aid facilities
- Lone workers should only unlock an area of the building in which they are working and should ensure that other areas of the school are kept secure.
- Ensure all external doors/windows are secured to prevent unauthorised access.
- Do **NOT** allow access to unknown callers.
- If working in the evening, ensure external areas are well lit (liaise with the Site Team).
- Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions which might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.
- During the school holidays all staff must sign in and out at Reception.

APPENDIX 1 – SITUATIONS WHERE LONE WORKING IS PROHIBITED BY LAW

There are certain situations where the law prohibits lone working and these are as follows:

- Entry into confined spaces. Confined spaces include tanks, manholes, pipes, flues, ducts, ceiling voids, enclosed basement rooms, and other spaces where there may be inadequate natural ventilation.
- Use of ladders which cannot be secured and require “footing” by a second person.
- Erection of scaffolding.
- Use of specified dangerous machines - for example:
 - Guillotine machines (both powered and manual)
 - Slicing machines used in catering (both powered and manual)
 - Potato chipping machines
 - Food mixing machines
- Certain electrical work under the Electricity at Work Regulations.

APPENDIX 2 – GENERIC LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT

PEOPLE AFFECTED	HAZARD	RISK	RISK POTENTIAL	REASONS	PREVENTATIVE MEASURES
All staff	Lone working	Assault/accident	Low	Procedures followed and care taken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff must ask permission from the Headteacher to work alone in the building out of school hours. 2. Staff must only carry out tasks for which they have been trained and which are safe for one person to undertake. 3. Tasks must be agreed by the Headteacher. 4. Staff must not enter the premises if there are signs of intruders and should call the police immediately. 5. Staff must carry a mobile phone or work in an area where there is access to a phone. 6. If working alone, staff must NOT use the lifts. 7. All lone working staff should establish their own checking in and out system with family, friends or colleagues. The phone number of the Headteacher or member of the Leadership Team should be given to the family/friend in case the lone worker fails to arrive home at the expected time. 8. In a situation where 2 or more people work in isolated areas of an otherwise unoccupied building they should keep each other informed about their movements. 9. A lone worker should ensure they have access to first aid facilities 10. Lone workers should only unlock an area of the building in which they are working & should ensure that other areas of the school are kept secure. 11. Ensure all external doors/windows are secured to prevent unauthorised access. 12. Do NOT allow access to unknown callers. 13. If working in the evening, ensure external areas are well lit. (liaise with the Site Team) 14. Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions which might cause incapacity or unconsciousness. 15. During school holidays staff must sign in and out at reception.

Signed (Lone Manager): Line Manager: Date: