



Education Trust

'Inspiring the individuals of today, for a better society tomorrow'

"Aspire, Belong, Collaborate"

LONE WORKING POLICY & GUIDANCE

Review Frequency	Annual
Reviewed	April 2026
Next Review	April 2027
Agreed by Trustees	22 nd May 2026

Aims of the Lone Working Policy and Procedures

The Trustees are committed to ensuring staff, volunteers and contractors enjoy a safe working environment along with flexible working arrangements, where appropriate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide managers, school leaders, and employees with guidance as to who may be lone workers and the practical steps to be taken. It is recognised that there are occasions when teaching, support, administrative, grounds, cleaning staff or school leaders may be required, or choose, to work alone or in isolated situations. This, however, may introduce risks for a normally non-hazardous work activity. People who work alone should not be at greater risk than others.

Equality statement

This policy applies to all employees within the Trust, regardless of their disability, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. Care will be taken to ensure that no groups or individuals are adversely impacted in implementing this policy.

Categories of Lone Workers

A 'lone worker' is any person whose work involves a portion of their time in a situation where there is no close, frequent or regular involvement with other workers or supervision.

Within the Trust, a lone worker will most probably fall within one of the following categories:

- Those staff working with or supervising a child on their own
- Those who work in an otherwise unoccupied building
- Those who work on the premises outside of normal working hours, at weekends or during holidays
- Those responding to an alarm call out after normal school hours
- On rare occasions, this may include home visits in relation to welfare checks

Lone working occurs both on-site and offsite, and within and outside normal working hours. There is no general reason why people cannot work by themselves. Working alone will often form part of the normal working pattern within a particular job and as such may not be regarded as particularly significant or even distinct. Through management support and guidance and through personal awareness, it is important that staff appreciate and understand the nature of the activity, the potential risks and what is required to minimise them.

The school will carry out risk assessments to identify any risks to the health and safety of staff who work alone as part of their day-to-day work or for particular periods of lone working.

Risk Assessment

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that all members of staff read and understand the Lone Working policy. The Headteacher or Line Manager will decide whether a Lone Working Risk Assessment (appendix i) for staff new to the school is required as part of their induction. For staff who regularly partake in lone working, a risk assessment will need to be completed annually. The risk assessment will take into account the type of tasks undertaken, the environment, health and safety instruction and training received and the individual's medical history. The procedure for carrying out risk assessments is no different from the normal workplace assessment process (see appendix i):

1. Identify the hazards
2. Decide who can be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risk and decide on precautions/control measures
4. Record your findings and implement them
5. Monitor and update them as necessary

Whilst the hazards are similar to everyday working situations they may be exacerbated by the fact that a person is alone and perhaps not in the immediate vicinity of aide and assistance, e.g.

- Verbal abuse
- Animal attacks
- Cash handling
- Defective vehicles
- Driving and/or road rage
- Electric shocks
- Exposure to hazardous materials
- Faulty equipment
- Fire
- Manual handling heavy or unwieldy loads
- Noise
- Poor or lack of training
- Pregnant or young workers
- Remoteness or isolation
- Slips, trips or falls
- Sudden illness rendering the worker unable to summon help
- Violent clients, members of the public or other staff
- Working at height
- Working in confined spaces
- Working over or near water

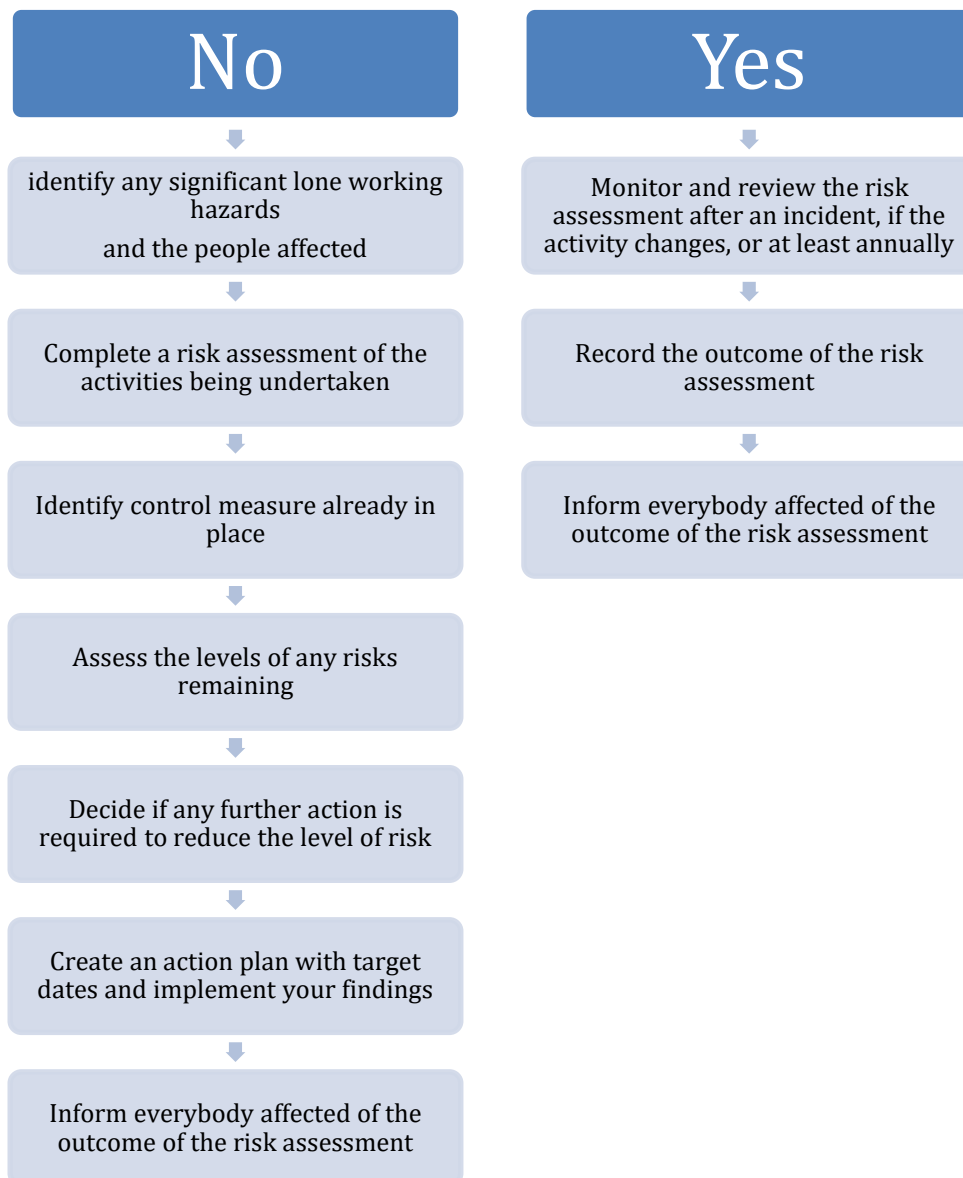
Hazards identified will be shared with the Health and Safety Governor. Measures will be introduced if the assessment shows that existing precautions are inadequate to eliminate or adequately control the hazard. The risk assessment will be subject to review to ensure it is

relevant and current to the workings of the school.

In addition, there are a few high-risk activities which would require at least one other person to be present to provide assistance in the case of an emergency arising. Examples include:

- High risk confined space work
- Electrical work near live equipment
- Visits to homes outside of school where there is a known history of (or potential for) violence or aggression
- Working at height

Is there a relevant risk assessment in place?



Controls

Staff need to comply with the following controls when working alone:

- When working in school outside of term time, staff must sign in at the school office so that the caretaker is aware of who is on-site
- Staff identified as working alone through annual risk assessments, will receive information and/or training to help ensure they understand the risks associated with lone working and to minimise these risks. All lone workers, in an otherwise unoccupied building, should follow the school's 'Fire and Emergency Procedures'. Staff have a responsibility for making themselves familiar with and following the school's safety procedures and location of safety equipment, including fire alarms to raise an alarm.
- Staff should seek the agreement/permission of the Headteacher to work alone in the building outside of normal school opening hours.
- The experience and training of all staff and the activities to be undertaken will be taken into consideration before allowing lone working. Lone workers must be considered capable of responding correctly in an emergency situation by the Headteacher.
- All staff should avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging for a colleague to also be on site.
- Staff should not enter the school premises if there are signs of intruders and are advised to immediately call the police. Staff must not place themselves in danger by challenging intruders or vandals but should call the police for assistance.
- Staff should activate the door security system when lone working and ensure that areas of the school not in use are kept secure.
- In the situation where two or more people are working in isolated areas of an otherwise unoccupied building, personnel should keep each other informed about their movements.
- When two or more people work late – beyond the normal school day - they should try to leave the building together.
- The caretaker is responsible for ensuring all outside security lights are in working order to ensure staff can access cars/exits safely
- Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.
- All lone working staff need to inform the Headteacher they will be on site outside of the school's normal opening hours. They should establish their own checking in and out system with either family, friends or work colleagues. It is advised that lone workers provide a relative or friend with a telephone contact number (Headteacher's or caretaker's mobile phone numbers) to call if the lone worker fails to return home at the expected time.
- It is not normally practicable for the Headteacher or Caretaker to periodically visit and visually monitor people working alone.
- Anyone working alone should have access to a telephone and first aid equipment. They should also be aware of accident reporting procedures.
- If staff rely on mobile phones they must ensure that their network has good reception within school. Although phones can give extra reassurance, they do not provide complete protection and staff should still be alert for their own personal safety at all times.

- For safety reasons it is recommended that staff are able to hear clearly for intruders, alarms or distress calls/calls for help. Hearing should not be impaired at any time by loud music or headphones.
- Staff should not use ladders and scaffold towers unless they have received appropriate training. In the case of scaffold towers staff must hold a current and valid PASMA certificate. Ladders and scaffold towers should not be used by anyone working alone.
- Lone workers are particularly at risk if a fire occurs this is because they are less likely to be aware of a fire until they themselves see or smell it. Lone workers should always be aware of the appropriate access routes out of the building from their place of work. These routes should be kept clear at all times.

High risk situations

Where a risk assessment identifies that lone working poses a high risk to a lone worker, lone working should be avoided or arrangements for providing assistance and support put in place.

Reporting an incident

Where there is an incident or accident in the workplace, including threatening or intimidating behaviour, these should be recorded on an accident report form. Line managers will take action and provide support as necessary. The Trust will support staff with its zero tolerance stance towards violence and aggression towards its employees.

Contractors

When contractors are on site It is not practicable for the caretaker to wait with contractors whilst they carry out work as this is not time effective or value for money. The caretaker will check with contractors that they have carried out a 'dynamic risk assessment' and as such are happy they are safe to work alone, are aware of relevant safety procedures and have a means of contact such as mobile phone. Contractors need to be informed of where the caretaker will be working and of their contact details such as mobile phone number. Contractors should have access to their own first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.

Lone meetings or supervision of pupils

The overall aim in the layout of a room when meeting a parent, child, staff member, visitor or another stakeholder is to make the atmosphere non-oppressive or threatening and conducive to a relaxed atmosphere. At the same time consideration for personal safety is vital. Trust employees must consider the following to reduce risks:

- Ensure you can reach an exit without being obstructed
- Arrange furniture so that it cannot be used against you
- Remove or secure objects that could be used
- Prevent any door locks from being activated by others
- Direct visitors to seat of your choice

- Inform others working nearby when you have someone present
- Have another person with you if you are apprehensive
- Prepare an urgent signal or call sign in the event of an emergency

Home Visits

Staff need to be aware that there are many visiting situations that are potentially dangerous and it is important that the risks are assessed prior to any visit. The most common types of risky situations are:

- Any visits that require investigation into alleged abuse, or possibly the removal of a child from a risk situation;
- Any visits which involve those who may be assessed for compulsory admission into hospital;
- Any visits involving people who use drugs or alcohol;
- Any visits involving people who are alleged to have knives or guns on the premises.

Always consider whether a home visit is really necessary or whether contact could be made in a different way or through another environment.

Mobile phones enhance security for staff. It is therefore essential that the phones are:

- Kept charged up at all times;
- Switched on during home visits that are unfamiliar to staff or where there are known or possible safety issues;
- That the mobile phone remains easily accessible;

Staff should take responsibility for their own personal safety by:

- Completing a home visit risk assessment (appendix ii) prior to the visit;
- Making visits in pairs, where possible;
- Ensuring their location and whereabouts are known and their contact information is accessible;
- When potential risks have been identified, a discussion between worker and manager must take place prior to the visit;
- When undertaking unplanned visits, workers should keep the Head informed and ensure the visit is known to office staff through the school's diary;
- Take precautions to ensure personal safety throughout the visit, e.g. parking in a well-lit area ensuring they can pull straight out of the space, having keys ready, not taking short cuts through alleys or isolated areas, carrying items to ensure safety (phone, alarm, torch);
- Headteacher, Deputy Head, Assistant Head or named colleague should always be contacted following an after-hours visit;
- Where there is potential risk, the worker will agree a timescale for the visit. Office staff will contact worker if visit exceeds timescale;
- Be vigilant to risks during the visit and make adjustments to the visit if needed;

- If at any point during a visit a member of staff is feeling under threat, intimidated or at risk, they must remove themselves from the situation immediately and safely;
- Follow the protocol for lone visits (appendix iii).

It is the responsibility of all school personnel and contractors to adhere to the lone working procedures and to report any difficulties, failure of equipment or general concerns on health and safety to the Headteacher. If members of staff fail to follow procedures designed to protect their safety, this could result in disciplinary procedures or management guidance as they will have contributed to their injury and any compensation claims for damages or unfair dismissal may be reduced accordingly.

Information and Training

Employees and others will be provided with the necessary information, training and supervision, to support them in the recognition of hazards and appreciation of the risks associated with working alone (and in any other working environment) and the precautions of safe working practices they should be using. Employees are required to follow the safe working practices which will include contact arrangements, the provision of first aid, keeping safe in lone working situations and emergency procedures. Line managers and the Headteacher are responsible for ensuring Trust employees can access the appropriate training.

Working from home

Whilst employees are working from home they have the same level of support and assistance as if they would if they were working from school. Line managers and employees will need to consider the additional measures which may need to be taken to keep the employee safe and healthy. These measures would include considering the security of the home, not giving out home addresses or phone numbers and any additional equipment or training which may be required.

Reviewing the Policy

The School Leadership Team, Health and Safety Governor, Local Governing Body and Trustees will regularly monitor the implementation of these procedures.

Following any incident or accident, an investigation will be carried out and its findings used to inform change to procedures and working practices.

Risk Assessment - Lone Working Please refer to the Lone Working Policy when completing this risk assessment

Name and Job Title:	Date of assessment:
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Lone working tasks/activities Please indicate tasks you intend to undertake when working alone	List foreseeable hazards below (e.g. violence, falls from height, manual handling injuries, etc.)	Additional controls that will be put in place for tasks/ activities that are unsafe to be carried out by a lone worker (e.g. working in

Name of assessor/Health and Safety Governor: (H&S Governor to ensure all measures are in place)	Signature:	Date:
Headteacher name:	Signature:	Date:

LONE WORKING AND HOME VISIT RISK ASSESSMENT

Name of Staff Member(s):	Date of visit:
Name of Parent/Person To Be Visited:	
Address:	
Telephone:	Date form completed:

RISK AREA	Yes	No	ADDITIONAL INFO
Purpose of Visit			
Is the visit necessary and been approved by the Headteacher?			
Is the level of staffing appropriate?			
Are the school office and Named Person aware of the visit and the expected time frame and have staff contact details?			
House Location			
Is the house/flat number or name visible from the road?			
Are specific directions required?			
Are there other houses close by?			
Are there any environmental risks/hazards (e.g. steps, alley way, uneven paths, debris etc.)?			
Travel/Parking			
Does the staff member have appropriate transport for the visit?			
Can you park outside on the road or close by < 5 minutes?			
Family Members and Associated Persons			
Are there concerns about other individuals in the household? (e.g. inappropriate behaviour/drugs/alcohol etc.)			
Are there concerns about the neighbours?			
Premises			
Does the property have mobile telephone network coverage?			
Are there any pets present which need to be restrained prior to the visit?			
Are there any alternative means of exiting the premises in the event of an emergency? (e.g. fire, violence etc.)			
Are there any other internal risks or hazards which cause you concern?			
Individual			
Does the parent use drugs/alcohol or smoke and does this pose a risk to staff?			
Does the parent have any sensory impairment, mental health issues, personality disorder, learning disability, other?			
Is there any history of violence/abuse/intimidation/bullying/domestic abuse?			

HOME VISIT SAFETY PROTOCOL: THE "PURPLE FOLDER" CODE

PROTOCOL FLOW: SOLO HOME VISITS

1. PREPARATION & ALERTS

- Alert SLT member of visit
- School Office must know:
Expected Duration & Location

2. UNCOMFORTABLE SITUATION



School Main Phonenumber
or
Webex Office Extension

STAFF USE CODE: "PURPLE FOLDER" IN A SENTENCE



"Can you check in in the **PURPLE FOLDER** to cancel my next appointment?"

OFFICE TEAM RESPONSE: IF CODE RECEIVED

1 REMAIN CALM & RESPOND



2 ASK KEY QUESTIONS



• "Do you want a colleague to join you?"



• "Should the Police be called?"



• "Are you at?"
(to confirm whereabouts)

3 ESCALATE & TAKE ACTION



IMMEDIATELY
Alert an SLT member
SLT MUST PHONE 999
TO ALERT POLICE
(IF REQUESTED)

DETAILS OF AMENDMENTS

April 2026

- New Policy and Guidance adopted.