LONE WORKING POLICY

Learning Academies Trust

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Approved by:	Duncan Baldie	Ratified date:	01 November 2022
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CHANGES

Policy date	Summary of change	Author	Version	Review date
01 November 2022	Policy has been created.	Duncan Baldie, Estates Manager	1.0	01/11/2024

1. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

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

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, states that it is the Employers Responsibility to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare (HSW) of all their staff. It is also the employee's responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by their work activity.

Aim:
To ensure adequate control measures are put into place to safeguard all employees who work alone at any point during their contractual duties.

2. LONE WORKERS

People working alone or in isolation from others may be at particular risk, either because of circumstances in their day to day working or because of an emergency situation. They are at extra risk

if they are not in regular contact with others and are not kept informed of any changes that may affect them. Lone workers should not be at more risk than other employees. 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. Employers should identify situations where people work alone and ask questions such as:

- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a safe way in and out for one person?
- Can all the plant, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
- 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.
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Does the person have any medical condition that may affect their suitability to work alone?
- What happens if the person either becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency?
- There are various work activities that result in staff members working alone; for example:
- Staff who are required to work alone for all or most of the time, such as cleaning staff working at
- night or early morning.
- 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.
- Staff who are key-holders or who are left to turn out the lights, set the alarm and lock up the premises after everyone else has gone home.
- Members of staff working at home.
- 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 working hours or who routinely work in these locations on their own.
- Category Two: The caretaker and cleaning staff that have to work out of hours; (refer to caretakers and site manager section, under activities to be avoided).
- Category Three: Key holders on a call out.

3. MANAGER DUTIES
Provide safe systems of work for all staff.

- Ensure that there are appropriate security systems in place to secure the building.
- Provide security devices for members of staff when they are working in the office or out in the community, if assessed as appropriate.
- Carry out personal risk assessments for all staff working alone.
- During one-to-one sessions, discuss the control measures that are in place to ensure they are still adequate or discuss amendments.
- Identify any training needs and ensure these are met.
- Set up an adequate system for recording home and out of office visits. Ensure this is kept up to date on a daily basis, for example: staff reporting to the office; their location and general movements for the day, where this is required as part of the risk assessment.
- Ensure systems are agreed, on how to raise the alarm and copies of the procedures are given to all relevant staff.
- Ensure that anyone who is not able to raise the alarm is not left alone.
- Ensure that during induction all procedures are discussed, a copy of relevant information is obtained, and a training plan is agreed by both the staff member and the manager.
- Ensure that the staff members are suitable to be left working alone.

- Ensure that your procedures allow for lone workers to request additional support when they feel vulnerable.
- Discuss this policy on a regular basis during team meetings, as a priority if an incident has occurred.
- Provide practical support when needed.
- Report any incidents to the Headteacher and where appropriate and proportional the MAT Central Team
- Record and monitor all accidents and incidents and report findings to the Headteacher.

All records are held in the School or Local Office

4. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff members 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 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.
- Ensure that they have made themselves aware of the nearest place of safety.
- Be aware of the on-site security procedures.
- Ensure that access is available to personal alarms/mobile phones or some form of personal
- communication.

5. RISK ASSOCIATED WITH VIOLENCE

Below are some indicators that may make violence more likely, and should be taken into account in staff risk assessments. Staff may need to consider if the people they 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 staff 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 the correct measures are in place to reduce the risk to its lowest level. Staff need to consider the person or persons they may be visiting or attending to alone, and the risks involved in each situation.

7. THREATS TO STAFF

Very occasionally staff 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 staff members are subjected to 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;

- Access personal safety training;
- Report whereabouts to office at all times, when changing venues or set up buddy system.

8. KEY HOLDER AND ATTENDANCE OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Key holders may need to attend premises outside of normal business hours. This may be to carry out normal work activities, following the activation of an intruder alarm or because of some other emergency that might have occurred.

Key holders should be registered with the Alarm company operative 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 key holders should be appointed in order to cover holidays and sickness etc.

Key holders who are carrying out normal work activities, should follow the general lone working guidance in this policy.

Key holders who 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 Officers name and number or Alarm Company operative's name.
- Using telephone numbers previously obtained, call back and verify the detail. Do not use the number that called unless recognised.
- Key holder to contact a member of their family or other responsible person within 5 minutes of arrival and arrange to call back either on conclusion of investigation or 30 minutes, whichever is sooner.
- Arrange with either a family member or other responsible person to call the Police to the premises if they have not heard from the Key Holder after 30 minutes of estimated arrival time.

8.1. On Arrival at the premises

- If the Police are in attendance, make sure they have checked all sides of the buildings.
- Then enter with the Police and check all areas.
- 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 from the first available telephone, call the Police by dialling 999.
- 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 as above.**
- If in doubt leave the site immediately, even if you have the use of a mobile phone.
- Arrange to meet the Police nearby. **This is for own safety.**

8.2. On entering the premises

- Carefully note all information displayed on the alarm controls. Take no action at the control panel beyond un-setting the protected areas.
- **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.
- If alone and, at any point, it is suspected there has been a break-in, then leave the premises immediately and call the Police.
- 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.

8.3. After checking the premises

If there is no apparent break-in, the alarm company or appointed contractor should be called to arrange for an engineer to attend if panel cannot be reset. Obtain his/her name and estimated

time of arrival.

- Notify the member of family or other responsible person, who is expecting to be contacted, to let them know you are safe and all is in order. Consider arranging to make further calls if appropriate.
- Check identification of alarm engineer on arrival; call the alarm company to verify details if necessary.
- 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.
- If you are not responsible for opening the premises at the start of the next day, leave a note on the office reception desk 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.
- Ensure that all written logs detailing what has occurred are correctly completed by both the key-holder attending and the alarm engineer. These logs must be returned to school office.
- Advise the Headteacher and other members of staff at the earliest opportunity on the next working day.
- Secure the premises and set the alarm system.
- On your next return to the premises advise the relevant members of staff about the situation.

9. CARETAKER/SITE MANAGER

The Site Management Team (Site Manager/Cleaners) is more likely to be lone working and often a key holder, responsible for opening and locking up the premises. They are also likely to be 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 'Key Holders'.

10. WORKING FROM HOME

All staff members who are requested/required to work from home are to ensure that their premises are suitable for use and adequate equipment is made available for their normal duties. This will include additional equipment, as requested under the Display Screen Equipment Regulations (DSE Regs).

Additional assessments should be undertaken to ensure the safety of home workers, including regular contact during normal working hours. Utilisation of software to detect absence such as Microsoft Teams should be considered. Should a member of staff be expected to be working from home for longer periods, consideration should be made for a "buddy system" to ensure contact is maintained to support potential isolation and Wellbeing.
Additional guidance : https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm

11. HAZARDS

Key holders may be required to undertake a number of potentially hazardous activities whilst working alone, which could require additional control measures to be implemented. These 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. CONTROL MEASURES

All members of staff who are likely to be lone working are to ensure that a suitable cascaded

contact is available should they fail to return home or make contact as agreed. This number should be the employer (School Head/Central Team).

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

- Working at height
- Work in confined spaces

Consideration should also be given to any pre-existing medical conditions that key holders may have. These may increase their risk and the control measures required to safeguard them when working alone.

Examples of control measures that can be adopted may include:

- Only use equipment provided by the employer
- Follow 'key holder' guidance in this document when checking security of building or site
- Ensure any procedures are known and followed for re-lighting boiler after period of shut down
- Ensure employee is adequately trained for the required task
- Ensure site entrances and exits are free from defects and well lit
- Carry a fully charged torch when attending site after dark
- Ensure all necessary Risk Assessments have been undertaken and (where necessary) Method
- Statements are in place e.g. Manual Handling.

13. TRAINING

Depending upon the staff member's job role, a Training Plan should be prepared and introduced through induction. This should cover all aspects of lone working and ensure that the staff member is able to safeguard their welfare whilst alone on premises.

14. FIRST AID REQUIREMENTS

First aid 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.

15. 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.

16. REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS

- 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 3-days work or someone is unable to carry out normal duties for over 3-days, then a HSE F2508 form must be completed by the headteacher or admin officer. They should send it to the Estates Office for forwarding to the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with Reporting of Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995.**
- The Headteacher must be informed of any incident involving violence, which includes verbal abuse, physical assault and property damage.

17. MONITORING AND REVIEWING

All accidents, incidents or near misses should be logged and monitored by the caretakers of the school. The caretaker/site manager should make ongoing assessments to identify trends, and review the Risk Assessments accordingly. This must also be reported back to the Headteacher, so they are aware of any situations that may have

arisen and been reported to Governors as appropriate. This policy to be reviewed as required , a duration no greater than 2 years