



Staploe Education Trust

Lone Working Policy & Procedure

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1. Aims and definitions

This policy aims to:

- Set out expectations for staff working alone or in isolated situations
- Outline how the trust will minimise and manage risks for those lone working both on school sites and at home.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors. Throughout the term 'staff' should be read to include both staff and volunteers associated with the school or trust.

The HSE define lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'.

2. Circumstances when staff might work alone or in isolation

Staff, volunteers and contractors may work alone for the following reasons:

- Staff who work alone for all or most of the time, such as cleaning staff working in the evening or early mornings.
- Staff starting or finishing work before or after others are in the building
- Staff working in school in the school holidays, when less staff may be on site
- Staff who are key-holders
- Contractors working on their own or in isolated areas of the school site
- Staff working at home

The trust respects the right of the employee, under the Employment Rights Act 1996, to refuse to carry out work where there is a serious and imminent risk of danger. They also can advise others to do the same without being dismissed as a result. Staff should be proactive in bringing to the attention of the headteacher and/or head of estates, contracts and energy any aspect of work-related risks.

3. Requesting to work alone or in isolation

Staff should seek the permission of the headteacher to work alone in the building outside normal hours. The experience, training and medical suitability of the worker, as well as the school's lone working risk assessment for lone working will be considered as part of each request.

On agreement of lone working arrangements, the staff member should sign and return the lone working agreement form in appendix 2 to the headteacher.

The caretakers should be informed if a staff member intends to work late, so they can check in with the staff member.

Those requesting to work at home should follow the process set out in the trust's working from home policy which is available on the trust's website.

4. Risks when lone workings

Lone working carries risk, not necessarily because it makes an activity a greater risk but those working alone or in isolation are more vulnerable and lack support when dealing with issues that arise.

The risks to consider when lone working are:

- Violence in the workplace, lone working makes workers more vulnerable due to lack of nearby support
- Stress and mental health or wellbeing, it is important to have relationships with, and support from, other workers.
- A person's medical suitability to work alone – both routine work and possible emergencies that may put additional physical and mental burdens on the lone worker should be considered
- The workplace itself, for example if it's in a rural or isolated area

A risk assessment will need to be carried out for lone working at each individual school as well as for those who work at home.

5. Managing Risks

Personal Safety:

Lone working does not always mean a higher risk to personal safety, but it does make workers more vulnerable. The lack of nearby support makes it harder for them to prevent an incident.

To manage these risks the following measures must be followed:

- The staff member who is lone working should notify someone of their intended time at work and their intended time of return. All lone working staff 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 an appropriate colleague's telephone contact number (ie. line manager's mobile phone number) to call if the lone worker fails to return home at the expected time. This should be done in agreement with the staff member whose telephone number is being shared. A lone worker should at all-times have access to a mobile phone or school landline.
- 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.

- Contractors must have agreed their work with the school's caretaker or trust's head of estates, contracts and energy prior to entering the school site.
- In normal circumstances, a caretaker will meet the contractor on their arrival and the contractor will inform them of their expected time of departure from the site. Contact details will be shared in case of query or incident.
- Staff and contractors should not enter the school site if there is sign of physical damage to the building that would pose a risk to them. The school caretaker should be contacted in this instance.
- Staff and contractors should not enter the school premises if there are signs of intruders but are advised to immediately call the police.
- Staff and contractors should activate the door security system when lone working and ensure that areas of the school not in use are kept secure.
- Staff must not place themselves in danger by challenging intruders or vandals but should call the police for assistance.
- 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. A radio for use on site must be carried at all times.

Health

The physical and mental health of staff is of high importance to the trust.

When lone working the following will be considered:

- Stress and other work-related mental health conditions can cause staff to feel disconnected, isolated or abandoned. The effects of lone working should be monitored regularly by the staff members line manager.
- Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness. It will be at the headteacher's discretion, with guidance from medical professionals when needed, as to whether they believe a staff member's medical condition poses a risk to lone working.
- Staff must familiarise themselves with the location of the nearest first aid kit when working on site.
- Lone workers should not undertake activities that have been identified as medium or high risk or which are potentially hazardous given their own level of experience and the nature of the task. Only agreed tasks are to be undertaken while lone working.
- Staff should contact the emergency contacts set out in the lone working booklet for staff in an emergency situation.

Training and Supervision

It is more difficult for those lone working to get help. It is important that those lone working are competent to deal with the requirements of the activity, trained appropriately and able to recognise when advice should be sought.

The following measures must be followed:

- Lone workers must be considered capable of responding correctly in an emergency

situation by the headteacher and/or head of estates, contracts and energy.

- Staff 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.
- Staff will be fully trained and competent in their role before they undertake lone working or in isolation.
- Staff will have proof of any training required for their roles prior to proceeding with lone working.

Working from home

The trust has the same health and safety responsibilities for homeworkers and the same liability for accident or injury as for any other worker.

We will therefore provide adequate supervision, education and training, as well as implementing enough control measures to protect the homeworker.

Further information about working from home can be found in the trust's working from home policy.

Key Holders

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

The following processes have therefore been put in place:

- Key holder information is registered with the school's monitoring/alarm system.
- At least three key holders should be appointed in order to cover holidays and sickness etc (please see appendix 1 for intruder alarm activation procedures.)
- For the safety of key holders the alarm activation procedure, as set out in appendix 1 must be followed, including measures for police to be called if the key holder hasn't checked in within the agreed time scale.

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 and/or head of estates, contracts and energy. If members of staff fail to follow procedures designed to protect their safety, this could result in a disciplinary matter as they will have contributed to their injury and any compensation claims for damages or unfair dismissal may be reduced accordingly.

6. Policy Review:

The head of estates, contracts and energy and/or the health and safety advisory body member will regularly monitor the implementation of these procedures. Following any incident an investigation will be carried out and its findings used to inform change to procedures and

working practices.

The policy will be reviewed at least every three-years, or early to reflect changes in guidance or working practice.

Appendix 1: Alarm Activation procedures

On receiving a telephone call notifying of intruder alarm activation establish the identity of the person making the call i.e. Alarm system company.

Arrange with either a member of your family or other responsible person to call the Police to the premises if they have not heard to say that all is well. This call should be made between 30 to 45 minutes after the estimate time of arrival.

What to take:

- Identification of who you are, for example an employee badge. This helps if Police do attend the scene or are later called to the scene.
- A torch of a reasonable size and power
- Your mobile phone

On arrival at the premises

If the Police are in attendance make sure they have checked all sides of the building. Then enter with the Police and check all areas.

If the Police are not in attendance walk slowly round as much of the premises as possible checking for forced entry e.g. broken glass, prised doors, windows etc. including the roof and walls. Evidence of flash lights being used or other lights left on within the building; noise from within the building or outside; suspicious/unfamiliar vehicles parked in the immediate area. If in any doubt leave the site and call the Police by dialling 999.

If all appears to be quiet, enter and check premises. Switch on appropriate lights and proceed to re-set the alarm. 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 your own safety.

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 Police are in attendance they should be made aware of the telephones not working.

If alone and, at any point, it is suspected there has been a break-in, then leave the premises and call the Police.

If there has been a break-in, re-enter the premises and check carefully with the police and following their instructions. Please note that a crime reference number will be required for insurance purposes.

After checking the premises:

Notify the member of family or other responsible person, who is expecting to be contacted, to let them know that all is in order. Consider arranging to make further calls if appropriate.

Arrange for any emergency repairs to be made so the premises can be secured.

If there is no apparent break-in, secure the premises and set the alarm system.

If the reason for the alarm activation cannot be identified it may be necessary to arrange with the head of estates, contracts and energy the following day to contact the alarm company to check the system for faults.

Complete an alarm monitoring form the following day with full details of the problem.



Appendix 2: Lone Working Agreement Form

Name		Department	
Role		Line Manager	

Declaration

I have received and read a copy of the:

- Lone Working Policy & Procedure
- Lone working booklet

I understand the contents and agree to work to the guidance and standards contained in it. I understand that failure to comply with the guidance may result in serious disciplinary or legal action.

Signed		Date	
The original copy of this sheet will be filed in the staff member's file and please take a copy for your own records			