



Lone Working Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out how the provision manages the safety, welfare and safeguarding risks associated with staff working alone. It applies particularly to staff working alone outside the core hours of 0900–1530 hrs and to staff working one-to-one alone in a classroom, or activity room with one child. The aim is to ensure that lone working is planned, risk assessed, supervised, monitored and only permitted where suitable control measures are in place.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and agency staff, who may work without close or direct supervision on behalf of the provision, whether on site, off site, before or after the normal provision day, or during one-to-one work with a child.

Definition of Lone Working

Lone working means working by oneself without close or direct supervision. In this provision, lone working may include being the only staff member on site, working separately from colleagues in another part of the building, working outside core hours, transporting or supervising pupils away from the main group, or working one-to-one in a classroom, activity room, or intervention space with a child.

Legal and Safeguarding Framework

The provision will manage lone working in line with relevant health and safety and safeguarding duties, including the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, current Health and Safety Executive guidance on lone working, and statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and colleges, including Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Policy Statement

The provision recognises that lone working can increase risk because immediate support may not be available if an incident, accident, medical emergency, allegation, behavioural crisis or safeguarding concern arises. Lone working will therefore only take place where it is necessary, authorised, risk assessed and subject to appropriate monitoring and communication arrangements.

Responsibilities

Managing Director

- Ensure there is an effective lone working policy and associated risk assessment process.
- Ensure safeguarding and health and safety arrangements are reviewed regularly.
- Hold senior leaders to account for the safe management of lone working.

Director of Operations

- Authorise lone working arrangements, including working outside 0900–1530 hrs.
- Ensure suitable risk assessments are completed and reviewed.
- Ensure staff have access to emergency contact details, communication devices and clear escalation procedures.
- Ensure lone working is not used where risks cannot be adequately controlled.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Advise on safeguarding risks associated with lone working and one-to-one work with pupils.
- Ensure all safeguarding concerns, disclosures or allegations arising during lone working are recorded and acted upon immediately.
- Review patterns of concern relating to one-to-one sessions, behaviour incidents or staff safety.

Staff

- Follow this policy, risk assessments and safeguarding procedures at all times.
- Obtain authorisation before working alone outside core hours.
- Notify a senior leader or nominated contact of their location, expected times and completion of lone working.
- Maintain professional boundaries and safe practice when working one-to-one with pupils.
- Report incidents, near misses, concerns, injuries, aggressive behaviour, allegations or unsafe arrangements promptly.

Risk Assessment

A lone working risk assessment must be completed before lone working is agreed. The assessment must consider the activity, location, pupil profile, staff experience, time of day, foreseeable behaviour risks, medical needs, safeguarding concerns, access to support, communication arrangements, emergency procedures and the staff member's suitability to work alone.

Working Alone Outside Core Hours of 0900–1530 hrs

Core hours for this provision are 0900–1530 hrs. Any staff member who needs to work alone before 0900 hrs or after 1530 hrs must have prior approval from the Managing Director or Director of Operations. Lone working outside core hours must be exceptional, planned and recorded.

- Staff must sign in and out using the agreed system and inform the nominated contact when they arrive and leave.
- Staff must carry a charged mobile phone or approved communication device at all times.
- A nominated contact must know the staff member's expected location, start time, finish time and reason for being on site.
- Staff must not admit pupils, parents, carers, contractors or visitors during lone working outside core hours unless this has been expressly authorised and risk assessed.
- Staff must not undertake high-risk tasks alone, including physical intervention planning or practice, moving heavy items, working at height, using hazardous equipment, or dealing with aggressive or unknown visitors.
- External doors must remain secured, and staff must work in an area with safe access to an exit.
- If the staff member fails to check in or check out as agreed, the nominated contact must follow the escalation procedure, including contacting the staff member, contacting a senior leader and, where necessary, calling emergency services.

Working One-to-One Alone in a Classroom or Activity Room with One Child

The provision recognises that one-to-one work may be necessary for teaching, mentoring, therapeutic input, assessments, behaviour support or safeguarding support. However, one-to-one work alone with a child must be carefully managed to protect the child and the staff member.

- One-to-one sessions should be timetabled, authorised and known to another member of staff.
- The classroom or intervention room should be suitable, visible and safe, preferably with a vision panel, open blind, internal window or door left ajar where appropriate.
- Staff must avoid working in isolated areas where they cannot be seen or easily supported.
- The session start time, end time, location, staff member and pupil name must be recorded in line with the provision's procedures.
- Where a pupil has known risks relating to aggression, absconding, self-harm, sexualised behaviour, false allegations, trauma triggers or medical needs, an

individual risk assessment must identify whether one-to-one lone working is appropriate.

- Staff must maintain professional boundaries, use appropriate language and avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Any physical contact must be limited to what is necessary, proportionate, lawful and in line with the behaviour, restraint, first aid or intimate care policies.
- Staff must never cover windows, lock doors, use personal devices for private communication with pupils, or arrange unrecorded one-to-one sessions.
- If a child becomes distressed, discloses a safeguarding concern, makes an allegation, becomes aggressive, attempts to leave, or presents a risk to themselves or others, staff must seek support immediately and follow safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

Safeguarding Controls

- All staff must follow the Staff Code of Conduct, safeguarding policy, behaviour policy and whistleblowing procedures.
- Safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and recorded on the agreed system.
- Allegations or concerns about an adult must be reported immediately to the Director of Operations. If the concern relates to the Director of Operations, it must be reported to the Managing Director or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Staff must not place themselves or pupils in situations that could be misinterpreted or that do not follow agreed safe working practice.
- Where possible, staff should use rooms that allow appropriate visibility while preserving the child's dignity and confidentiality.

Communication and Monitoring

Appropriate communication arrangements must be in place for all lone working. This may include scheduled check-ins, a signing-in and signing-out process, a buddy system, use of work mobile phones, and senior leader walk-throughs.

Emergency Procedures

- In an emergency, staff must call 999 where there is immediate risk to life, serious injury, fire, violence, a serious medical incident or a child at immediate risk of significant harm.
- Staff must alert a senior leader or nominated contact as soon as it is safe to do so.
- All incidents, accidents, near misses, safeguarding concerns and behaviour incidents must be recorded before the end of the working day wherever possible.

- After any significant incident involving lone working, the risk assessment must be reviewed before the arrangement continues.

Training

Staff who may work alone must receive appropriate induction and training. This should include safeguarding, child protection, behaviour management, de-escalation, emergency procedures, reporting systems, professional boundaries, first aid arrangements, site security and the specific controls in this policy.

Prohibited Lone Working Arrangements

- Staff must not work alone with a pupil where the risk assessment states that two adults are required.
- Staff must not work alone outside core hours without prior authorisation.
- Staff must not meet pupils alone in unapproved rooms, off-site locations or private premises unless a separate authorised risk assessment is in place.
- Staff must not remain on site alone if they feel unsafe, if communication systems fail, or if there is an uncontrolled risk.

Reporting and Review

All lone working incidents, near misses, safeguarding concerns and breaches of this policy must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This policy will be reviewed annually, following any serious incident, following changes to staffing or site arrangements, or when updated legislation or statutory guidance requires changes.



Nicholas Morris
Director – Productive Learning UK Limited