



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Lone Working Policy

Approved by	Approval date	Review date
FGB	July 2023	Summer 2025
FGB	17 July 2025	Summer 2027

LONE WORKER POLICY

Context

Sparken Hill Academy recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of its employees while working alone. This policy sets out our approach in both identifying these risks and adequately managing them. Any questions regarding its operation should be addressed to the Principal.

Background information

For the purposes of this policy, a lone worker is any individual who spends some or all of their working hours working alone. This may occur either during normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace, or when working outside normal hours or outside the normal workplace. Normal hours for the majority of staff are deemed to be from 08:00 until 17:00, Monday to Friday. Individual contracts may specify hours outside of this range to address extended school, community education and due to the nature of individuals role, for example premises and catering staff.

Legal position

Our duty to both assess and control any risks from lone working is governed by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA). Section 2 requires us to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of our employees. Similar duties are owed to other workers, such as temporary agency workers under section 3 of the HSWA, where we will ensure such persons are not exposed to risks regarding their health and safety. This will be achieved by carrying out risk assessments in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended).

Risk assessment

Our risk assessments (RA) cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed to be undertaken alone), where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong. **See appendix A** for the template RA that should be made specific to task/role etc. Once all job roles involving lone working have been identified, the following factors will be considered:

Site security

All staff have a duty for ensuring the academy is secure from perpetrators. Whilst the key holder will be responsible for ensuring the site and building is alarmed and secure at the end of each day, all staff must ensure that doors and windows in the area they are working remain closed during any period of lone working to avoid risk of external access. Failure to do so is considered as a breach of site security.

Risk of violence

All jobs involving an element of lone working will be assessed for a risk of verbal threats, or violence. The priority will be those involving face-to-face dealings with members of the public and/or cash handling.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment used by lone workers will be assessed to ensure that it is suitable for use by one person.

Work at height

Working at height will not be undertaken when working alone and must comply with health and safety provisions for the use of ladders and scaffold towers in accordance with the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and the Work at Height Amendment Regulations 2007.

Chemicals

Any existing or planned use of chemicals will be considered with regards to their suitability for use by those working alone.

The worker

The medical fitness of workers working alone will be assessed. Staff will be encouraged to refer any concerns to their GP as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Access and egress

Some lone working may require access to locations which are difficult to access or exit. Assessments will consider whether these tasks are suitable to be carried out by one person.

Control measures

In order to manage the risks identified, we have introduced the following control measures:

Risk of violence

- Staff are required to lock themselves in the buildings when lone working.
- Members of staff must not arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working. All meetings must be arranged during school occupancy times or when there is more than one member of staff on site for the duration of the meeting.
- Members of staff are required not to handle cash when lone working.
- Late meetings must finish promptly and not leave one member of staff alone on site.
- Members of staff are required not to approach, or let into the buildings, unauthorised persons when lone working.
- All staff members are required to give 24 hours' notice to the line manager before lone working, either after hours or through holiday periods.
- The academy commissions the services of a key holding company that attends alarm callouts out of academy hours including weekends. Occasionally there may be times when a member of staff who is a key holder will attend an alarm call out – in this instance the following would be expected:
 1. The member of staff attending the activation MUST ensure they have alerted another person, this can be a nominated family member, friend or colleague.
 2. They should advise of their attendance with the time of departure from home and arrival to site. It should be agreed that communication will be made at intervals throughout the period they are on site. Failure of communication being received from the member of staff the nominated person should raise the alarm to the police and the principal.

3. Upon arrival to site, the member of staff attending should park in the staff car park, outside the main reception. They should stay in their vehicle and log on the academy's CCTV system. All cameras should be viewed before accessing the building (this can help with identifying if there are any perpetrators on site). If no evidence of perpetrators is detected, the member of staff should approach the building with caution. Entry should only be gained via main reception.
4. Should there be any signs that a perpetrator may be on site, police support must sought immediately before any attempts to enter the building are made.

Communication

- Staff members are required to avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.
- Staff members are required to sign in and off the site.
- Staff members are required to carry either a mobile phone or school telephone at all times when lone working.
- Staff members are required to
 - let a family member or friend and
 - their line manager

know they are coming into work, how long they are expected to be on site and when they are leaving the site.

- Staff members are required to comply with all fire evacuation procedures.

First aid

For those working on our premises, first aid kits can be found in the:

- First aid room
- Kitchen
- Site Managers office

Emergency procedures

In the event that a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone/school phone to contact the principal, the staff member's nominated person or the emergency services.

Access and egress

Staff members are required to consider weather conditions before coming into and while at work.

Unacceptable lone working

The following activities are not to be carried out by lone workers under any circumstances:

- Working at height.
- Manual handling of heavy or bulky items.

Training

Lone workers will be trained in safe working practices. This will apply to employees and other workers where applicable, such as agency staff and contractors.

Contractors

Contractors will need to complete a notification of works in advance of works being carried out, this will include Risk Assessments & Method Statements (RAMS). These will be reviewed by the academy personnel responsible for this (Site Manager or Business Manager) and any periods of lone working will be assessed and managed in line with this policy.

Line managers

It is the responsibility of individual line managers, to monitor the tasks being carried out by staff. In particular, they are responsible for ensuring that any proscribed tasks are not carried out by one person alone. If the nature of the task changes, in any way, the line manager must ensure that a new risk assessment is carried out. They also need to ensure that any lone worker follows good working practices and safe systems of work.

Lone worker duties

All lone workers are expected to co-operate fully with instructions given by their line manager. They are also expected to follow the school's safe systems of work and any associated procedures. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or be a disciplinary offence.

Appendix A

Operations/Work Activities covered by this assessment:						
Site Address/Location:			Department/Service/Team:			
Assessment Date:	Click or tap to enter a date.		Lead Assessor:			
Authorised By:						
Who Might Be Affected	Employee ☐	Contractor ☐	Visitor ☐	Pupil ☐	Client ☐	Member of Public/Third Party ☐
Note: A person specific assessment must be carried out for young persons, pregnant employees, and nursing employees						

Hazards Considered	How might they be Harmed	Current Control/Mitigation Measures:	Risk Rating			Action Required/ Action No.
			Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating	
Inadequate arrangements for managing lone working procedures / policy.	Physical injury, ill-health, stress, and impact on mental health from working alone without direct or close supervision.	Lone working to be avoided wherever possible. Consideration to be given to: • Complete the task during normal working hours. • Complete at an occupied location • Provide supervision / support • High risk activities which cannot be conducted whilst lone working e.g. work at height, confined spaces etc. Formal procedures / policy in place relating to lone working activities. Formally communicate lone working procedures to all staff and maintain a record to evidence the communication. Include lone working arrangements within the induction process for new members of staff. Review lone working arrangements / procedures / policy on a periodic basis. A specific review must be undertaken following a near miss, accident, incident, or report of concerns. Debrief and feedback any lessons learned following any review processes to all staff. Guidance is available from the HSE and the Suzy Lamplugh Trust: • indg73.pdf (hse.gov.uk) • Lone workers (hse.gov.uk) • Personal safety advice Suzy Lamplugh Trust				
Inadequate communication arrangements leading to lack of support for lone worker and inability to follow emergency procedures.	Physical injury, ill-health, stress, and impact on mental health from inadequate support and communication arrangements. Inability to contact support or notify of an emergency.	Emergency contact information available and kept up to date. Staff aware of their responsibility to notify of any changes to contact information, including home address, telephone number and emergency contact.				

	Potentially fatal consequences if involved in an emergency.	Procedures for emergency communication plan in place both lone worker aware of who to contact in an emergency and staff aware of escalation procedure to follow. Cover is available to receive calls from staff outside of work hours and / or and during periods of absence. Staff required to have a means of contact e.g. mobile phone when lone working. Signal strength is considered and reminder to keep equipment charged. Contact details venue being visited obtained where necessary e.g. address and phone number. System in place to check in / out of a visit and to keep in touch with a contact. For example, expected time of departure / arrival. Implement a buddy system, where staff team up for communication and overseeing health and safety when engaged in home / off-site visits. Shared work / school calendars (or alternative) used to notify others of location and plans. First aid provisions are considered and implemented including: • Carrying first aid equipment • First aid training, including how to use first aid on themselves • Access to adequate first aid facilities • Action to take if injured at work • Method of reporting accidents, incidents and near misses. Any accidents, incidents or near misses are recorded and investigations completed where appropriate.				
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		Formally communicate any identified risks / issues / concerns to Senior Leadership Team. Counselling and support services made available to staff.				
Individual at increased risk of harm whilst lone working, including stress, mental health, wellbeing, and other health / individual factors.	Physical injury, ill-health, stress, and impact on mental health from working alone without direct or close supervision. Individual with specific medical conditions may be at greater risk of harm.	Determine if it is suitable for the individual to conduct lone working activities. Conduct an individual risk assessment to ensure that suitable and sufficient control measures are implemented for those at increased risk due to individual factors. Consider routine work and possible emergencies that may put additional physical and mental burdens on the lone worker. Consider individual factors, including (but not limited to): • Medical conditions • New and expectant mothers • Age • Training and experience • Gender • Ethnicity • A specific new and expectant mothers risk assessment must be completed where necessary. When first language is not English, consider unfamiliar risks, difference in workplace culture and understanding of information, instruction, and training. Suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training provided to lone workers.				

		All staff provided with information and instruction on lone working procedures and arrangements, including dealing with emergencies. Procedures implemented to enable direct contact with lone workers. Normal work practices including breaks and rest periods to be adhered to as far as reasonably practicable.				
Work environment leading to increased risk of harm whilst lone working.	Physical injury, ill-health, stress, and impact on mental health due to hazards from the work environment.	If working in a rural or isolated area, consider: • Phone signal and how this will impact communication arrangements • Travel to and from the location • Emergency arrangements If working in someone's home or another premises, consider: • Lack of familiarity with premises or third parties • Evacuation arrangements • Personal safety • Other unknown individuals present • Animals • Emergency arrangements Consider the affect from adverse weather conditions and how this may impact the lone worker: • Travel disruption. • Appropriate clothing and footwear. • Welfare and comfort – including food, drink, breaks. • Fatigue. • Emergencies and response.				

		Out of hours working. Individuals / task may be affected by darkness and ability to contact others.				
Individual at increased risk of harm whilst working from home.	Physical injury, ill-health, stress, and impact on mental health from working alone without direct or close supervision.	Maintain regular contact with those working from home. Encourage contact from home worker to others. Consider activities undertaken whilst working at home and implement additional control measures where necessary. Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments completed of workstation. Additional controls / equipment provided where necessary. Ensure support / communication mechanisms are in place to support and identify stress and mental health concerns with employees.				
Inadequate planning of travel and individual at higher risk during when travelling.	Physical injury, ill-health, stress, and impact on mental health whilst travelling. Potentially fatal consequences if involved in an emergency or road traffic collision.	Ensure that travel arrangements are suitable and sufficient, safe routes are taken and estimated time of arrival and departure are known to supervisor especially when working off site or making home visits. Allow plenty of time for the journey and know the route. Ensure enough fuel for journey. Use only approved and authorised forms of public transport and pay particular attention to taxis – use only marked taxis, book for outbound and return journey before you leave if possible and ask for details of car and if possible, driver to ensure you are getting into right car. Ensure vehicle is in good working order and insurance includes business travel. Note vehicle details as part of emergency contact information e.g. registration number, make, model and colour.				

		Carry emergency equipment that may be required e.g. torch, telephone numbers for emergencies, blanket, drinking water, phone charger, first aid kit etc. Lock vehicle doors when in transit, particularly when travelling at a slow speed, stopped at traffic lights and when travelling in built up areas. Park close to the visiting location, in a well-lit area and facing the direction of travel. Reverse into spaces wherever possible. Walking / out and about – keep to well-lit areas, busy streets, and try to face oncoming traffic. Consider the use of personal alarms. If carrying equipment use bags that do not advertise what they are carrying e.g. laptop bag. Consider carrying mobile phone and keys separately. Avoid wearing ID badge and identifiable uniforms when travelling.				
Individual at increased risk of harm from violence and aggression whilst lone working.	Physical injury, ill-health, stress, and impact on mental health from violent, aggressive, or threatening behaviour. Potential for fatal consequences or severe injury.	Avoid lone working where there are known risks of violence and aggression. Staff to be made aware of any previous history about pupils or third-party users – considering information from partner agencies if necessary. Consider completing the visit at a neutral location or within a secure environment. Specific violence and aggression risk assessment completed. Suitable and sufficient information, instruction, and training for coping with risky behaviours (CRB training) and de-escalation techniques. Staff to remove themselves from any situation where they feel their personal safety is compromised.				

		Implement a system of emergency words / phrases to use in emergency situations without highlighting concern to perpetrator(s). Report any accidents, incidents or near misses. Where appropriate report incidents to police. Staff to remain alert and aware of: • Positioning within room e.g. sit closest to the exit. • Aware of all entrances and exits • Positioning of items (including personal belongings) which could be used as a weapon. • Aware of body language and other cues which could indicate an escalating situation. • Aware of their own body language. • Utilising physical security measures e.g. panic alarms. • Try not to walk in front of third parties – follow instead. • Individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If there is a known problem with animals at an address / location request to remove or secure animals both before and / or on arrival. Individual must not put themselves at risk and abandon the visit if necessary. Vary the time of day, day of week etc. for visits to avoid becoming a target. Suitable and sufficient site security to prevent unauthorised access to site. Consider the use of security services if attending alarm call outs. Do not confront intruders. Avoid cash handling. Use the acronym P L A N as is provides a good basis for any visits:				
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		• P – Plan to meet first time visitors in a public place or in a properly laid out meeting room, if possible, arrange meeting where possible during daylight hours / school day, will you be returning after dark, contact details (telephone numbers), car details / registration numbers etc. • L – Let a buddy or manager know where you'll be and phone after to let someone know you are safe. • A – Always make contingency plans for situations that you believe may be difficult. • N – Never assume it won't happen to you, look confident.				
Additional Notes						

Control Improvements/Developments				
Action No.	Recommended additional control measures	Responsibility	Target Date	Date Completed
			Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap to enter a date.
			Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap to enter a date.
			Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap to enter a date.
			Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature of Assessor	Date:
Signature of Person Authorising:	Date:

Reviews – this assessment should be reviewed at intervals no greater than 12 months or if there are changes to the procedures, personnel, work environment or following an incident

Review Date	Comments/Amendments	Reviewed By	Signature		Review Date	Comments/Amendments	Reviewed By	Signature
Click or tap to enter a date.					Click or tap to enter a date.			
Click or tap to enter a date.					Click or tap to enter a date.			
Click or tap to enter a date.					Click or tap to enter a date.			
Click or tap to enter a date.					Click or tap to enter a date.			

Potential Severity of Harm	Major	Medium	High	High
	Minor	Low	Medium	High
	Negligible	Low	Low	Medium
		Rare	Possible	Almost Certain
		Likelihood of Harm Occurring		

Definitions	
High	Take appropriate action within agreed period
Medium	Monitor & Review Situation
Low	No Action Required

The following table should be used for all staff to sign and date to confirm that the risk assessment has been read.

Print Name	Signature	Date		Print Name	Signature	Date

