



Special Partnership Trust



LONE WORKING POLICY

Date Last Reviewed: March 2025

Review Date: March 2027

Lone working Policy

Introduction

The following policy outlines procedures and guidance to be followed when any staff member is working alone. Its aim is to ensure clarity so that:

- Procedures are applied consistently across the Trust
- All staff receive relevant information, instruction, training and supervision in respect of lone working
- Risks to staff are minimised/controlled where practically possible
- Appropriate resources are in place to ensure the health and safety of staff and pupils

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following document:

- Trust safeguarding policy

For the purposes of this policy 'lone working' is defined as any working practice that involves a member of staff undertaking their duties alone, with specific emphasis on direct contact with pupils and families. Examples of lone working might include:

- Making home visits
- Delivering outcomes specified within a pupil's personalised learning plan (Bespoke Learning Provision) off site
- Being the last person in a building at the end of the day
- Working in the school weekend, evenings, holidays
- Working one to one with a pupil

It is recognised that, from time to time, it may be necessary for school employees:

- to work in situations or locations which are remote from other members of staff – e.g. – delivering Bespoke Learning Provision/ outreach off site
- to work in the evenings, weekends or during the holiday in the school on their own.

In any such circumstance, the school will assess the risk to individuals using the EEC Risk Assessment Software and will introduce suitable controls to ensure that all risks are minimised (Appendix A lone working off site and Appendix B lone working signing in/out sheet). A copy of these Risk Assessments designed to control risks will be kept in School Office/ Site Manager's Office, staff will be informed of the risk assessment process as appropriate, during their induction when they join the school.

The Head Teacher is responsible for these risk assessments and any subsequent updates to them, bringing the risk assessment and any amendments made to them to the attention of the staff; these risk assessments must be included in the pack of policies provided for any staff new to the school. It will be the responsibility of staff members to adhere to the risk assessments outcomes if they are working with pupils off site or working alone in the school. Due consideration will always be made within any risk assessment that there may be an identified need for a co-worker to join the member of staff undertaking a home visit; if this has been identified this must form part of the risk assessment, all risk assessment outcomes must be adhered to. All risk assessments must be signed by the Head Teacher and member of staff(s) concerned.

It is recognised that on occasion staff might be alone in the school building. These staff should take special note of, and ensure the following:

- Ensure someone knows where you will be working and what time you will finish
- Make sure all doors and windows are locked
- Always use the intercom/ CCTV/ camera prior to opening up the main door requesting to see the appropriate identification before opening the door
- If lone working is on the school premises, staff must always sign in and out of the school building on entry/ when leaving
- Be aware of Health and Safety, do not take unnecessary risks. For example, avoid potential hazards such as working at height. If step ladders are used the staff member must have sight of the appropriate risk assessment held by the school; the member of staff is not given permission to use any other type of ladder
- When opening and closing sites try to arrange the times so that you are on site just before others arrive and close sites just after the last person has gone, to keep the time that you are on your own to a minimum
- Keep a mobile phone with you as you move round the building
- Staff must only undertake activities for which they have received training – e.g. – use of step ladders to guide their working practice

Any staff wishing to work outside normal school hours must have prior agreement/ permission from Head Teacher or Deputy/ Assistant Head Teacher. For example, families should be invited into school or an agreed local venue to avoid home visits. Staff must not take pupils in cars without another adult travelling with them; any such practice must be further informed by appropriate risk assessments/ additional control measures.

Whereabouts of staff

Staff must always ensure that the Head Teacher/ Leadership Team know when a member of staff will be working alone to enable the Leadership team to respond appropriately in the event of an emergency.

For any staff who are working alone off site – e.g. – delivering Bespoke Learning Provision in relation to a pupil's educational offer, the member of staff must provide information which includes information on who they are seeing and estimated start and finish time or return to school. All lone working in a pupil's home must be informed via a risk assessment undertaken via a pre-visit; the outcomes of this risk assessment must be shared with the Head Teacher. This is particularly important where a possible ongoing risk has been identified. If the plan changes or estimated time of return changes in relation to lone working off site, you must ensure you contact the school so they are aware of such changes. It is the responsibility of staff to check the details of their car insurance to determine suitability of cover if they use their own vehicle; the office team will request to see the insurance documents recording the visual checks made (Appendix B).

All staff must provide the school with appropriate personal information. This information must only be used in an emergency and the school must ensure it is held securely to avoid inappropriate disclosure. Information should include:

- Details of car make, model, colour and registration number if appropriate
- Home address and telephone number
- Mobile telephone number
- Details of next-of-kin

The identified worker must always phone a pre-arranged contact person both immediately before the visit commences and immediately after the visit has ended to ensure the school is aware the welfare of the person undertaking the visit has not been compromised. This information must be recorded on the record sheet provided (Appendix B) which will detail the following:

| Office Team: | |
|--|-------|
| Member of staff who received the call: | Name: |
| Staff arrived at destination: | Time: |
| Staff have left destination: | Time: |

The member of staff must provide a pre-arranged emergency code word/ phrase noting this on the lone working signing in/ out sheet (Appendix B).

| | |
|--|--|
| Pre-arranged emergency code word/phrase: | |
|--|--|

If **any** member of staff is concerned about any arrangements informing lone practice working/ following lone working practice they **MUST** bring this to the attention of the Head Teacher with immediate effect.

Working out of hours

There may be occasions when contact with children and parents will require staff to work outside of normal working hours; this must always be discussed with the Head Teacher before any such arrangements take place. Discussions will consider if working outside of normal working hours is necessary and will be further informed by the employee's job specification/ contract of employment. For example, if a parent is not available during the day due to work commitments; planned visits must be discussed with a member of the Leadership team, taking into account any risk factors that may be pertinent. Appropriate control measures, such as a buddy system described below, must then be agreed and implemented. If no risks are identified normal protocols will apply. Wherever possible these visits should not take place alone.

Monitoring/buddy system

In cases where a monitoring/buddy system has been agreed as part of a risk assessment process the following will apply:

- If during school hours' admin will alert a member of the Leadership team if staff member has not returned to or contacted the school within 30 minutes of expected return time/ finish time
- Leadership team member to contact the staff member by mobile, if unable to do so will inform the Police
- If out of hours, it is the worker's responsibility to contact the agreed designated contact person (Member of the Leadership team) to advise they have finished and are on their way home
- If no contact is made within 30 minutes of expected finish time, designated contact person will attempt to make contact with staff member, and if unable to do so will contact the Police

- Mobile telephones must be kept switched on until contact has been made with the designated member of the Leadership team
- In both instances, if an individual staff member for any reason is aware that they will not be contactable on their mobile they must ensure that an alternative contact number is given
- A code word must always be agreed so that emergency help can be requested during a phone call

Reporting of incidents

Any incident in relation to lone working must be recorded and reported to a member of the Leadership Team. This must be done as soon as possible so that others are not put at risk. If the incident suggests a child may be at risk the safeguarding and child protection policy must be followed. If the incident involves aggression towards the member of staff, then guidance must be sought.

One to one teaching and support

The nature of our work means there will be occasions where staff work on a one to one basis with pupils. This must always be considered as part of a risk assessment. Rooms / locations for this must be carefully considered. For example, doors should have viewing panels, staff should leave the door open in the recognition that public spaces are better than out of the way parts of the school.

Staff should always consider the following situations and what they would do in these example situations, always remembering staff are in a position of trust:

- When a pupil needs first aid
- If a pupil is distressed
- How additional support can be summoned
- If you think a pupil has become infatuated with a staff member
- Pupils ask for your mobile number
- A pupil gives you a gift

Outside agency staff must always sign in/ out at the main entrance of the school; the visitors' policy will inform both school staff and visitors what protocols relate when visiting the school. Schools must consider where agency staff will work especially if they have been instructed to work one to one with pupils. Pupils must not be seen without written parent / carer permission.

Further information:

There are several laws which hold the employer responsible for protecting the safety of everyone in their employment:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended in 2003 and 2006)
- The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007

Related policies and documents:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Visitor Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

- Lone working EEC Live risk assessment* - It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to review the lone working risk assessment and cascade this to the staff who work within the school



Appendix A – example EEC

Appendix A – example EEC Live Risk assessment

| What are the Hazards? | What is already being done? | Is this considered satisfactory? | Risk Findings |
|---|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Fire started in workplace whilst staff member is lone working in school. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> School fitted with Smoke detectors, Fire Alarm system and adequate FFE. Staff members are aware of Fire evacuation & alarm procedures for the school and must evacuate the building as in the normal procedures for fire emergency. Staff members must not play music so loud so as to not hear the alarm sounding. Staff members are not permitted to carry out activities which may lead to a fire being started. | Yes | Risk Severity:4 Likelihood:2 Risk Rating:8 |
| Unpredicted illness causing incapacity to summon help. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All staff members must sign in and out of the "staff out of hours" register to ensure that others are aware that they are in the building. Staff members must be in possession of mobile phones. Where possible staff members must have informed a family member/ loved on or work colleague that they plan to be working alone on site out of hours. All staff members who have serious health issues are discouraged from lone working, this will be identified on their staff suitability form. | Yes | Risk Severity:4 Likelihood:2 Risk Rating:8 Severity:3 |
| Inadequate provision of First Aid. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is adequate provision of First Aid boxes located around the school sites. Staff members are aware of the locations of First Aid boxes around the school sites. First Aid boxes are checked monthly for contents. | Yes | Likelihood:2 Risk Rating:6 Severity:3 |
| Carrying out work activities for which inadequate training has been given. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members are only permitted to carry out work activities within their class setting that they are familiar with. This will include putting up displays, class furniture rearranging, planning and the use of the Laminator/printer in the upstairs resources room. Only staff members that have completed relevant training in the use of step ladders and other work equipment are permitted to carry out that activity. | Yes | Likelihood:2 Risk Rating:6 Severity:4 |
| High risk work activities carried out whilst alone. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are not permitted to carry out the following high risk work activities whilst alone: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The use of ladders above a height of 1.5m. Accessing the IoT. Using COSHH that they are not familiar with. Using the water skills pool. | Yes | Likelihood:2 Risk Rating:8 Severity:4 |
| Location and times of work not notified to others i.e. line manager, relative, etc. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All staff members must sign in and out of the "staff out of hours" register to ensure that others are aware that they are in the building. Staff members must be in possession of mobile phones. Where possible staff members must have informed a family member/ loved on or work colleague that they plan to be working alone on site out of hours. All staff members who have serious health issues are discouraged from lone working. | Yes | Likelihood:2 Risk Rating:8 Severity:1 |
| Emergency items i.e. telephone, first aid, personal alarm and torch unavailable for use | In the event of an emergency the following is available for use: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Each classroom is equipped with a telephone. There are nurse call points situated in every classroom and toilet. There is adequate provision of First Aid boxes located around the school sites. | Yes | Likelihood:-1 Risk Rating:-1 Severity:2 |
| Threatening verbal abuse and violence from members of the public. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The school sites have electronic key pad entry and exit which restricts the access to members of the public. Staff will not open the front/back doors to any member of the public if not known to them. | Yes | Likelihood:2 Risk Rating:4 |



APPENDIX B - Lone working signing in/out sheet

- It is the responsibility of the member of staff who plans to lone work with a pupil away from the school site to provide the following information; if the staff member is travelling from/ back to their own home this must be detailed
- It will be the responsibility of the office team to record the information received from the member of staff undertaking the visit
- Staff must telephone the school when they have arrived at the specified destination and when they leave to start their return journey

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Staff name: | | | |
| Date of lone working: | | | |
| Staff contact details: <i>Please indicate which mobile is being used</i> | Personal mobile/ number: | | |
| | School mobile/ number: | | |
| Destination Include pupils initials: | | | |
| Time of departure from school/ home: | | Expected arrival time at destination: | |
| Expected departure from destination: | | Expected time back to school/ home: | |

| Checklist – Before you leave: | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Mobile phone details provided above: | |
| Does the office have your emergency contact details: | |
| I have checked my car insurance and have ensured I the suitable cover: | Office staff checked/ date: |
| Pre-arranged emergency code word/phrase: | |
| Staff signature: | |
| Head/ Deputy/ Assistant signature: | |

| Office Team: | |
|---|--------------|
| Member of staff who received the call: | Name: |
| Staff arrived at destination: | Time: |
| Staff have left destination: | Time: |

Please ensure this sheet is stored in the school office following each lone working visit.
If **any** member of staff is concerned about any arrangements informing lone working practice/ following lone working practice they **MUST** bring this to the attention of the Head Teacher with **immediate affect**

