


NORTHFIELD SCHOOL LONE WORKING POLICY

Date adopted	March 2017
Signed by chair of Staffing committee	
Member of staff responsible for monitoring	Headteacher
Review frequency	Biennial

Date	Changes made	Agreed by	Authorised for use by	Date of review
21/02/17	Page 2, Council changed to school.	Jill Bentley	Policy Committee	21/02/17

LONE WORKING SAFELY – Assessing Risks

Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 / Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

As an employer, the County Council is responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees. Heads of establishments/managers are responsible for carrying out the necessary assessments and checks to ensure the safety of lone workers on behalf of the Council.

- These responsibilities can not be transferred to employees who work alone or without close supervision.
- It is the Head of Establishment's/manager's duty to organise and control solitary employees.
- Employees have a duty to co-operate with such arrangements.

Who are Lone Workers?

Lone workers are those people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision in a wide range of situations typified by those below:

People in **Northfield School** where

- Only one person is on the premises at the time of working e.g. Head of Establishment, Caretaker, Cleaner, Hub worker.
- People who work separately from others, e.g. Out-Reach Workers, Education Social Workers;
- People who work outside normal working hours, e.g. cleaners, security, maintenance, repair employees.
- Staff who may work individually with students.
- Staff who drive a student to or from school.

Mobile workers working away from Northfield School such as:

- Home tutoring from staff at Northfield

Why is working alone particularly dangerous?

Lone workers are at special risk because they are isolated from help in the event of illness, accident or attack. They must also rely on their own experience and judgment to operate safe working methods as they will have no supervisor on hand to refer to. Clearly, employees who work alone must be suited or competent for the task and both their ability and the tasks they undertake must be assessed to ensure their safety.

Safe working arrangements for lone work

These include the identification of the:

- hazards of the work;
- assessing the risks involved and
- devising and implementing safe working arrangements to ensure that the risks are either eliminated or adequately controlled, and should be no different from those used for organizing and ensuring the Health & Safety of other employees.

Precautions should take account of normal working conditions and foreseeable emergencies e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents. Identify all the areas where the lone worker will work and ask the following questions:

- Does the workplace present a special risk to lone workers?

- Is there safe access and exit for one person?
- Can one person safely handle any equipment, which is necessary such as portable ladders or trestles?
- Can all the equipment, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
- Does the work involve lifting objects too large for one person;
- Will more than one person be necessary to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment?
- Will money be handled?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Is the surrounding area well lit?

Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?

It is necessary to determine if the lone worker has any medical conditions that would make them unsuitable for working alone or whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made. If in doubt, seek confidential advice from the Occupational Health Service. Consider both routine, foreseeable work and situations such as emergencies which may impose additional physical and mental burdens on the lone worker.

The lone worker must fully understand the risk(s) involved with their work, the necessary precautions and be sufficiently experienced to be capable of working independently. Clear documented procedures should be laid down stating what should and should not be done whilst working alone, and when to stop work and seek advice from a supervisor.

How will the lone worker be supervised?

Even though lone workers are not subjected to direct supervision, the School will still have a duty to ensure that the lone worker maintain a proper control of the work. The employer must ensure that the employee fully understands the risk assessment undertaken before the activity commences, the risks associated with their work and that the necessary safety precautions are in place. The extent of supervision depends upon the risk(s) involved and the proficiency of the employee to handle such risks to their health & safety. This is a decision that only the employer can make, not the employee. A mechanism of reporting start and finish times is essential for employees and the supervisor, at the end of a work period when the individual has been a lone worker.

What happens if the lone worker becomes ill?

Lone workers should be trained in the procedures for dealing with emergencies, if, as and when they arise. In particular, lone workers should receive information about the emergency procedures of any other premises that they may visit under the auspices of their work. Additionally, lone workers should be made fully aware of, and have complete access, to first aid facilities and mobile workers should always carry a suitable and sufficient first aid container.

The employer should implement and carry out thorough monitoring of the lone worker. The supervisor should visit the lone worker periodically and visually monitor the lone worker at work.

Regular contact between the lone worker and supervisor must be maintained by either telephone or radio. Whichever method is adopted the system will need to be active so that an appropriate response can be actioned.

Any situation where Lone Working is to occur must carry a suitable 'Risk Assessment', these are found on the school intranet (OCC Risk Assessment Tool 2013).

RISK ASSESSMENT

Activity being Risk Assessed:	
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What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done

Risk Assessment Completed by (Name):		Job Title:		Date:	
Authorised by Line Manager (Name):		Job Title		Date:	
Reviewed by:		Job Title		Date:	
Distribution List:		Job Title:		Date:	