



The Wythenshawe Catholic Academy Trust

Journeying together with Jesus Christ, we learn to love and love to learn.

LONE WORKING PROCEDURE



Saint Paul's Catholic High School
St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School
St Anthony's Catholic Primary School
SS John Fisher & Thomas More Catholic Primary School

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| Author | Marion Fletcher |
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Schools within the Wythenshawe Catholic Academy Trust:

- Saint Paul's Catholic High School
- St Anthony's Catholic Primary School
- SS John Fisher & Thomas More Catholic Primary School
- St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

This policy will be published on the Trust's website under the staff shared area

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Appendix A – Lone Working Risk Assessment

1. Introduction

- i. The Wythenshawe Catholic Academy Trust (referred to hereafter as the Trust) will avoid the need for employees to work alone where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, the Trust will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of employees working alone and others who may be affected by or involved in these activities.
- ii. This procedure outlines a sensible risk based approach towards lone working. Safe lone working can be achieved by ensuring that safe systems of work are made available through management processes and used by all employees.
- iii. Each school within the Trust will ensure that a risk assessment is conducted and that arrangements are in place prior to employees working alone.
- iv. This policy and procedure complies with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and is compliant with the Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings October 2015.

2. Scope of the Policy

- i. This policy applies to all employees who work at schools within the Trust. The schools in the Trust currently consist of St Paul's Catholic High School, St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, St John Fisher and St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School.
- ii. This policy also applies to agency staff and governors.
- iii. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Health and Safety Policy.
- iv. Unless indicated otherwise, all references to "Governing Body" apply to each school's Local Governing Body or Interim Management Board.

3. Principles

- i. The Trust is mindful of its obligations and duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 in the application of this policy and procedure.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

i. The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body have a legal duty to look after the health, safety and welfare of the school staff. The Head Teacher has day-to-day delegated responsibility for the management of health and safety in the school.

ii. **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher's responsibility includes a duty of care to reduce, as far as reasonably practicable the risks associated with lone working both on and off the school premises.

The Headteacher will ensure that: -

- Lone working is avoided as far as is reasonably practicable;
- Lone workers are identified, risks are assessed; and appropriate action is taken to reduce these risks;
- Emergency procedures are in place so that members of staff working alone can obtain assistance if required;
- A risk assessment is completed by a person competent to do so prior to employees working alone;
- Any employee working alone is capable of undertaking the work alone;
- Arrangements are in place so that someone else is aware of a lone worker's whereabouts at all times;
- Individuals working alone are provided with adequate information, instruction and training to understand the potential hazards and risks and the safe working procedures associated with working alone; and
- Training records are kept.

iii. **The person carrying out the risk assessment will: -**

- Give consideration to the greater risks to expectant mothers and young persons;
- Involve the employee who is working alone in the assessment process and the development of safe working methods;
- Advise the employee undertaking the lone working of the findings of the assessment; and
- Maintain a file of all lone working assessments.

iv. **Employees working alone will: -**

- Let someone know when they are going out and are expected to return;
- The location and work to be undertaken, including who they are going to meet;
- How to contact them;
- Take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety;
- Make sure that their car and mobile phone (and personal alarm if issued) are in good working order and;
- Inform their line manager of any incidents or safety concerns.

5. Defining Lone Working

- i. The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. Lone working may be encountered during part of a working day as well as for lone

working occupations, for example, locking and opening up an office base, driving to different work bases to attend meetings.

- ii. Lone workers may be found in a range of situations:
 - a. People in fixed establishments where:
 - Only one person works at the premises;
 - People work separately from others, e.g. in isolated areas of a site such as cleaners;
 - People work outside normal hours, e.g. site staff.
 - b. Mobile, or peripatetic workers operating away from their fixed base:
 - On unfamiliar sites;
 - Trust or shared service employees, for example, Social Workers, Chaplains, Attendance Managers or Safeguarding Officers.

6. Lone Working Risk Assessments

- i. There is no general legal prohibition on working alone. However, each school will identify the hazards, assess the risks involved, and put measures in place to avoid or control the risks. If the risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, then other arrangements must be put in place.
- ii. Lone working can be included as part of an overall risk assessment for an activity or a specific lone working assessment must be carried out. A lone working risk assessment template is included with this guidance at Appendix A.
- iii. Each risk assessment must consider the vulnerabilities of the person involved in the lone working task, and identify controls to reduce risk to an acceptable level.
- iv. In addition, the risk assessment must take account of foreseeable emergencies which may arise, such as equipment failure, illness and accidents.

7. Identifying the hazard.

- i. To assist in determining the level of risk, the Trust's Strategic Resource Officer has identified examples of Low, Medium and High risk factors.

LOW RISK Category 1

| <i>Risk Category</i> | <i>Control Measures</i> |
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| <p>Category 1 Employees working in offices or other secure locations outside of normal school working hours.</p> <p>Employees who routinely work in locations on their own e.g. mobile</p> | <p>Mandatory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees must be briefed on the measures required to ensure their workplace is secure if they are lone working and the emergency procedures to be followed. |

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| <p>classrooms or site staff working during the school holiday period.</p> <p>Examples would include classroom and office based employees, individuals who travel alone for significant periods or in circumstances that may give rise to additional risks e.g. attendance and safeguarding officers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees must record an itinerary of their movements that is accessible to their manager and colleagues. Details made available should include location, car make, model, registration number and mobile phone number. • Employee's attending late meetings will be allowed access to the school's car park and must not leave alone or leave one member of staff alone on the school premises. |
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MEDIUM RISK Category 2

| <i>Risk Category</i> | <i>Control Measures</i> |
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| <p>Category 2 Areas of the premises where meetings may take place and where there may be a potential risk of aggression.</p> <p>Areas of the premises where colleagues cannot be readily called on by the lone worker in the event of an adverse situation arising.</p> <p>Employees visiting places which have been assessed as presenting no risk to employees.</p> <p>Employees responding to intruder alarm calls for school property out of hours.</p> | <p>Mandatory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees who are expected to respond to alarm call-outs must have access to a personally issued work mobile with appropriate reception or have indicated that they are willing to use their personal mobile in such circumstances and that it has appropriate network coverage for the area in question. • Line managers should provide clear guidance to lone workers dealing with situations where there may be the potential risk of aggression. This guidance should include the types of work that can and cannot be carried out alone; when to withdraw or stop work; communication and check-in procedures; signs of escalating violence and aggression and emergency procedures to be followed. • Where a problem may relate to open areas of the premises where the public may have access, the security of the building should be reviewed and appropriate measures introduced. • Daily work tracking arrangements must be put in place in line with the level of risk involved • All employees must record an itinerary of their movements that is accessible to their manager/colleagues. Details made available should include location, car make, model, registration number and mobile phone number. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration should be given to the issuing of a personal safety alarm. • Consideration should be given to ensuring that employees receive appropriate training in dealing with confrontational situations such as the Suzy Lamplugh Trust's "Dealing with Violence and Aggression" one day course available through the Trust's Strategic Resource Officer. |
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HIGH RISK Category 3

| <i>Risk Category</i> | <i>Control Measures</i> |
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| <p>Category 3 Visiting domestic houses where there is potential for risk of violence and aggression.</p> <p>Working out of hours (not in a school controlled facility).</p> <p>Working alone with hazardous plant, tools, equipment or chemicals i.e. D&T or science labs.</p> <p>Cash handling and banking money.</p> <p>Where there is the potential for serious injury due to the type of work being carried out.</p> <p>Examples would include: Attendance and Safeguarding Officers, Social Worker, Site Manager.</p> | <p>Mandatory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees who from time to time work alone would benefit from receiving training on dealing with confrontational situations such as the Suzy Lamplugh Trust's "Dealing with Violence and Aggression" one-day course. • Line managers should provide clear guidance to employees on the type of work that can and cannot be carried out alone; when to withdraw or stop work; communication arrangements and emergency procedures. • A system for recording an employee's whereabouts must be introduced and its use enforced alongside a contact system. • Employees must be briefed on the procedures for lone working before they start such work for the first time. Records of these briefings should be maintained. • Where an individual may present a known risk of violence, then the visit should be re-arranged for a suitable venue where appropriate levels of security or assistance can be provided. If there are particular reasons for the visit to take place at an individual's home, then at least two people should attend. • When banking cash vary the time and day of the visit, inform someone of the visit and carry a mobile phone. • Consideration should be given to the issuing of a personal safety alarm. |

8. Potential risk of violence and aggression

- i. The following table identifies four areas for consideration, as they are applicable when assessing lone working risks. This table does not contain an exhaustive list and should be used as a starting point.

| People/Place | Risk |
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| Parents, carers and the general public. | Individual's characteristics can have the potential to contribute towards violence and aggression, e.g. previous history, or the fact that the person is unknown and there is no available information to use as part of the risk assessment process. |
| The employee who is lone working | Factors which may increase or decrease the chances of violence and aggression occurring, e.g. their competence (level of training, experience, cultural awareness etc), role (e.g. representing authority in their area of work) and the things they might do (e.g. arriving late for a home visit) |
| Interaction | The interaction which takes place between school staff and parents, carers and the general public, for example, enforcing rules, asking questions about family backgrounds, carrying valuable or personal items, home visits. |
| The work environment | <p>Off School Sites For example, attending a home visit on another person's property, visiting rural areas that are without lighting, school trips.</p> <p>On School Sites Where there is the potential for violence and aggression involving an individual, both employees and visitors need to be able to move to a place of safety if a difficult situation arises, for example, exit the meeting room that you are working in.</p> |

9. Potential Risk of Physical Hazards

- i. The working environment and activities may present particular hazards and should be considered as part of the lone working risk assessment, for example:

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| Work environment | <p>The level of risk varies from one working environment to another. Lower risk environments can include working at offices alone, driving alone on short duration journeys in built up areas. Higher risk environments can include building work taking place on the premises or attending home visits.</p> <p>There must be a safe way in and out of the workplace. This can be difficult to achieve when working on premises which</p> |
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| | are not under the control of the school, for example when making a first home visit. |
| Activity being undertaken | The level of risk varies by activity. Risk activity may include working at height to carry out maintenance work or using hazardous machinery. |
| Communication with others and supervision. | Means of communication vary depending on the work activity and location. There are areas in Greater Manchester where a mobile phone signal is poor or not available. This also impacts on the ability to summon assistance in the event of an emergency. |

10. Identifying who may be at risk and when

- i. The risk assessment must consider who might be at risk of potential harm including employees and governors.
- ii. The following table provides details of some specific aspects for consideration when assessing the suitability of lone working for Trust employees. It is a guide only and Headteachers or line managers will complete a risk assessment to determine the level of risk and control measures required.
- iii. In circumstances where all control measures are in place and the assessment identifies that it is not possible for the task to be carried out safely by a lone worker then the activity should not proceed.

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| New employees, trainees including inexperienced volunteers | Lack of familiarity through level of experience or training needs. |
| Individuals with specific medical conditions | Some individuals may have medical conditions that make them unsuitable for working alone. These may include some health conditions, such as unstable epilepsy or diabetes. The consideration of medical conditions should include both routine activities and foreseeable emergencies, which may impose additional physical and mental burdens on the individual. |

11. Guidance to controlling the risk

- i. Control measures which should be considered by lone workers.

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| Adaption | These arrangements include ensuring that lone workers are competent in adapting to a foreseeable range of changing and developing situations with little or no contact with their supervisor |
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| Self-Awareness | <p>Lone workers need to be aware of their own actions and how others may perceive them. They need to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body language and the messages given out. • Tone of voice and choice of words. Anything which could be seen as sarcastic or patronising should be avoided. • Suitable clothing should be worn for the task in hand. • Appearance should be appropriate for the circumstances, being mindful of how others may perceive an individual's appearance. • Avoiding any triggers which may cause the individual to become angry or upset |
| Awareness of others | <p>Lone workers need to be aware of others. They need to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body language and non-verbal signals from others. • The other person's temperament. • An individual's space. • The amount of time required for a task. • Reasonable resolutions that can be achieved by self or others. • That they are demonstrating to others they are actively listening to them. |
| Environmental Awareness | <p>Lone workers need to be aware of their surroundings and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What measures are in place at the school, for example evacuation procedures, exits and entrances, and the location of the first aid supplies. • Possible escape routes if a meeting has the potential to become out of control. • Maintaining a comfortable level of heating, ventilation and lighting where possible. |
| Planning and Preparing | <p>Lone workers should always be properly prepared for each meeting and ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They know where the meeting venue is and have allowed sufficient time to arrive on time. <p>In some circumstances, it may not be appropriate to hold a face-to-face meeting, and a telephone meeting may have to do.</p> |
| Contact | <p>Ensure there are agreed contacts in case of an emergency situation arising and there is a system in place for reporting back at the end of a visit.</p> |
| History | <p>Take into consideration the current situation and any previous events which have caused problems.</p> |

12. In house contact systems

- i. A contact system is used to maintain telephone contact at pre-determined intervals between a nominated contact and lone worker in order to confirm their safety. The lone worker must provide the contact with an itinerary. In house contact systems rely on:
 - All contact employees knowing the actions to be taken in the event of a lone worker either raising an alert or emergency.
 - Employees having the time and concentration to be able to fulfil the requirement of the role
 - Full participation of all employees who are involved in system use in order to ensure that it remains robust and has credibility.
- ii. A contact can be used to monitor lone workers in person and respond to meetings for example, when meeting with an individual at the school. The contact can check through a door vision panel into the room where meetings are carried out or come into the room and ask a set question at a predetermined time; if assistance is needed it can be established through the response made without raising an alert to the other individuals in the room.
- iii. A contact can also be used to contact a lone worker with a pre-arranged telephone call approximately ten minutes into any visit at a new address to check all is well. A code word determined beforehand could be used to summon assistance should it be required.
- iv. Personal safety alarms should be considered and issued where it is deemed necessary and alarms may be installed in certain meeting rooms.
- v. If an employee has not returned or contacted the nominated contact in the specific time the nominated contact will inform the line manager.

13. Alert Response and Emergency arrangements

- i. The health and safety of all Trust employees will take precedence in cases of any adverse situations arising. If during the course of an employee's duties they are held up or attacked, they must immediately hand over whatever is requested. Employees must not try and remonstrate with an assailant or compromise their personal safety in any way.
- ii. Lone workers should be capable of responding to foreseeable emergencies through the development of planned arrangements, for example, fire and first aid need. The requirements for emergency will depend on the nature of the work being carried out.
- iii. Where it is possible a lone worker should withdraw from circumstances of escalating violence and aggression towards them.
- iv. Where a lone worker monitoring system is used it must include a means to raise the alarm in the event of (a) failure to contact a lone worker (b) an emergency request for assistance. If there is no response from a lone worker to confirm their safety the police should be contacted and

informed of the last known whereabouts after no more than a 30 to 45 minute period of trying to make contact.

- v. In addition, line management of all employees who may be involved in receiving an alert must be able to deal with the response procedure effectively. The type of lone working device selected will depend upon the type of lone work activity involved.
- vi. The Trust has a system for employees to raise the alarm if an employee finds themselves trapped or feels to be in danger from an individual. The employee should ask permission to phone the school or their manager to say they are running late. On speaking to their nominated contact they should use the alert code phrase **“Please let Mr Bell know that I am going to be late.”** This will be the coded signal for the nominated contact to inform management or call the police.

14. Recording

- i. Lone working issues may be considered as part of an overall risk assessment of a job role or activity. However, where lone working has not been considered as part of other risk assessments, a specific risk assessment must be carried out. It is important to note that the original risk assessment may change as the activity itself progresses and further information on the competency of lone workers has been provided in this guide.

15. Reviewing

- i. Lone working risk assessments must be regularly reviewed in line with changes which have been identified, for example, a violent incident has occurred during the last visit and it is no longer safe to lone work in the future. All incidents and/or previously unforeseeable risks must be reported by the lone worker as soon as possible, reviewed by the senior staff and flagged on any systems which will warn other workers of the risk. If no changes have occurred within a twelve-month period, then lone working risk assessments should be reviewed at that point.
- ii. Headteachers and line managers must ensure that adequate reporting and feedback mechanisms are in place which allow for new information to be gathered about any changes which may impact on the risk assessment. Changes to working practice must be assessed and communicated to all relevant employees.