



Oxenhope Church of England Primary

Policy for Lone working

March 2018

1. Policy Statement:

Oxenhope Church of England Primary recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of employees when working alone. This policy has been established to identify risks and manage them accordingly.

Oxenhope Church of England Primary has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees.

2. Definition Within this policy,

'Lone working' refers to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) definition of lone working:

"Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision."

This includes situations where staff in the course of their duties work alone in the school and are physically isolated from colleagues, possibly without immediate access to assistance. It is possible for a staff member to be 'lone working' with other staff members in the building due to the nature of the building creating isolated areas.

Where associated tasks require staff to work alone, both the individual staff member and Oxenhope C of E Primary School have a duty of care to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents. While many hazards at work are relatively easy to identify and control, other health and safety aspects are less easy to define.

3. Scope: Identifying Lone Workers:

Working alone is not in itself against the law and it will often be safe to do so. However, the law requires employers to consider carefully, and then deal with, any health and safety risks for people working alone.

Employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of all their workers. They also have responsibility for the health and safety of any contractors or self-employed people doing work for them.

These responsibilities cannot be transferred to any other person, including those people who work alone.

Workers have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work activities and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, either employees who work separately from others in an establishment, or mobile workers who work away from a fixed base are classed as lone workers.

Examples of employees who may be classed as lone workers include:

- Staff with responsibility for opening up and closing buildings;
- Staff working outside normal working hours;
- School staff working during holiday periods;
- Staff working in an isolated part of the building;
- Staff working in an environment away from the school.

(This list is by no means exhaustive)

Consideration therefore needs to be given to the potential risks faced by lone workers, as follows:

- A commitment to supporting staff both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices;
- Recognising and reducing risk by adopting a systematic approach to undertaking regular risk assessments extending to regular reviews;
- A commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff;
- A clear understanding of responsibilities;
- The priority placed on the safety of the individual;

- A commitment to providing appropriate training for staff;
- Equipment such as mobile phones, personal alarms, etc. made available.

4. Context:

This policy should be considered in the context of:

- Oxenhope Church of England Primary Health, Safety and Environment Policy;
- The HSE documents “Working alone – Health and Safety guidance on the risks of lone working.”

5. Roles and Responsibilities

As the employer BDAT has ultimate responsibility for the Health and Safety of all employees.

The Governing Body has responsibility under the relevant legislation for ensuring that there is due regard to matters of health, safety and environmental matters within the School. The overall responsibility for all aspects of health and safety at work within Oxenhope Church of England Primary rests with the Governing Body through the safety organisation objectives set out in the Health, Safety and Environment Policy.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of the Health, Safety and Environmental Policy and for encouraging staff to implement health and safety arrangements.

The Headteacher has primary responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the objectives set out in this policy.

The Headteacher has delegated the Business Manager to act as the Competent Person acting as adviser to the Headteacher on health, safety and welfare issues, including Lone Working, and ensuring that the objectives of the policy are achieved in practice.

The Senior Leadership Team, Middle Managers, Subject Team Leaders and all staff are responsible for the detailed adoption and implementation of the Lone Working Policy in their respective workplaces and ensuring in particular that they follow a safe approach to their working practices.

6. Assessing the risks:

The employer has a duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary. This must include:

- Involving workers when considering potential risks and measures to control them;
- Taking steps to ensure risks are removed where possible, or putting in place control measures, e.g. carefully selecting work equipment to ensure the worker is able to perform the required tasks in safety;
- Instruction, training and supervision;

- Reviewing risk assessments periodically or when there has been a significant change in working practice.

This may include:

- Being aware that some tasks may be too difficult or dangerous to be carried out by an unaccompanied worker;
- Where a lone worker is working at another employer's workplace, informing that other employer of the risks and the required control measures;
- When a risk assessment shows it is not possible for the work to be conducted safely by a lone worker, addressing that risk by making arrangements to provide help or back-up.

Risk assessment should help employers decide on the right level of supervision. There are some high-risk activities where at least one other person may need to be present. Examples include:

- Working at height;
- Excessive manual handling;
- Working with substances that are hazardous to health including flammables;
- Working in a confined space, where a supervisor may need to be present, along with someone dedicated to the rescue role;
- Working with electricity including near exposed live electricity conductors and undertaking Portable Appliance Testing;
- Dealing with unpredictable partners and stakeholders.

Oxenhope Church of England Primary School must record the significant findings of all risk assessments.

In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the Risk Assessment template set out as Appendix A should be used.

The questions to consider when identifying specific hazards of lone working are set out in Appendix B and this may provide a useful guide. The Risk Assessment template covers the following issues:

6.1 Access:

Is access to the building adequately controlled?

All staff should sign in and sign out in the register book situated in the main office Identify hazards specific to the workplace e.g. remote areas and confined spaces. All doors should be secure.

Who knows who is in the building?

Any staff or visitors should sign in and out at the designated entrance. Caretaking staff should be made aware of any visitors.

Is there any way of identifying legitimate visitors?

Ensure all visitors to the school are provided with a visitor's badge.

Could people just wander in?

Ensure security doors throughout the building are locked preventing access from outside the building.

Is there a procedure for removing people from the building if necessary?

Do not endeavour to deal with a situation which will put anyone at risk. Liaise with your Line Manager prior to undertaking any lone working to agree a procedure setting out how to respond to any foreseeable emergencies that may arise during the course of your work.

6.2 Isolation:

Are employees working alone in isolated offices or parts of the building?

Advise staff within other areas you are in school.

Do employees meet with outside agencies or members of the public in isolated offices?

Ensure you inform staff of your whereabouts and who you are with.

Who knows where employees are and whom they are with?

Identify a designated member of staff to inform i.e. Line Manager.

Are there suitable lines of communication between the lone worker and a designated person? *Ensure regular contact/communication throughout the day.*

Are there procedures in place if contact with the lone worker cannot be established, as required? Regular communication network should ensure appropriate contact and wellbeing of lone worker.

Can employees in isolated areas summon help or raise an alarm?

Ensure employee has direct access to either a departmental phone or mobile phone.

Have there previously been any problems arising from employees working in isolation?

By ensuring the Caretaker is informed when staff leave the premises, this should avoid the situation of staff being locked in school at the end of the day. Working staff should be aware of any fixed closure times.

6.3 For employees who are required to work alone and away from a fixed location use the following checklist:

Have you signed in/out from your location?

Sign out or in at the designated entrance to school/ building.

Do other staff know where you are going? How long you will be and your estimated time of return?

Information should be indicated in the signing in/out register. If another member of staff is around they should be informed of an expected time of return and know what to do in the event of overdue contact.

Can you make contact other staff or they with you?

Ensure a communication network is in place throughout the working day by the staff member having a mobile phone with them or a number at which they can be contacted.

What should you do if you are making a sensitive or high risk visit?

Ensure you inform a designated member of staff of your proposed visit, proposed time and return. If possible attend the meeting with a colleague.

6.4 Personal Safety:

☒ The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk for staff working alone.

☒ Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.

☒ Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the Line Manager.

☒ Staff should inform their Line Manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person and the Caretaker when leaving the building (School log in main office should identify personnel in school).

☒ Lone Working can only be undertaken following authorisation from an employee's Line Manager.

☒ It is the responsibility of the individual concerned to ensure all necessary precautions and methods are adhered to at all times.

☒ A robust system is in place for signing in and out within the main office, and staff should follow these procedures.

☒ Where staff work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, procedures should be in place for regular contact between staff, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.

☒ Where staff are issued with mobile phones; they are responsible for ensuring that the phone is charged, in working order, and with sufficient credit remaining. Personal alarms may also be considered.

☒ Any person who becomes aware of circumstances involving lone working, where the existing control measures may not be fully effective, must inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as soon as possible.

6.5 Planning:

☒ Staff should be fully briefed in relation to possible risks involved in lone working.

☒ Plans for responding to those who present a known risk should be regularly reviewed and discussed with the Line Manager/SLT.

☒ Vulnerable employees that may be at a higher risk from lone working set out in Appendix C should be considered.

☒ Communication, checking-in and fallback arrangements must be in place for all lone workers.

☒ The Line Manager is responsible for agreeing and facilitating these arrangements, which should be tailored to the conditions affecting the staff.

6.6 Responsibilities and Control Measures:

Having carried out a risk assessment affecting lone workers both in-house and away from school, it is important to ensure that suitable and sufficient control measures are identified and put in place. A summary of suitable controls would be as follows:

☒ Are effective lines of communication established, communicated, understood and monitored?

☒ Emergency procedures have been identified and staff are aware of these and are clear about the action to be taken if necessary.

☒ Staff have received the appropriate training to enable them to undertake lone working.

☒ Lone workers been given all the necessary information (copy of the Policy) to enable them to carry out their job safely.

☒ Consideration has been given to the procedures for fire evacuation and first aid procedures.

☒ Employees stop for regular breaks and, if possible, change activity after prolonged periods.

☒ Employees must inform their Line Manager of any relevant medical conditions.

☒ Clear procedures been established which the lone worker can follow, as identified in the Lone Worker Policy.

Staff are encouraged to seek advice/assistance from their Line Manager if they are unsure about a situation.

6.7 Reporting:

☒ Should an incident occur the lone worker must report this to their Line Manager and a de-briefing should follow any incident.

☒ Any incidents or concerns in relation to lone working should be reported to the Business Manager.

7.0 Monitoring and Review:

Having undertaken appropriate risk assessments and implemented all necessary controls it is important that all lone working situations are monitored and continually reviewed.

☒ The Business Manager is responsible for monitoring this policy and procedures and amending accordingly following any incidents or concerns or on a bi-annual basis.

☒ Lone working and risk assessments should be reported to the Health and Safety Committee on a regular basis

☒ Staff with a concern should ensure the issue is discussed with their Line Manager.

8.0 Publicity:

All new staff will be made aware of the Lone Working Policy during the induction period. The policy is available on the Shared Drive (staffboard) or through the School's web site

Appendix A

Risk Assessment Template for Lone Working at Oxenhope Church of England Primary School

Hazard / Risk	Who is at Risk?	How can the hazards cause harm?	Normal Control Measures	Are Normal Control Measures Y/N/NA	
				In Place	Adequate
Lone working working in school alone / in isolated locations	TKS employees and contractors	Accident / injury, delayed assistance in emergency	• Only agreed low tasks to be undertaken, avoid high risk activities (e.g. working at height) strenuous manual handling, work with electricity and flammables.		
			• Mobile phone available.		
			• Notify manager of intention to work outside regular hours.		
		Physical assault / verbal abuse	• Reduce time spent working alone so far as is reasonably practicable. Avoid use of plant and machinery.		
			• Ensure a colleague, partner, friend etc is aware you are working alone and who to contact in the event of overdue contact.		
		Cuts / abrasions, muscular skeletal and other physical injuries	• Notify staff on site of location / estimated duration of task if working on site remote from others.		
			• Adequate security in place.		
			• Access to site controlled e.g. through coded doors etc.		
		Hazards have the potential to cause harm as the employee is vulnerable and at higher risk from lone working.	• Use of visitor badges / signing in book		
			• Ensure all external doors / windows secured to prevent unauthorised access.		
			• Do not allow access to unknown callers.		
			• External lighting adequate		
			• Emergency Evacuation procedure in place		
	• Key holders should be strictly controlled and numbers kept to a minimum.				

Additional Control Measures <i>(to take account of local/individual circumstances including changes such as working practices, equipment, staffing levels).</i>	Action by Whom <i>(list the name of the person/people who have been designated to conduct actions)</i>	Action by When <i>(set timescales for the completion of the actions - remember to prioritise them)</i>	Action Completed <i>(record the actual date of completion for each action listed)</i>	Residual Risk Rating
DATE OF REVIEW: <i>Record actual date of review</i>	COMMENTS: <i>Record any comments reviewer wishes to make. Including recommendations for future reviews.</i>			
DATE OF REVIEW:	COMMENTS:			
DATE OF REVIEW:	COMMENTS:			

RESIDUAL RISK RATING	ACTION REQUIRED
VERY HIGH (VH) Strong likelihood of fatality / serious injury occurring	The activity must not take place at all. You must identify further controls to reduce the risk rating.
HIGH (H) Possibility of fatality/serious injury occurring	You must identify further controls to reduce the risk rating. Seek further advice, e.g. from the School Business Manager
MEDIUM (M) Possibility of significant injury or over 3 day absence occurring	If it is not possible to lower risk further, you will need to consider the risk against the benefit. Monitor risk assessments at this rating more regularly and closely.
LOW (L) Possibility of minor injury only	No further action required.

Appendix B

Questions to Consider when identifying specific hazards of lone working

Question	Consideration
Does the workplace present a special risk to a lone worker?	Due to the environment, location, contents, unfamiliarity etc
Does the activity present a special risk to a lone worker?	Equipment, process, substances, location, time, members of public, handling cash etc.
Is there a safe way in and out for one person?	In the course of normal work and in the event of an emergency etc
Can the equipment be adequately controlled and handled by one person?	Manual handling, operation of essential/emergency controls etc
Can all goods, substances and materials be safely handled by one person?	Flammables, toxins, pathogens etc
Is the working environment appropriate?	Heating, lighting, ventilation etc.
Are the welfare facilities adequate and accessible?	Toilet, washing, drinking water etc.
Does the lone worker have first aid facilities or access to them?	First aid kit, first aider, eye wash station, etc.
Does the lone worker have access to a suitable means of communication, or other means of summoning assistance if required?	Telephone, mobile, radio, inactivity alarm etc.
Is there a risk of violence associated with the work activity or location?	Previous history of verbal threats, violence, interaction with public, etc.

Is the lone worker more at risk due to their gender or inexperience?	Maturity, familiarity with procedures, knowledge and experience, particularly young and new workers
Has the employee received sufficient information, instruction and training to enable the work to be undertaken safely whilst alone?	Is the employee competent? Is the emergency plan appropriate?
Has the employee received specific training in how to respond to foreseeable emergencies that may arise in the course of their work alone?	Fire safety, spills, electrical shut down etc.
Is the worker medically fit to undertake the work alone?	Health checks, health monitoring?
What arrangements are in place to provide adequate supervision?	Periodic visits, use of local security staff, signing in/out, periodic contact arrangements, open diaries, CCTV, inactivity alarms, 'permits to work'
Are there contingency plans in place should an alert or alarm be raised by a lone worker? Are these plans well known and rehearsed?	Would you or your colleagues know what to do, who to contact?
Are clear written procedures established? (Limits set as to what can and cannot be done whilst working alone, when to stop work and seek advice etc.)	What activities should be prohibited?

Appendix C

Vulnerable Employees that may be at a Higher Risk from Lone Working

Group	Additional Considerations for lone workers
New and Expectant Mothers	<p>The School's duty of care extends to the unborn child as well as risks to the mother herself. Therefore assessments must include the risk to any unborn child or child who is still breast-feeding.</p> <p>Consideration must also be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">☒ Impaired mobility may make the mother more prone to slips, trips and falls (especially in the later stages of pregnancy).☒ Impaired ability to carry out physically strenuous work☒ Increased likelihood of back injuries.☒ Entitlement to more rest breaks.☒ Risk of early labour or miscarriage.
Young People Aged Under 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☒ Possible lack of experience and immaturity.☒ Possible inability to concentrate for long periods.☒ Entitled to more frequent rest breaks.
Disabled People	<p>Contractors must be given the same level of consideration as Oxenhope Church of England Primary School employees when carrying out a risk assessment.</p> <p>Contractors are at additional risk because they are unfamiliar with aspects of the school, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">☒ Layout and environment☒ Emergency procedures☒ Adjacent activities and hazards

Appendix D

LONE WORKING OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Introduction

Lone workers are staff or volunteers who work by themselves where there is no close or direct contact with a colleague. This might involve:

- Home visits;
- Appointments with professionals at parents' home/another venue, i.e. schools or offices;
- Working out of hours in such a situation may be at risk

from:

- ☒ Having an accident and being unable to attract help;
- ☒ Aggressive/violent behaviour of another person;
- ☒ The subject of false allegations.

This policy outlines the procedures for lone working and provides good practice guidelines.

Policy Statement

- ☒ Lone working is an essential part of support work. Oxenhope C of E Primary School is committed to ensuring that it does not put any of its workers in a situation of unreasonable risk.
- ☒ Risk Assessments for visits out of school should be undertaken to reduce risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- ☒ All staff working alone must take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety. If at any time they feel unsure of their safety, they should remove themselves from that situation as soon as possible.
- ☒ Oxenhope C of E Primary School will ensure that where a worker is likely to be in a position of lone working, this will be specified in the recruitment information, in order to make this requirement explicit to all applicants.

☒ Oxenhope C of E Primary School will also ensure that the induction programme for workers includes written materials and discussion about the organisation's Lone Working Policy and the risk assessment and measures in place for lone working

Responsibilities

☒ The employee or school representative will hold responsibility of informing the school of work movements which are outside of school.

☒ The school will not allow any visits or movements which will place the worker at unacceptable risk levels.

Procedures

Home Visits:

☒ Employee or school representative MUST NOT provide home visits in the evening unless they are totally unavoidable.

☒ Employee or school representative must be aware of background information before making a visit.

☒ When arranging the first home visit with a parent/carer over the telephone ask who will be present in the home

☒ The employee or school representative may be accompanied by a colleague on initial home visits where it is deemed that there may be a high personal safety risk factor.

☒ Employee or school representative should not be left alone with child in home.

☒ Clear notes of the meeting should be made by the employee or school representative.

☒ Meetings at any neutral venues should be logged with manager with times and venues clearly stated.

☒ All movements should be diaried and variations notified.

☒ If employee or school representative finds they are delayed, call the parent and let them know you will be arriving later than originally planned.

☒ If, on arriving at a home, you consider yourself to be at risk, decline to enter or make an excuse to leave where necessary, e.g. "I've left the car lights on" or "I've left some papers in the car" and depart. Do not attempt to enter what is considered a risk situation.

☒ Employee or school representative should leave a mobile phone on at all times so that she can be contacted for checks or can report in any issues.

☒ If at any time, the employee or school representative experiences any aggression or verbal abuse, or other unwelcome approaches, this should be reported to the SCHOOL immediately, when safe to do so. Employee or school representative should leave at the earliest opportunity.

☒ Employee or school representative must not then arrange to make another appointment with the abusive or aggressive person until the case has been reviewed.

☒ The employee or school representative must ensure she/he has appropriate car insurance for transporting parents/carers and their families if necessary when carrying out their day to day duties.

Best Practice Guidelines for Employee or school representative

☒ Always trust your instincts – if you are in any doubt or feel unsafe, remove yourself from that situation.

☒ Act in a confident manner and terminate the visit apologetically, for example by saying you have to be at another meeting which you had forgotten about.

☒ Plan your route and take a map along, to avoid having to stop and ask for directions in unfamiliar surroundings.

☒ Consider where you park and always reverse into a space, so it is easy for you to drive out.

☒ If using public transport, sit where there are other people, not on your own.

☒ If walking, use well lit public streets – do not use shortcuts.

☒ Pay attention to your surroundings when in someone's home – where are the doors? Sit in a seat nearest to a door.

☒ Ensure you always have your mobile telephone switched on and to hand.

☒ Keep your keys easily accessible.

☒ Avoid carrying valuables or large sums of money.

☒ Do not allow a parent/carer to leave you alone with their child/ren. If, whilst talking, a parent walks out of the room and leaves you with a child/ren in the room, follow them (i.e. into the kitchen if they are making drinks etc).

☒ Always have a legitimate reason for leaving, e.g. that you have another appointment.

☒ It is advisable not to accept offers of a drink whilst on a home visit.

☒ The employee or school representative may be expected to operate from an alternative workbase during periods of school closure.

DO

☒ Prepare and plan. Check records and speak to colleagues.

- ☒ Set up your case file with papers to sign – confidentiality agreement, sensitive data consent form, agreement of support form.
- ☒ Keep the School informed of your whereabouts – inform Manager of diary.
- ☒ Plan your route in advance. Avoid known unsafe areas. Carry a fully charged mobile telephone with credit available.
- ☒ Do have a contingency plan if things go wrong – car breaks down/battery is flat/arrange to be picked up.
- ☒ Maintain a discrete distance. Ensure you sit close to exits. Speak in a friendly and polite manner.
- ☒ Avoid dangerous areas.
- ☒ When transporting parents/carers and/or their children, wherever possible ensure they are seated in the rear of the car and wearing appropriate restraints e.g. seatbelt, child car seat.

DON'T

- ☒ Visit without having read the appropriate paperwork.
- ☒ Forget to keep a simple case file, taking pen and paper!
- ☒ Forget to let Manager know and others of your whereabouts.
- ☒ Forget to contact the school after visits to say all is well!
- ☒ Forget to charge up or take your mobile telephone.
- ☒ Forget to keep your car serviced and full of petrol.
- ☒ Give out personal details, your mobile, address.
- ☒ Forget to report any trips, falls, and accidents or report abusive threatening behaviours.
- ☒ Park near to high walls, hedges or unlit areas.

Policy written by Alice Jones 8.3.18

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