



Meole Brace School

Achievement • Respect • Community

Lone Working Policy

Senior member of staff responsible: Mr R Carlyle Director of Finance & Operations

Governor Committee: Premises, Security & Health and Safety

Revised: 18th May 2017

Approved by Committee: PSH & S

Next Review Date: 18th May 2019

LONE WORKER POLICY

1. Policy Statement

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring staff, volunteers and contractors enjoy a safe working environment. It is recognised that there are occasions when teaching, support, administrative, cleaning staff or contractors may be required, or choose, to work alone or in isolated situations. This method of working may introduce risks into a normally non-hazardous work activity.

2. Definition of Lone Working

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.”

3. Categories of Lone Workers

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 Meole Brace School have a duty 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.

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 for them.

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.

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 working, as follows:

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

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of the Health and Safety 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 Director of Finance and Operations to act as the Competent Person acting as advisor 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, Community Leaders, 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.

5. Assessing the Risks

The employer has a duty of care 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 risks 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.

A risk assessment should help employers decide on the right level of supervision. There are some high-risk activities where at least one additional 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 with electricity including near exposed live electricity conductors and undertaking Portable Appliance Testing;

6. Personal Safety

- Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- It is the responsibility of the individual concerned to ensure all necessary precautions and methods are adhered to at all times
- Any person who becomes aware of circumstances involving lone working, where the existing control measures may not be fully effective, must inform the Director of Finance and Operations as soon as possible.

7. Responsibilities and Control Measures

Having carried out a risk assessment affecting lone working, it is important 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 and understood.
- Emergency procedures have been identified and staff are aware of these and are clear about the action to be taken if necessary.
- Lone workers have 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.

8. Reporting

Any incidents or concerns in relation to lone working should be reported to the Director of Finance and Operations

9. 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 (I)