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| Policy Reference: | GA-P032 |
| Version: | V4 |
| Status | Operational |
| Authors | Reviewed by J. Wood |
| Applicable to | All Schools |
| Checked by | Union/Non-Union |
| Valid From | March 2017 |
| Review Date | March 2020 |

**Grace Foundation**

**Lone Working Policy**

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1. **Policy Statement**

Where associated tasks require individuals to work alone, both the individual and Senior Leaders 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.

1. **Identifying Lone Workers**

The definition of lone worker is:

**“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”.**

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
* Those who work away from a fixed base i.e. volunteers, EWO, family support workers.

(This list is by no means exhaustive)

Within this document, ‘lone working’ refers to situations where staff and volunteers in the course of their duties work alone in the Academy and are physically isolated from colleagues, possibly without access to immediate assistance. The situation may arise where there are other staff in the building but the nature of the building itself may essentially create isolated areas.

Where this policy states staff or employees it may also be read as volunteers where applicable.

1. **Context**

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
* 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

1. **Assessing the risks**

Employees should carry out their own informal personal assessment of risk before undertaking any activity which involves working alone. They should inform their line manager when they will be in a lone work situation and if at any time feel that something is wrong, they should rely on their senses and professional judgment.

Having identified lone workers, the risks to which they are exposed need to be assessed. This assessment should take into account the risk inherent in the task and the environment, along with any additional risks associated with the fact that the employee is working on their own. Where an instruction is given by the Academy a formal risk assessment will take place.

The main risks associated with lone working may be identified using the checklists below at 4.1-4.6.

* 1. Access
* Is access to the building adequately controlled? All staff, visitors and volunteers should sign in and sign out in the log book situated in the reception. 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? Identify hazards specific to the individual e.g. medical conditions, disabilities, expectant mothers, etc.
* Is there any way of identifying legitimate visitors? Ensure all visitors to the school are provided with a visitor’s badge and are collected and accompanied by an employee of the Academy.
* 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?
* If there is an individual on site who is drunk, abusive, causing a nuisance or who may be on drugs DO NOT approach the individual and call the police.
  1. 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 (although not limited to 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? Provision of mobile phones or appropriate communication device may be considered.
* Have there previously been any problems arising from employees working in isolation? Ensuring the facilities staff are informed when staff leave the premises should avoid the situation of staff being locked in school at the end of the day.
  1. Lone Working Without a Fixed Location

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

* Have you signed in/out from your location? Signing in/out register situated in the reception.
* 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.
* Can you contact other staff or are they with you? Ensure communication network is in place throughout the working day by regular contact i.e. advise designated staff of whereabouts and safe conclusion of visit.
* Ensure you are accompanied if making sensitive visits.
* Ensure you inform a designated member of staff of your proposed visit, proposed time and return.
* We take security of our staff very seriously and therefore all the Academies have invested in the SoloProtect Identicom 877’. This is a security device that links the member of staff to the emergency services. Please ensure that you have collected the device and checked that it is working and that you have been trained how to use it. (Grace Academies only)
  1. Personal Safety
* 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. This includes familirisation with local fire orders and evacuation procedure.
* Consideration should be given to ensure that adequate first aid provision is provided. If you become injured or ill confirm the procedure with your line manager applicable to the job you are doing. Are you medically fit and suitable to work alone? If not inform your line manager in writing.
* 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 facilities staff when leaving the building.
* A robust system is in place for signing in and out within the reception, 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 required 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.
* Evening staff should not exit the building (e.g. for rubbish disposal) during hours of darkness. Where exit is necessary during the course of duty, night staff should exit in pairs, ensuring the door is guarded.
  1. Assessment of Risk

In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

* *The environment – location, security, access, safety*
* *The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances*
* *The individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk*
* *History – any previous incidents in similar situations*
* *Any other special circumstances*

All available information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary.

* 1. 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.

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

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

It is always the responsibility of the lone worker to ensure that they minimize any possible risks to themselves and others.

1. **Reporting**

Should an incident occur, reporting and de-briefing should follow with the Line Manager who will refer the matter to the Principal or appropriate director.

Identified person should debrief in the first instance; if this is not the staff’s Line Manager, that manager should be informed as soon as is practicable.

1. **Monitoring and Review**

A lone worker must notify the Line Manager in respect of any changes to their health or circumstances to be considered within the lone working assessment.

* Lone working and risk assessment to be included within the Health and Safety meeting that will be reviewed by the Governors.
* It is the responsibility of any member of staff with a concern to ensure any change to their medical condition is discussed with their Line Manager or designated person.

1. **Management Controls**

Having carried out a risk assessment affecting lone workers both in-house and away from the Academy, 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 there suitable lines of communication and monitoring?
* Have emergency procedures been identified, and are staff aware of these, are they clear about the action to be taken?
* Have staff received suitable training i.e. dealing with difficult situations?
* Have lone workers been given all necessary information (copy of the Policy and the Academy Health and Safety Policy) to enable them to carry out their job safely?
* Have considerations been given to procedures for fire evacuation or first aid procedures?
* Have 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.

It is evident that having undertaken appropriate risk assessments and implemented all necessary controls it is important that all lone working situations are monitored and reviewed by the employee and their line manager with any significant changes being immediately brought to the attention of the Principal or Director.

1. **Lone Worker Risk Assessments**

Examples of lone worker risk assessments forms are annexed. However, the lone worker and their line manager must ensure that the risk assessment covers all possible eventualities for that role and therefore the attached examples should be viewed as guidance only.

**ANNEX A**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **RISK ASSESSMENT FOR LONE WORKING ACTIVITIES** | | | | |
| **Academy** |  | | | |
| **Department** |  | | | |
| **Responsible Manager** |  | | | |
| **Name of person(s) working alone** |  | | | |
| **Location of lone working** |  | | | |
| **Reason for lone working** |  | | | |
| **Periods when lone working occurs** |  | | | |
| **Is it possible to remove the need for individuals to work alone – for example by altering work hours, or moving their location?** |  |  | | |
| **Work details – does the work involve any of the following:** | **Tick** | **Give details – include details of any control measures/precautions in place** | | |
| General office/clerical activities where this is the sole activity |  |  | | |
| Lifting/handling of heavy loads |  |  | | |
| Contact with the public, handling large amounts of cash/expensive items |  |  | | |
| Use of electrical appliances/work on electrical installations |  |  | | |
| Use of machinery with moving parts or other hazardous equipment (see guidance note high risk processes) |  |  | | |
| Use of/contact with hazardous substances/biological/radioactive materials (see guidance note on high risk processes) |  |  | | |
| Work in a confined space |  |  | | |
| **CONTROLS** | **Y/N** | **Give details of control measures to be put in place to remove/reduce risk** | | |
| **INDIVIDUAL** | | | | |
| **Medical fitness:** Is the LW subject to any medical condition that may place them at increased risk when working alone (where there may be doubt refer the LW to occ health) |  |  | | |
| **Supervision:** What arrangements are in place to maintain contact with the LW |  |  | | |
| * Regular contact by phone – identify who is responsible for maintaining contact with the LW and how it will be achieved |  |  | | |
| * End of shift contact |  |  | | |
| * Periodic site visit to LW by supervisor |  |  | | |
| * Identification of co-worker (buddy) to be within visual or audible contact of the LW |  |  | | |
| * Signing in arrangements |  |  | | |
| **Training:** Has necessary information instruction and training been given to the LW and is the LW competent to carry out the work alone? |  |  | | |
| **LOCATION AND PREMISES** | | | | |
| **Building security:** Is the building secure? |  |  | | |
| **Access:** Is there a safe means of access/egress for the LW (consider lighting and personal security issues and means of escape in emergency) |  |  | | |
| **Emergencies:** Does the LW have access to emergency warning devices to raise the alarm in event of emergency e.g. motion sensors/manual device (panic alarms) |  |  | | |
| **First Aid:** Are there any arrangements in place to deal with a situation where the LW becomes ill or has an accident? (access to first aiders and facilities) |  |  | | |
| **Welfare facilities:** Is there adequate heating, lighting, access to drinking water and toilets |  |  | | |
| **PROCESS/WORK ACTIVITY** | | | | |
| Can the plant, equipment, substances involved in the process be safely used by the LW |  |  | | |
| Is the LW able to deal with emergencies that may arise out of the work activity without the assistance of a second person? |  |  | | |
| **ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL RISK** | | | | |
| **Risk – have the risks to the LW been adequately controlled by the application of the aforementioned control measures.** |  | IF ‘NO’ DETAIL ADDITIONAL ACTRIONS REQUIRED TO REDUCE RISK BELOW. IF RISKS CANNOT BE REDUCED TO LOW/EFFECTIVELY ZERO THEN THE LW ACTIVITY SHOULD NOT BE AUTHORISED | | |
| **Name of Assessor** |  | | **Signed** |  |
| **Name of Colleague assessed** |  | | **Signed** |  |
| **Date** |  | | | |
| **Signature of line manager** |  | | | |
| **ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES TO BE APPLIED TO REDUCE RISKS** | | | | |
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**ANNEX B**

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| **GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT LONE WORKING IN OFFICES (to accommodate staff requiring ad hoc access to office areas)** | |
| The risk assessment covers general office/clerical activities which are of a low risk, being undertaken at the convenience and discretion of the individual. It specifically does not cover work with any hazardous machinery and/or substances or the lifting/handling of loads that could cause injury, which should be subject to specific risk assessment (see Annex A) | |
| Academy |  |
| Department |  |
| Categories of staff/students covered by this assessment | All fully trained academic and support staff and post grad students. |
| Location of lone working | Office areas of: |
| Likely reason for lone working | Personal preference of the individual. |
| Periods when lone working tends to occur |  |
| **ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL RISK** | |
| **Providing the control measures listed below are applied risks will be adequately controlled** | |
| Name of line manager |  |
| Signature of line manager |  |
| Date |  |
| **HAZARD** | **CONTROL MEASURE** |
| **INDIVIDUAL** | |
| **Medical fitness:** Is the LW subject to any medical condition that may place them at increased risk when working alone (where there may be doubt refer the LW to occ health) | LW must ensure that any medical conditions which might be relevant to their working alone are fully discussed with their line manager and, if necessary, Occupational Health and own GP. Individuals must not work alone if any such condition is assessed as placing them at increased risk. Any person who requires assistance to get out of the building in an emergency must not work alone. |
| **Supervision:** What arrangements are in place to maintain contact with the LW | The LW must comply with the out of hours log in/out arrangements in operation within the building. Set up contact arrangements with family member. |
| **Training:** Has necessary information instruction and training been given to the LW and is the LW competent to carry out the work alone? | Any person authorised to be in the building outside normal hours must be fully competent to carry out the work safely and be fully conversant with emergency procedures. |
| **LOCATION AND PREMISESE** | |
| **Building security:** Is the building secure? | Access to the building is restricted to authorised personnel outside normal hours. In the event that the LW has concerns about security or suspects there is an intruder in the building they must contact the facilities manager on their mobile. Do not confront the intruder, lock door and await arrival of assistance. |
| **Access:** Is there a safe means of access/egress for the LW (consider lighting and personal security issues and means of escape in emergency) | Entrances in the vicinity of the building and car park are well lit. The LW should plan how to get to car/public transport after leaving, taking account of potential personal safety issues. LW should consider use of personal attack alarm. |
| **Emergencies:** Does the LW have access to emergency warning devices to raise the alarm in event of emergency e.g. motion sensors/manual device (panic alarms) | LWs must know local arrangements on how respond in event of fire or other emergency |
| **First Aid:** Are there any arrangements in place to deal with a situation where the LW becomes ill or has an accident? (access to first aiders and facilities) | First aiders are unlikely to be present. First aid boxes are available and contents checked regularly. In the event of a LW feeling unwell they should if possible return home or contact Security on 13013 for assistance. |
| **Welfare facilities:** Is there adequate heating, lighting, access to drinking water and toilets. | LW should be aware that heating/cooling in the area may be much reduced unless the business need for after hours working has been established. |
| **PROCESS/WORK ACTIVITY** | |
| Use of computers and general office equipment | LW should ensure their work station complies, and is set up in accordance with the UoN standards for DSE and has undergone a DSE assessment. LW should take regular breaks from DSE work. |
| Slip/trip/falls | Regular inspection of offices to ensure that any trip hazards [torn carpets, uneven flooring, trailing cables etc.] receive prompt attention. Individuals with temporarily impaired mobility must not work alone. |
| Electrical equipment | Ensure all office equipment is electrically tested in accordance with UoN procedures. Electrical cables and plugs visually inspected for damage. Do not interfere with plugs or power supply. |
| Work with hazardous substances and/or machinery | Not permitted. |
| Single handed lifting or handling of any load that is of such a weight as to cause injury. | Not permitted. |
| Handling cash and/or contact with the public | Not permitted. |
| **ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES TO BE APPLIED TO REDUCE RISKS** | |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Areas of Risk | What are the Hazards to Health and Safety? | What risks do they pose and to whom | Risk Level  (High Medium or Low) | What Precautions have been taken to reduce risk? | Risk Level after action taken (High Medium or Low) | What further action is needed to reduce the risk? |
| Journey to Families Home   1. Accidents 2. Congestion |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Stranger on Journey   1. Is the street lit well 2. Is it secluded 3. Theft |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Family Home   1. Unknown visitors / Physical assault from intruders to premises 2. Physical/verbal abuse from service intruders to premises. 3. Animals / pets 4. Clutter 5. Theft from lone worker 6. Language barrier 7. Being injured or becoming unwell and not being able to summon assistance, |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Concerns Based on Instinct  People not knowing your whereabouts.  1) Not being contactable  2) Unknown incidences by school when working alone. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**ANNEX C**

**Family Support Worker Risk Assessment Form:**

Assessed by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date Assessed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**ANNEX D**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RISK ASSESSMENT FOR: | Lone Working | |  |
| **Establishment:** | **Assessment by:** | **Date:** |
| **Review Date Due :** | **Signed By:** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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  . | Staff | Accident / injury,  delayed assistance in emergency  Physical assault / verbal abuse  **Cuts / abrasions, muscular skeletal and other physical injuries**  Staff at increased risk i.e. inexperienced staff, medical issues etc. | * Only agreed risk tasks to be undertaken, Avoid high risk activities (e.g. working at height); * Mobile phone available * Notify Principal / manager of intention to work outside regular hours. * Reduce time spent working alone so far as is reasonably practicable. * Ensure a colleague, partner, friend etc. is aware you are working alone and who to contact in the event of overdue contact. * 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 swipe doors etc. * 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 * Key holders strictly controlled * Weekend working – contact to be made with signing in and off work | **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔**  **✔** |  |