



# Lone Working Policy

Date Approved: September 2021

Date of Next Review: September 2024

## 1. Purpose

Northern Leaders Trust is committed to ensuring staff, volunteers and contractors enjoy a safe working environment. It is recognised that there are occasions when staff may be required, or choose, to work alone or in isolated situations. This however may introduce risks for a normally non-hazardous work activity.

## 2. Categories of lone workers

- Those responsible for opening, closing and securing the site, i.e. Sport@Kenton staff.
- Those who work in an isolated part of a building/school grounds
- Those responding to an alarm call out of normal school hours
- Those carrying out security checks during week-ends and holidays
- Those working during holiday/week-end periods
- Contractors working on site during week-ends and holiday periods
- Those carrying out duties off-site – i.e. visits to students' homes etc

## 3. Definition of Lone Working

Where staff are engaged in work (either outdoors or indoors) where there are no other people who could reasonably be expected to come to their immediate aid in the event of an incident or emergency.

## 4. Risk Assessment

It is the responsibility of the Principal of each school to ensure that all members of staff in the school have read and understood the Lone Working Risk Assessment relevant to their role. It is the responsibility of the Chief Operating Officer to ensure that all members of trust centrally employed staff have read and understood the Lone Working Risk Assessment relevant to their role. Hazards identified will be evaluated by the Estates and Premises Manager for the likelihood of the hazard causing harm. Measures will be introduced if the assessment shows that existing precautions are inadequate to eliminate or adequately control the hazard.

The risk assessment will be subject to review to ensure it is relevant and current to the workings of the Trust and its' schools. Contractors and other third party workers will be given a copy of the Lone Working Risk Assessment and will receive the appropriate Health and Safety information.

## 5. Lone Working Protocols

- Staff must seek the permission of the Principal or Chief Operating Officer to work alone in the buildings outside normal business/school hours.
- The experience and training of all staff and the activities to be undertaken will be taken into consideration before allowing lone working.
- Lone workers must be considered capable, by the COO or Principal, of responding correctly in an emergency situation.

- Staff should not enter the premises if there are signs of intruders but are advised to immediately call the police, council security force and a representative of the school.
- Staff should lock doors when lone working and ensure that areas of the school not in use are kept secure.
- Staff should ensure that they do not arrange meetings with third party visitors whilst lone working.
- Staff must not place themselves in danger by challenging intruders but should call the police for assistance. Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.
- All lone working staff should establish their own checking in and out system with either family, friends or work colleagues. It is advised that lone workers provide a relative or friend with a telephone contact number (COO, Principal, HR, Site Manager or Caretaker) to call if the lone worker fails to return home at the expected time.
- Staff working alone have a responsibility for making themselves familiar with and following the school's safety procedures and location of safety equipment.
- Staff and Contractors should have access to their own first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.
- If staff rely on mobile phones, they must ensure that their network has good reception within school. Although phones can give extra reassurance, they do not provide complete protection and staff should still be alert for their own personal safety at all times. In the situation where two or more people are working in isolated areas of an otherwise unoccupied building, personnel should keep each other informed about their movements.
- Lone workers should not undertake activities that involve the handling of money, working at height, any task that has been identified as medium or high risk or which is potentially hazardous given their own level of experience and the nature of the task. Staff working at height in an isolated building must follow the 'Working at Height Procedures.'

## 6. Home Visit Protocols

Before conducting a home visit consider the following:

- Is a home visit the most appropriate way of dealing with the issue?
- Have you checked the records to see if any previous violent incidents have been recorded? This is an aspect that should be recorded confidentially within the SIMS system
- Are you aware of whom will be present on the visit including visitors and other family members?
- If you have concerns about a particular visit – is it possible for you to visit with a colleague?

If you have any doubt – discuss this with your manager as your personal safety is paramount.

## 7. Control measures prior to the visit:

- When making the appointment to visit, log the time and date clearly and ensure it is recorded in the office so staff are aware of your whereabouts.

This can also allow others to raise concerns if you do not return or contact the office at the expected time.

- Arrange all of the home visits into an order of visit and leave this list in school on the designated board in the office.
- Ensure appropriate clothing is worn. No long earrings, long scarves or ties.
- Be aware of where you park your car; street lighting and sheltered or obscure locations.
- Be aware of trouble spots in the local area.
- On each visit take a mobile phone.
- Consider what is taken into the visit. Do you need to take a handbag, purse/wallet, briefcase? Or could you simply take a note pad, pen, relevant forms and mobile phone?
- Should the need arise, ensure you have a plan for getting out of the home safely. If you are in any doubt when you get to the house – do not enter.

## 8. During and after a home visit:

- Staff should always carry a (charged) mobile phone and have a number stored of a colleague you can contact in an emergency.
- Check that reception on the mobile phone is good before seeking to enter the premises.
- If invited into the house, only enter if you feel it is safe to do so.
- Stand a suitable distance from the door so as not to seem imposing. If there are steps stand 1 or 2 from the top.
- Assess the behaviour of the parent and consider the persons condition (alcohol, drugs, etc.). It is not advisable to talk in the kitchen as there are sharp implements in this area.
- Be aware of exits and anyone else that might be in the house.
- Always stand or sit as near to an exit as possible and make note of any obstacles between you and the door.
- Have a strategy in mind to use if you feel uncomfortable or feel the need to leave urgently. Make sure you have your car keys and phone in hand in case of an emergency.
- Consider household pets & animals in the home (ask for them to be kept in a room away from the interview area)
- Consider general standards of hygiene. Carry some Hand Hygiene Gel in your car.
- Staff should wear their work ID badge or carry it with them
- Staff should never give members of the public their personal contact details e.g. home telephone number, addresses or vehicle details.
- Assess and report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Staff should never undertake home visits during severe weather periods as this could have an adverse effect on travel arrangements

It is the responsibility of all school personnel and contractors to adhere to the lone working procedures and to report any difficulties, failure of equipment or general concerns on health and safety to the Trust Estates and Premises Manager.