

# Heaton St. Barnabas' C.E.(V.A.) Primary School

## LONE WORKER POLICY

### Context

Heaton St. Barnabas' school recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of its employees while working alone. This policy sets out our approach in both identifying these risks and adequately managing them. Any questions regarding its operation should be addressed to the headteacher.

### Background information

For the purposes of this policy, a lone worker is any individual who spends some or all of their working hours working alone. This may occur either during normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace, or when working outside normal hours or outside the normal workplace. Normal hours for the majority of staff are deemed to be from 08:00 until 17:00, Monday to Friday. Individual contracts may specify hours outside of this range to address extended school and community education.

### Legal position

Our duty to both assess and control any risks from lone working is governed by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA). Section 2 requires us to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of our employees. Similar duties are owed to other workers, such as agency temps under section 3 of the HSWA. This will be achieved by carrying out risk assessments in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended).

### Risk assessment

Our risk assessments cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed to be undertaken alone), where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong. Once all job roles involving lone working have been identified, the following factors will be considered:

#### Risk of violence

All jobs involving an element of lone working will be assessed for a risk of verbal threats, or violence. The priority will be those involving face-to-face dealings with members of the public and/or cash handling.

#### Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment used by lone workers will be assessed to ensure that it is suitable for use by one person.

#### Work at height

Working at height will not be undertaken when working alone and must comply with health and safety provisions for the use of ladders and scaffold towers.

### **Chemicals**

Any existing or planned use of chemicals will be considered with regards to their suitability for use by those working alone.

### **The worker**

The medical fitness of workers working alone will be assessed. Staff will be encouraged to refer any concerns to their GP.

### **Access and egress**

Some lone working may require access to locations which are difficult to access or exit. Assessments will consider whether these tasks are suitable to be carried out by one person.

## **Control measures**

In order to manage the risks identified, we have introduced the following control measures:

### **Risk of violence**

- Staff are required to lock themselves in the buildings when lone working.
- Members of staff must not arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working. All meetings must be arranged during school occupancy times or when there is more than one member of staff on site for the duration of the meeting.
- Members of staff are required not to handle cash when lone working.
- Late meetings must finish promptly and not leave one member of staff alone on site.
- Members of staff are required not to approach, or let into the buildings, unauthorised persons when lone working.
- All staff members are required to give 24 hours' notice to the line manager before lone working, either after hours or through holiday periods.
- Staff members attending alarm activations will only attend either with police support or in pairs. An outside check of the premises must be carried out, to ascertain if entry has been gained, before entering the school. If there is sign of an entry, police support must be gained before entering the school.

### **Communication**

- Staff members are required to avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.
- Staff members are required to sign in and off the site.
- Staff members are required to carry either a mobile phone or school telephone at all times when lone working.
- Staff members are required to let someone know they are coming into work, how long they are expected to be on site and when they are leaving the site.
- Staff members are required to comply with all fire evacuation procedures.

### **First aid**

For those working on our premises, first aid kits can be found in the:

- Staffroom
- Kitchen
- Etc

### **Emergency procedures**

In the event that a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone/school phone to contact the headteacher, the staff member's nominated person or the emergency services.

### **Access and egress**

Staff members are required to consider weather conditions before coming into and while at work.

### **Unacceptable lone working**

The following activities are not to be carried out by lone workers under any circumstances:

- Working at height.
- Manual handling of heavy or bulky items.
- Transport of injured persons. (This must always be undertaken by more than one member of staff.)

### **Training**

Lone workers will be trained in safe working practices. This will apply to employees and other workers where applicable, such as agency staff and contractors.

### **Line managers**

It is the responsibility of individual line managers, to monitor the tasks being carried out by staff. In particular, they are responsible for ensuring that any proscribed tasks are not carried out by one person alone. If the nature of the task changes, in any way, the line manager must ensure that a new risk assessment is carried out. They also need to ensure that any lone worker follows good working practices and safe systems of work.

### **Lone worker duties**

All lone workers are expected to co-operate fully with instructions given by their line manager. They are also expected to follow the school's safe systems of work and any associated procedures. Failure to do so may be a disciplinary offence.