



Lone Working Policy

Review Date 25th Jul; 2020

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Statement of intent

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

REACH 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.

Within this policy, 'lone working' refers to situations where staff, in the course of their duties, work alone in the centre and are physically isolated from colleagues, possibly without immediate access to assistance. Due to the possibility of buildings creating isolated areas, it is possible for a staff member to be 'lone working' with other staff members in the building.

Next review date: 25/07/19

1. Lone working procedure

- 1.1. Under no circumstances should a member of staff compromise their personal safety. If a staff member feels in danger, they should remove themselves from the situation immediately.
- 1.2. A risk assessment must be undertaken of the activities the staff is engaged in. It must cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed to be), where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself, or by the lack of available assistance should something go wrong. The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring suitable procedures are in place for undertaking risk assessments for all situations requiring lone working. These procedures must ensure that all involved are aware of precautions and methods of work to be followed, including emergency action to be taken if necessary. Once relevant tasks are identified, the following must be considered:
 - Risk of violence: All jobs involving lone working are assessed for risk of verbal threats or violence.
 - Access and egress: Some lone working may require access to locations that are difficult to access or egress. Assessments will consider whether these tasks are suitable for lone working.
 - Situational hazards: These include potentially dangerous animals in the home, dangerous locations and visits to locations where previous problems have occurred.

- 1.3. An approved list of lone working activities will be established, outlining situations where lone working may be authorised and the necessary precautions and work methods to be followed.
- 1.4. Providing the activity is on the approved list, lone working may be deemed 'authorised'.
- 1.5. Unless explicitly stated on the approved list, lone working must only be undertaken following authorisation from the Centre Manager.
- 1.6. A log of known risks, with regard to locations and persons, must be kept, updated and reviewed regularly. It must be available to staff prior to visits and held in a secure location. If staff are leaving REACH's employment, they are required to inform their successor of any known concerns via a report, and a briefing if possible.
- 1.7. Appointments must be managed so that colleagues of staff members are always aware of their movements and appointments. A list of appointments for the designated staff member is kept for the Centre Manager to view when needed. The list includes the address designated staff will be visiting, the details of the persons whom they are visiting and a known contact number, and indications of how long they expect to be at these locations. The list is held securely in google outreach file to ensure the information remains confidential. If the Centre Manager is not available, responsibility for the list defers to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 1.8. Details of vehicles used by designated staff, including make, model, registration number and colour, must be held by the Centre Manager.
- 1.9. Once in place, appointment arrangements should be adhered to. Staff must notify the Centre Manager of changes to their schedule.
- 1.10. If a visit is deemed high risk, where there is a history of violence or the location itself is considered high risk, the visit must only be made if absolutely necessary. In these cases, the designated staff member may request a meeting in a more suitable location or to be accompanied by another member of staff.
- 1.11. During a visit, staff will:
 - Carry an ID badge and be prepared to identify themselves.
 - Carry out a '10 second risk assessment' when they first arrive at the house. If they feel in danger, they should have an excuse ready not to enter the house and arrange an alternative appointment.
 - Be aware of any animals in the house and ask for them to be secured in a separate room. If there is a known problem with animals at the address, the occupants should be contacted and requested to remove or secure the animals before arrival.
 - Ensure that they shut the door behind them and make themselves familiar with the door lock, in case an emergency exit is needed.
 - Not position themselves in the corner of a room or in a situation where it is difficult to escape.

- Remain calm and focused at all times and keep their possessions close to them.
 - Be aware of their body language and the body language of the client. There is potentially a risk of exacerbating the situation by sending out nervous or aggressive signals, particularly where cultural, gender or physical issues need to be considered.
- 1.12. The designated staff member will report, via telephone, to their 'buddy' at the end of each session (see 1.9).
- 1.13. The school operates a 'buddy system'. The member of staff has a nominated buddy for each period in which they will be working alone. The buddy will:
- Be aware of the schedule and movements of the staff member.
 - Have all necessary contact details of the staff member, including next of kin.
 - Have details of the staff members scheduled breaks and rest periods.
 - Attempt to contact the staff member if contact is not made as agreed.
 - Follow agreed escalation procedures and notify the Centre Manager.
- 1.14. Contingency arrangements must be in place for a member of staff to take over the role of buddy in case the nominated person becomes unavailable, for example, the buddy is called into a meeting or appointments go beyond their working day.
- 1.15. Where there is genuine concern, as a result of a lone worker failing to attend a visit or report back to their buddy, the Centre Manager will use the information held on record to try and ascertain the whereabouts of the designated member of staff. If contact cannot be made, the Centre Manager will decide, depending on the circumstances, whether to contact the police.
- 1.16. If police involvement is necessary, police will be given access to all information held.
- 1.17. It is the responsibility of the individual concerned to ensure all necessary precautions and procedures are adhered to at all times.
- 1.18. Any person who becomes aware of circumstances involving lone working, where the existing control measures may not be fully effective, must inform the Centre Manager as soon as possible.

2. Training

- 2.1. Lone workers will be fully trained in safe working practices. The Designated safeguarding lead is responsible for organising all relevant training.
- 2.2. The staff will undertake training in conflict resolution to enable them to negotiate difficult situations safely. Other training that will be considered for staff includes: cultural awareness training, diversity and racial equality training, specific equipment training, manual handling training, first aid training, and training in disengagement techniques.

3. Duties of a lone worker

3.1. Lone workers are expected to follow all the procedures outlined in this policy and all relevant training. Failure to do so may be a disciplinary offence.

4. Child protection and safeguarding

4.1. Physical restraint and use of force:

- Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in our Promoting positive behaviour for learning policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

4.2. One-to-one sessions:

- If lone working is an integral part of an employee's role, a full and appropriate risk assessment will be conducted and agreed.
- Full and ongoing training regarding child protection, physical restraint and the use of reasonable force, and lone working procedures will be provided for all staff with regular lone working responsibilities.
- Meetings or sessions with children will never be held in remote or secluded areas.
- Colleagues will be informed beforehand when holding one-to-one sessions or discussions.
- The use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs is prohibited.
- Doors will be kept open when conducting one-to-one sessions. Where this is not possible, for example in a music lesson, it will be ensured that both parties can be seen through one or more windows.
- When holding one-to-one sessions, staff members will talk to the child with a desk between them, or otherwise arrange the room or environment to avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Both parties will sit near to the door.
- If a child becomes emotional, distressed or angry, the staff member will seek assistance, it will be reported to a senior colleague and a record kept of the employee's concerns.

4.3. Allegations:

- Our policy and procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in our Child protection and safeguarding policy.

5. Monitoring and review

5.1. The Centre Manager is responsible for monitoring this policy and procedures and amending accordingly following incidents or concerns.

5.2. The policy will be reviewed by the Centre Manager biannually.