



## Lone Working Policy

### Introduction

The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub (the Venue) is a for-profit Organisation run for the following purpose:

*The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub is a purpose-built space designed to be used by groups to enhance the wellbeing of children and young people, parents and carers, and professionals working in education.*

The Old Post Office C.I.C. (the Organisation) is a not-for profit organisation which provides support for children, young people (and their families) who are struggling to attend mainstream education.

The Organisation is based at:

Springlands Farm, London Road, Mountfield, East Sussex. TN32 5LX.

The Organisation has adopted this 'Lone Working Policy' and expects every adult working or helping at The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub, or representing the Organisation, to support and comply with it. Consequently, this policy shall apply to all service providers, volunteers and people using or renting the venue, and representing the Organisation.

### Purpose of the Policy

This policy is intended to protect children and young people who receive any support at The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub or through the Organisation, including those who are the children of adults using the facility. Under this policy, the term children shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

This policy relates to teaching and learning at The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub or through the Organisation, and the wider environment; it has been written to confirm our commitment to all students and The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub or our Organisation's Service Providers.

### Policy Principles & Values

The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the Organisation recognises that some students require 2:1 (adult:child) whilst other students require 1:1. When working in a 1:1 situation this introduces risks into the setting which must be appropriately managed. We have a commitment to supporting Service Providers, both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices.

The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the Organisation will:

- Recognise and reduce risk
- Have a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for Service Providers
- Have a clear understanding of responsibilities
- Place priority on the safety of the individual over property
- Have a commitment to providing appropriate information and or training for Service Providers.

The Lone Working Policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 document.

## Procedures

The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the Organisation will ensure any 1:1 working is agreed by parents or carers and a Director, these arrangements and agreements will be documented in the student's individual learning plan along with a One Page Plan and Risk Assessment. Parents will be informed of this in the tutors 'Terms and Conditions' document and signature of this will confirm that they have read all policies and the 'Terms and Conditions', accepted and agreed to comply with them all.

The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the Organisation will ensure that all Service Providers have a clear enhanced DBS check and barred list check before working 1:1 with any student (this is the case for all Service Providers but is particularly important for 1:1 working).

The Organisation will only approve 1:1 working for a student where it is in line with parental preference and where the student does not have any history of challenging or risky behaviour. If a student who is working 1:1 begins to display risky or challenging behaviour, then this should be immediately reviewed, and the student will need to be moved onto a programme with 2:1 Service Providers.

The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the Organisation require all Service Providers to raise any concerns with a Director at the earliest opportunity.

The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the Organisation require all Service Providers to always follow the Service Providers' code of conduct.

## Interrelationships with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other important policies:

- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

## Procedures to be followed at the location

Service Providers must ensure that:

- All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building and that emergency exits are known and accessible
- They are familiar with emergency exit procedures and alarms
- There is access to a telephone and First Aid kit. Service Providers are advised to have their mobile phone fully charged, with credit if applicable.
- Neither they nor students smoke or vape in any building which is being used for the Organisation's purposes
- Sign in and sign out procedures are followed, at all times.

## Personal Belongings

Due to the possible behaviour of some of the students referred to The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub or the Organisation, they may not treat your personal belongings with respect. Service Providers must ensure that they do not leave their personal belongings, for example, money, phones, car and or house keys, personal ID's, unattended.

Failure to look after such items properly can lead to safeguarding incidents, as well as the obvious risks to your personal property and privacy. Some students are, for good reason, not allowed to have access to mobile communication devices of any kind. Therefore, whilst working in The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub, or with the Organisation, a Service Provider should not allow a student to use their own personal telephone for any reason whatsoever.

Always check the One Page Plan and Risk Assessment for specific safeguarding or risk issues that may be known. Never assume that the student will have the same attitude towards property that you do.

## Personal Safety

Service Providers must:

Not assume that having a mobile telephone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The priority is to plan for a reduction of risk and refer to the risk assessment written for the student.

- Take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances
- Where required, ensure that they sign in and out of building registers
- Give details of their location prior to engaging in any session with a student; this information should be included in the Risk Assessment and Weekly Plan
- If a Service Provider does not report in as expected, an agreed plan will be put into operation. Initially to check on the situation and then to respond, as appropriate, using emergency contact information. This might involve situations in which Service Providers have failed to inform all relevant parties that they are late returning to the student's home in the student's company.

Safeguarding arrangements for contacts and responses, should be tailored to the needs and the nature of the circumstances. Issues to consider include:

- The identified risks
- Measures in place to reduce those risks according to the risk assessment

Where Service Providers work alone for extended periods and or on a regular basis, they should make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the provision and to counter the effects of working in isolation.

It is intended that all Alternative Provision, tutoring or group sessions will take place within The Old Post Office and there will be two members of staff present when working with children and young people

who have been flagged as ‘vulnerable’. Service Providers working away from The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub, should ensure that they always carry a mobile telephone. Service Providers are responsible for checking that the mobile telephone is charged, in working order and with sufficient credit remaining. Please see Appendix 1 for further guidance.

### **Assessment of Risk**

In preparing and recording an assessment of risk, the following should be considered:

- The environment – location, security, access
- The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
- Associate, student, members of the public and other individuals who are in the area
- History – any previous incidents in similar situations
- Any other special circumstances.

All available information should be considered and checked or updated as necessary. Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone Associate in each situation, consideration will be given to sending a second Associate or making other arrangements to deliver the provision. Please refer to How to Write a Risk Assessment Guidelines.

### **Planning**

As part of planning, the following points are to be considered:

- Associate and student safety, when choosing locations for an education provision
- Service Providers must be fully briefed in relation to any potential risks, and these will be communicated through the One Page Plan and existing Risk Assessments
- Communication, checking-in and fall-back arrangements must be in place. Service Providers should ensure; for example, that The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub or Organisation’s team and parents/carers are always aware of their movements and expected return time.

### **Practice Guidance – Personal Safety**

‘Reasonable precautions might include:

- Ensure you have the correct and current address and any directions for the destination
- Ensure your car, if used, is road-worthy, has business insurance and has break-down cover
- Ensure someone from the team knows where you are going and when you expect to return
- Where possible park in a well-lit and busy area
- Take care when entering or leaving empty buildings, especially if it is dark
- Ensure that items such as laptops or mobile phones are carried discreetly

Should you have any concerns as a lone worker please contact The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub or the Organisation.

This policy is approved and robustly endorsed by The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the Organisation and is due for renewal every year.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ *Anita Auer* \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Anita Auer (Safeguarding Officer)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ *Paul Auer* \_\_\_\_\_ Mr Paul Auer (Manager)

Date: 24.6.24

Review Date: 24.6.25

## APPENDIX 1 - Personal Safety – Summary

There are a number of things you can do to stay safe. The Organisation has a responsibility for the health and safety, and welfare of Service Providers at work. Service Providers also have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves whilst at work.

For your personal safety and that of students in your care you should:

### **1. Be aware of the environment**

- Know what measures are in place where you work; for example, check alarm systems and procedures, exits and entrances, and the location of the first aiders
- Make sure that your car and mobile phone are in good working order, and that electrical and other mechanical equipment is safe to use. Check the instructions for use and ensure that faults are reported and dealt with
- To reduce the risk of injury or incident, ensure any item which could be used as a potential weapon is removed, and you are aware of all exit routes
- Try to maintain a comfortable temperature and level of lighting.

### **2. Be aware of yourself**

- Think about your body language. What messages are you giving?
- Think about your tone of voice and choice of words. Avoid anything which could be interpreted as sarcastic or patronising
- Think about what you are wearing. Is it suitable for the task? Does it hamper your movement? What signals does it send out? In a potentially risky situation, does a scarf or tie offer an opportunity to an assailant?
- Be aware of your own triggers – the things that make you angry or upset
- Think about what you say about yourself and, or the impression your belongings give; for example, your phone, tablet, jewellery etc. This could spark resentment or jealousy or cause a student to steal - from you or others.

### **3. Be aware of other people**

- Take note of non-verbal signals
  - Be aware of triggers
  - Do not crowd people – allow them space
  - Make a realistic estimate of the time you will need to do something and don't make promises which can't be kept, either on your own or on behalf of someone else
  - Be aware of the context of your session – is the student already angry or upset when you meet?
  - Listen to them, and show them you are listening
  - Make sure you report any contact made with other adults unknown to you in your Daily Report.
- Safeguarding information might not always become available at time of referral. Your work with a student could unfold very useful background information. Do not forget we could potentially work with some of the most vulnerable young people.

## APPENDIX 2 - Guidance for the Education Provision at the Student's Home

## 1. Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers

- When tutoring at the student's home, ensure there is another responsible adult at home while the provision is taking place
- You should never be left in the home alone with a student unless there is a pre-agreed risk assessment for lone working. If for any reason the responsible adult should need to leave the home, the student must go with them. You must then leave the house and wait for their return
- Show respect for parents/carers/families as equal partners in the relationship
- Do not assume that all students or parents/carers are literate or speak English. Where necessary translation services will be provided
- Be aware of social, cultural and religious differences
- If a parent seeks to establish social contact with you, or if this occurs coincidentally, you should exercise your professional judgement. However, The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub recommends that you keep only a professional relationship with any parents/carers you have met through your engagement with the student and their family
- You may, as part of your professional role, be required to support a parent or carer. If that person comes to depend upon you or seeks support outside of your professional role, this should be immediately discussed with The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub team, who will seek further advice.

## 2. Safeguarding

- If when tutoring in the home, the student leaves the house abruptly, assess the situation and then immediately alert The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the parents/carers.
- Communication with the student should strictly take place within professional boundaries – this excludes texting, emails, social media sites and blogs etc.,
- Do not share any of your personal information with a student under any circumstances
- Do not respond to personal information the student gives unless appropriate to your professional role. However, such information should be reported as it may form part of a bigger picture that you are unaware of
- Be aware that inappropriate friendship or actions, and or relationships could be misconstrued as part of a grooming process either by the student or others
- It is illegal to engage in sexual activity with a student aged 18 years or below, or to incite the student to watch or engage in sexual activity. This is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offence Act 2003 and can lead to imprisonment
- Any sexual activity of any kind, including incitement, with any student, of any age, is considered by the The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub to be completely unacceptable behaviour and will lead to summary termination of contract irrespective of any prosecution.

## 3. Health and Safety

- Keep the door to the room that you are in open. This has two purposes: 1) it ensures that the student feels safe and not imprisoned, and 2) that you minimise the risk of any allegation that could be made against you
- Ensure that your mobile phone is operational and fully charged before the session
- When attending the student's home, demonstrate normal courtesy and wait to be invited in
- Do not use or visit bedrooms for any reason, unless accompanied by the parents/carers, otherwise keep in communal areas of the house at all times
- Dress modestly and appropriately for working with students. Service Providers are expected to maintain an appropriate standard of dress, appearance, and hygiene to ensure that the The Old Post

Office Wellbeing Hub's professional image and reputation are maintained. Dress in a way that is appropriate and suited to the location of your session and the activity you are involved in

- Use common sense, trust your instincts and if a situation feels threatening - leave, saying for example, that you are going back to get something from your car
- If you get delayed make sure that you inform you're the Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and parents/carers via WhatsApp groups as soon as possible. Parents/carers are advised to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), if an ES fails to return with a student within half an hour of the agreed time and no contact has been made. In these situations, a safeguarding concern is triggered, and the safeguarding protocol followed. Please ensure that false alarms are avoided as these can cause unnecessary concern
- If you are out with a student and meet a relative or friend of a student, be polite but never divulge any information about the student or yourself
- Special safeguarding measures may need to be arranged as a result of the Risk Assessment. Regular telephone contacts will most definitely be part of the special measures in place. If there appears to be any cause for concern, the following protocol will take place:

- o A code word will be used, and the Associate should respond accordingly to the questions being asked.

- o If there is no answer, the Associate will try to make contact again after 5 minutes

- o If there is still no answer, the Associate will ring the student's home number or their parents/carers mobile to ensure that the situation is safe

- o When contact cannot be successfully established, the Associate will immediately report their concern to the DSL

- Personal hygiene is important since you are working 1:1 and in close quarters, so be aware of your body and breath odour. Some students are sensitive to the smell of tobacco, coffee, perfume and aftershave
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour that could be misinterpreted
- You should be aware that your behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise your position within the work setting in relation to the protection of students, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub and the profession into disrepute.

#### **4. Personal Boundaries**

- If the student seeks comfort or a hug, do not do anything that can be misinterpreted or could be considered inappropriate. Be sympathetic and caring about their situation, but it is wise to avoid any physical contact
- Never introduce a student to any friend or family member that you meet, just tell them you are at work and will contact them later
- Be aware of the risk of a student of either gender becoming infatuated with you. Respond sensitively and appropriately to maintain your and their dignity, and safety. Be aware of how your words and actions may be misinterpreted. Raise any concerns with the Safeguarding Lead.
- Consider your body language and ensure, that you do not use any sudden, or what could be misinterpreted as threatening gestures, or gestures or expressions that could seem sexually provocative. Remember, all that is known of the student's past is what they have disclosed or has been observed by others. Even the student may not consciously remember what they may have suffered or seen, so try and avoid behaving in a way that