



Lone Working Policy

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Regulations and Standards:

The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015:

- Regulation 31 - Staffing of children's homes
- Regulation 33 - Employment of staff

Relevant Policies:

'Safeguarding – Child Protection Policy'

'Allegations Against Staff Policy'

'Recognising Abuse and Treating Abuse Guidance Policy'

'Rostering and Handover Policy'

'Touch Policy'

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1. Induction / Training:

It is critically important that homes are staffed at all times with sufficient staff, who are appropriately experienced and qualified.



See 'Rostering and Handover Policy'.

No member of staff will work in a one-to-one situation with a child until they have:

- Been validated by a manager as having sufficient prior training / experience.
- Satisfactorily completed an induction program.
- Received relevant training.

2. Risk Assessment:

No HND Children's Care Ltd member of staff will be asked or expected to work with a child in a one-to-one situation, unless such a method of working has been confirmed as appropriate and manageable as a result of a risk assessment carried out in relation to the child. The assessment of the risk presented to lone workers must also be subject to regular reviews.

Controlling the risks associated with lone working will also include the relevant training, information, instruction, supervision, and possible protective equipment etc. The risk assessment will have identified the safe working measures, controls, training, and supervision requirements to ensure the safety of staff and children.

The risk assessment prior to placement will clarify the issue of whether a child should be looked after by a staff member of the opposite sex. HND Children's Care Ltd will endeavor to ensure that there is a staff member of the same sex on all shifts if agreed in the Placement Plan.

When undertaking risk assessments, the thoughts and feelings of children will be considered with direct reference to taking account of them feeling unsafe / vulnerable with staff members of the same / opposite gender due to their previous experiences.

All staff working with the children share responsibility for familiarising themselves with the contents of the risk assessment, any conditions attached, and any other relevant information contained in the child's records.

The manager must ensure that arrangements are made to carry out any steps considered necessary to manage any risks presented to staff.

Factors to consider:

- The knowledge of a medical condition the staff member may have.
- The time of day or night.
- Methods of communication.
- The location of the work and if travel is involved.
- The risk of violence to staff, verbal and physical.
- Is inexperienced staff at risk?
- Are there any gender issues such as female staff or new and expectant mothers being especially at risk?
- Has adequate training been received to ensure competency?

Where the risk assessment indicates that a member of staff is likely to be at risk in a given



situation, the manager will ensure that a contingency plan is in place should the situation occur, for example by the provision of additional support staff.

Upon successful completion of the risk assessment, the manager:

- Must get the consent of the child's social worker for such arrangements to go ahead including the social worker viewing the assessment and making comment if necessary.
- Must review the risk assessment regularly.
- Must seek staff and children's opinion as to how the arrangements are working.
- Must stop the arrangement if any risk, safeguarding concerns etc. arise from such arrangements.

If a member of staff has any concerns about their own safety or that of the child, or others, they must contact the manager immediately (or when safe to do so) who will consider the need for an urgent review of the risk assessment. Any such concerns will be communicated as necessary to all members of the staff working with the child if appropriate. For example, during contact with parents, staff may feel threatened by the parent's behaviour.

See '[Contact with Parents and Siblings Policy](#)'.

If the manager has any reason to consider, having regard to any incidents, reports, or events, that a child presents a risk to staff, or that an individual member of staff is particularly at risk from a child or is vulnerable working in a one-to-one situation, the manager should take immediate steps to review the deployment of staff.

3. Supervision:

See '[Staff Supervision Policy](#)'.

At each supervision meeting, there will be an agenda item covering any issues related to lone working if appropriate and applicable. Any concerns, training issues or requests for additional support should be shared and discussed as part of this forum.

4. Monitoring:

The manager will monitor the appropriateness of the risk assessment through the regular review of the child's records, regular supervision with members of staff engaged in lone working, discussion at staff meetings, regular consultation with the child via keyworker meetings and Placement Planning Meetings etc.

As indicated above in (Section 2, Risk Assessments) where the manager has any concerns that a child presents a risk to lone workers, in general or to an individual member of staff, the manager must take immediate steps to review the risk assessment and if necessary, review the composition or deployment of the staff team, and / or the training needs of the individual member of staff.



Any HND Children's Care Ltd member of staff who has any such concerns must report them to the manager so that he or she can take any necessary action.

5. Guidance on One-to-One Working:

Staff lone working need to be particularly aware not to put themselves in potentially unsafe situations. They need to pay particular attention to detailed recordings in daily log and incident reports. Staff members need to be vigilant and report any concerns to the homes manager.

Staff who are lone working should not attempt to restrain a child but should use the "On Call" system for support. HND Children's Care Ltd recommends that for staff at risk of physical harm to leave the building in the absence of any other alternative. In some circumstances it may be safer not to leave the building and to summon help.

Staff should view spending time alone with children as an opportunity to develop individual positive adult - child relationships.

Staff are asked to pay particular attention to the following areas of risk:

- Special Relationships: It is beneficial for children to be involved in wholesome and nurturing relationships with responsible adults, but exclusiveness and secrecy is not acceptable and should be challenged and reported to the manager.
- Taking children home: This is not permitted under any circumstances.
- Physical Care: There are clear guidelines about appropriate privacy / boundaries. Children should be encouraged to undertake personal care and hygiene activities for themselves as soon as appropriate for their age.
- Access to Bedrooms: Staff should be mindful of children's need for privacy, and situations which could give rise to discomfort or misinterpretation. It would be unwise for any member of staff to be alone with a child in their bedroom, with the door closed so doors must always be left open unless there are two members of staff present.

Also see '[Children's Bedrooms Policy](#)'.

- Trips and Outings: These should be dispersed among the staff group and subject to collective management approval. There should be careful monitoring when a pattern emerges, linking one member of staff with a particular child, or group of children.
- Positive Handling: As a part of mandatory training staff are expected to attend HND Children's Care Ltd chosen restrictive physical intervention training course which explores best practice, risk management and safety issues when lone working with children. Where only one member of staff is on duty at any time, a risk assessment should be carried out and recorded in writing, identifying any likely risks to children, staff, and members of the public, and this must have demonstrated that there is no acceptable level of risk from such an arrangement. Staff working on their own should use the "On Call" system if they need advice or support.



Systems must be in place to ensure that staff are able to contact an on-call manager. When placing a child in a one-to-one situation the following issues have to be considered:

- Children must always have a member of staff responsible for them. They must know who that member of staff is and how to contact them. There must always be at least one member of staff responsible for each identifiable group of children, within or outside the home, with the means to call for immediate assistance from at least one other member of staff or the on-call manager if necessary.

End.