



## **Lone Working Policy- Swift Learning**

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## 1. Policy Statement

Swift Learning is committed to ensuring the health, safety, safeguarding, and wellbeing of all staff who may be required to work alone as part of their professional duties.

We recognise that lone working within alternative provision environments presents increased risks due to:

- complex pupil needs
- behavioural challenges
- emotional dysregulation
- off-site and community-based learning

This policy establishes a structured framework to identify, assess, and manage lone working risks, ensuring appropriate safeguards are always implemented.

Lone working will only take place where risks can be reduced to an acceptable level.

## 2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by and complies with:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- HSE Guidance on Lone Working
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- DfE Health and Safety and Safeguarding Guidance

Swift Learning has a legal duty of care to employees and pupils and must take reasonably practicable steps to protect individuals from foreseeable harm.

## 3. Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where a member of staff works without direct supervision, immediate assistance, or close support.

Examples include:

- A single staff member supervising pupil
- Working alone on premises outside normal hours
- One-to-one off-site activities
- Community visits or home-based learning
- Transporting pupils individually

- Remote or outreach provision

Lone working does not imply unsafe practice but requires enhanced risk management.

#### **4. Scope and Application**

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Volunteers
- Agency staff
- Contractors (where relevant)

It covers all on-site and off-site activities delivered by Swift Learning.

#### **5. Principles of Lone Working Safety**

Swift Learning operates under the principle that lone working should be avoided wherever reasonably practicable. Where it cannot be avoided, appropriate safeguards must be implemented to ensure staff safety and pupil welfare.

Staffing arrangements will always take account of individual pupil risk profiles, the nature of activities being undertaken, and environmental factors.

No staff member will be expected to undertake lone working where unacceptable risk remains following assessment.

#### **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **Proprietor**

The Proprietor holds overall accountability for ensuring that effective lone working arrangements are in place and that the organisation complies with health and safety legislation.

##### **Health & Safety Lead**

The Health & Safety Lead is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of lone working procedures, ensuring that risk assessments are completed and reviewed, monitoring incidents and trends, and coordinating relevant training.

### **Head of Alternative Provision**

The Head of Alternative Provision is responsible for authorising lone working activities, ensuring appropriate staffing arrangements, supporting staff, and responding to any concerns or incidents related to lone working.

### **All Staff**

All staff are responsible for following lone working procedures, participating in risk assessments, using agreed communication and monitoring systems, and reporting concerns or incidents promptly.

## **7. Risk Assessment Process**

Prior to any regular or planned lone working activity, a formal lone working risk assessment must be completed.

The assessment will consider the nature of the task, the environment in which the work will take place, the individual needs and behavioural risks of pupils involved, staff experience and training, communication arrangements, and emergency response procedures.

Risk assessments are recorded and reviewed regularly, and immediately following any incident, near miss, or significant change in circumstances.

In addition to formal assessments, staff are expected to undertake dynamic risk assessments throughout the working day and adapt practice accordingly.

## **8. Specific Risks in Alternative Provision**

Swift Learning recognises that lone working within alternative provision presents specific challenges, including unpredictable behaviour, emotional escalation, safeguarding disclosures, absconding, and medical emergencies.

These risks are explicitly considered within individual pupil risk profiles and lone working assessments to ensure appropriate preventative measures are in place.

## **9. Control and Preventative Measures**

A range of control measures are implemented to reduce lone working risks. These include appropriate staffing levels, clear operational procedures for approved lone working activities, secure premises, safe access and exit routes, behaviour management strategies, and leadership oversight of lone working arrangements.

Where higher risks are identified, additional staff support will be provided, or lone working will be avoided entirely.

### **10. Communication and Monitoring Systems**

Effective communication is central to lone working safety.

Staff are required to sign in and out of premises and to follow agreed check-in procedures when working alone or off-site. Mobile phones or communication devices are provided where appropriate, and emergency contact details are readily accessible.

Where a staff member fails to check in as expected, immediate escalation procedures are activated to ensure their safety.

### **11. Off-Site Lone Working**

All off-site lone working activities must be risk assessed in advance and authorised by leadership.

Details of locations, activities, and expected timescales must be shared with management. Emergency arrangements must be clearly agreed prior to the activity taking place.

Staff are encouraged to avoid isolated locations where possible and to withdraw from any situation that feels unsafe.

### **12. Transport and Travel Arrangements**

Transport for pupils attending Swift Learning is arranged and commissioned by the relevant local authority or placing school.

While Swift Learning does not directly provide or manage transport services, the organisation works closely with the local authority and transport providers to ensure that appropriate safeguarding and health and safety arrangements are in place.

Information relating to pupil needs, behaviour risks, medical requirements, and individual support plans is shared (in line with data protection requirements) to support safe transport arrangements.

Where concerns regarding transport safety, supervision, or pupil wellbeing are identified, these are escalated promptly to the local authority for review and action.

Swift Learning ensures that transport-related risks are considered within individual pupil risk assessments and support planning to support safe arrival and departure from the provision.

### **13. Emergency Response and Incident Management**

In the event of an emergency, staff must contact emergency services where required and notify leadership immediately.

All incidents, near misses, and concerns related to lone working must be recorded in line with organisational procedures.

Following any incident, appropriate support, debriefing, and review of risk assessments will take place.

#### **14. Training and Competency**

All staff receive lone working guidance as part of their induction programme and ongoing training.

This includes risk assessment training, behaviour management and de-escalation techniques, safeguarding training, and emergency response procedures.

Additional training is provided where lone working risks are higher.

#### **15. Monitoring, Audit and Review**

The Health & Safety Lead monitors lone working arrangements through regular review of risk assessments, incident reports, and staff feedback.

Findings are reported to leadership to ensure continuous improvement.

This policy is formally reviewed at least annually and following any significant incidents or organisational changes.

**Date of Policy Approval:** 01.09.2025

**Next Review Date:** 01.09.2026

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*Appendix A- Lone Working Risk Assessment*

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**Staff Member Name:**

**Role:**

**Date of Assessment:**

**Location / Activity:**

**Assessment Completed By:**

**Review Date:**

**1. Description of Lone Working Task**

*(Include details of the activity, location, duration and frequency)*

**2. Hazards Identified**

*(Consider behaviour risks, environment, medical needs, safeguarding concerns, travel risks)*

### 3. Individuals at Risk

*(Staff member, pupils, visitors or others)*

### 4. Existing Control Measures

*(Staffing arrangements, training, communication systems, environmental controls)*

### 5. Risk Rating

**Likelihood:**

**Severity:**

**Overall Risk Level:**

### 6. Additional Actions Required

**Action Required:**

**Person Responsible:**

**Target Date:**

**Action Required:**

*Person Responsible:*

*Target Date:*

**7. Emergency and Escalation Procedures**

*(Who to contact, how to get help, emergency numbers)*

**8. Assessment Outcome**

*Lone working approved with controls in place*

*Lone working not approved – alternative arrangements required*

*Assessor Signature:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Staff Member Signature:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_