



**OUR LADY
OF LOURDES**

CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST



Holy Cross Primary Catholic Voluntary Academy

Lone Working Policy

November 2023

Trust Mission Statement

We are a partnership of Catholic schools and our aim is to provide the very best Catholic education for all in our community and so improve life chances through spiritual, academic and social development.

We will achieve this by:

- Placing the life and teachings of Jesus Christ at the centre of all that we do
- Following the example of Our Lady of Lourdes by nurturing everyone so that we can all make the most of our God given talents
- Working together so that we can all achieve our full potential, deepen our faith and know that God loves us
- Being an example of healing, compassion and support for the most vulnerable in our society

Judges 18 v5-6 NIV

5. Then they said to him, "Please inquire of God to learn whether our journey will be successful."

6. The priest answered them, "Go in peace. Your journey has the LORD's approval."

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Introduction

Lone working is defined by the Health and Safety Executive as those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. This doesn't mean that the worker is physically alone, it means they are in a separate location to the rest of their team or manager. Due to the nature of the work within the school, employees are sometimes required to work alone. The school recognises the various risks that staff may face and has considered the actions that should be taken.

If staff work alone and/or face potentially hostile or abusive situations, it is important to have a system in place to ensure that an alarm can be raised if assistance is required.

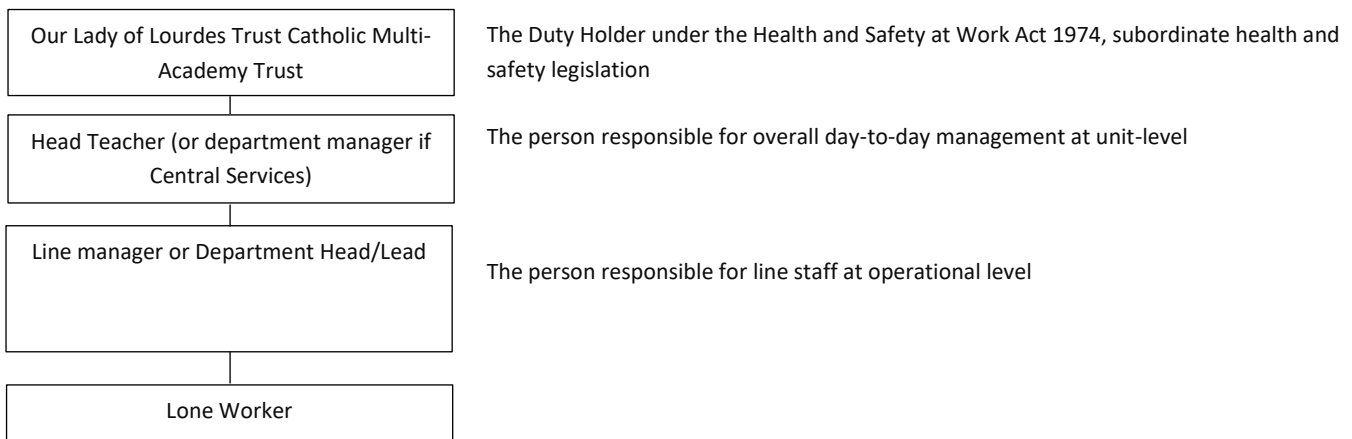
Health and Safety legislations does not prohibit lone working, but an employee should not be put at more risk than other people working. An employer has a general duty under Section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employee's whilst at work. Where appropriate, employers must assess the risks of violence to their staff and, if necessary, put in place actions to protect them.

Health and Safety Legislation requires employers and managers to assess risks to staff whilst lone working and make arrangements for effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review. This policy deals with generic aspects of management of lone working risks and provides advice on the efficacy of various actions that may be utilised to reduce these risks.

Scheme of Delegation

The Trust has the overall responsibility to implement suitable and sufficient policies and risk control measures. The school Headteacher (or department manager if Central Services) has overall responsibility for all matters of risk management; this includes Lone working activities and the responsibility for ensuring that sufficient resources are provided to enable the policy to be implemented and to remain effective.

Line Managers and Departments Heads are responsible for the effectiveness of risk reporting and of ensuring that management processes to protect lone workers are implemented and that department-specific lone working risk assessments have been completed and are monitored. Health and Safety Legislation requires employers and managers to assess risks to staff whilst lone working and make arrangements for effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review. This policy deals with generic aspects of management of lone working risks and provides advice on the efficacy of various actions that may be utilised to reduce these risks.



Guidance on what to consider when completing a risk assessment

Before lone working a log of known risks should be kept by the school. This should record the location and details of service users that may be visited by staff, where a risk may be present. This log should be kept securely and the information should be accurate and reviewed regularly. It should be available to lone workers to inspect ahead of any visit they make.

Information Sharing

Managers should highlight any areas and/or visitors that pose a significant risk to staff. Information concerning risks of individuals and addresses should be communicated internally to all relevant staff who may work with the same patients/service users.

Scheduling Visits

If there are known risks associated with a particular location or patient/service user, lone workers should consider, in consultation with their manager, rescheduling the visit so they can be accompanied by another member of staff.

Identify High-Risk Activities

Lone worker should not carry high-risk activities when working alone. These will include (but are not limited to):

- Attending a site in an emergency or following an intruder response call out;
- Working at height, including on roofs or any other activity above or below floor level;
- Working in hazardous weather conditions;
- Working in an unsecured premise
- Working with hazardous materials;
- Working with hazardous machinery or plant;
- Carrying out hazardous working processes.

Emergency Equipment

As part of the planning process, emergency equipment that may be required should be assessed. This might include a torch, map of the local area, telephone numbers for emergencies (including local police and ambulance service), a first aid kit, etc.

Key-Holder Lone Working

To address the issue of attending site alone in response to an emergency call from the security company. A keyholder may be called out if the security company is unable to resolve an issue on site. If so, take a torch and wear hi-vis apparel. If the call out is a 'confirmed' activation, do not enter the premises under any circumstances. Wait outside for the police and the security company to arrive and follow their instructions.

If the call out is a single activation, then wait for the security company to attend. If you are in any doubt or worried call the police and wait outside for the police to arrive. If you feel that you cannot gain access to the control panel without putting yourself in danger, then call the police and wait outside for the police to arrive. If you notice any damage or attempted break in do not enter the building, call the police and wait for their arrival. If you feel confident in doing so gain access to the control panel. Access the control panel only. Employees should not search for intruders.

If all seems in order assume that the call out is due to a faulty circuit then follow the engineers' instructions for omitting the circuit from the system and then reset it. The same detector will not trip the alarm again once it has been omitted. If another call out is received on the same day from a different detector always assume that intruders are on the premises and call the police. If a detector has been omitted from the system, then communicate this to the other key holders by SMS if possible and call the alarm company to resolve the fault as soon as possible on the next working day. If this is not possible then leave a message on the door leading to the control panel.

The security keyholding company will attend all call outs including single & double activations. A school key holder will only be called-out in an emergency situation where they cannot gain access or if they need advice from a School representative.

Lone Worker Movements

As part of the risk assessment and action taken to reduce risk, managers may implement a local system whereby lone workers ensure that someone else (a manager or appropriate colleague) is aware of their location and if applicable their visit schedule. Details of vehicles used by lone workers should be left with a manager or colleague, for example, registration number, make, model and colour. Procedures should be in place to ensure that the lone worker is in regular contact with their manager or relevant colleague, particularly if they are delayed or have to cancel an appointment.

The Buddy System

Where lone working is required, staff should ensure they make another colleague aware of their movements. To operate the buddy system, you must nominate a buddy. This is the person who is the contact for the period in which they will be working alone.

The nominated buddy will:

- be fully aware of the movements of the lone worker;
- have all necessary contact details for the lone worker, including next of kin;
- have details of the lone worker's known breaks or rest periods;
- attempt to contact the lone worker if they do not contact the buddy as agreed;

follow the agreed local escalation procedures for alerting their senior manager and/or the police if the lone worker cannot be contacted or if they fail to contact their buddy within agreed and reasonable timescales. Contingency arrangements should be in place for someone else to take over the role of the buddy in case the nominated person is unavailable, for example if the lone working situation extends past the end of the nominated person's normal working day or shift, if the shift varies, or if the nominated person is away on annual leave or off sick.

Escalation Process

Managers should have a local escalation procedure, outlining who should be notified if a lone worker cannot be contacted or if they fail to contact the relevant individual within agreed or reasonable timescales. The escalation process should include risk assessment and identification of contact points at appropriate stages, including a line manager, senior manager and, ultimately, the police.

Dealing with animals

The potential risks posed by household pets when conducting home visits will involve safety, allergies and infection control. Where animals are present and the staff member is concerned, a polite request should be made for the animal to be placed in a different room. If the resident/owner is not content with this request and has had the personal safety issues explained in a calm manner and if appropriate the visit should be abandoned and reported in accordance with the risk reporting policy.

Lone working and taxis

The Trust does not advocate the use of taxis or private hire vehicles for use by lone workers. Where there is an operational requirement for such transport to be used, lone workers must only use reputable licensed companies and they should book in advance. Private hire cabs should not be used, other than licensed or registered hackney carriages.

Lone working and travelling by foot

Where staff need to take part of their journey by foot, they should always endeavour to use well-lit paths and pavements. They should avoid unoccupied/populated areas and should ensure that their colleagues are aware of the route being taken prior to the journey. Staff members need to be aware of the areas that they are working in and plan their journey accordingly. In the event of a situation where a staff member has concern for their safety they should head for the nearest public area (Shop, Petrol Station, Police station etc.) If possible, look out for street CCTV cameras and try and remain in view of these.

Lone working and public transport

Where it is necessary to utilise public transport, staff members should prepare for their journey by ensuring they know the routes and times of buses/trains etc. They should stick to using larger stations and bus stops in busy areas.

Lone working devices

It is essential to recognise that lone worker devices will not prevent incidents from occurring. However, if used correctly in conjunction with robust procedures, they will enhance the protection of lone workers. Lone workers should still exercise caution even if equipped with such devices and continue to use the risk assessment process.

Use of a mobile phone

The following information and guidelines should be noted:

- Lone workers should carry mobile phones and they should always check the signal strength before entering a lone working situation.
- A mobile phone may be the main form of communication. If entering a known risky area lone workers should tell their manager or a colleague about any visit in advance, including its location and nature, and when they expect to arrive and leave. Afterwards, they should let their manager or colleague know that they are safe.
- A mobile phone should always be kept as fully charged as possible.
- Emergency contacts may be kept on speed dial.
- The phone should be kept nearby and never left unattended.
- Lone workers should be sensitive to the fact that using a mobile phone could escalate an aggressive situation.
- In some circumstances, agreed 'code' words or phrases should be used to help lone workers convey the nature of the threat to their managers or colleagues so that they can provide the appropriate response, such as involving the police. The decision to use code words or phrases should give due consideration to the ability of a member of staff to recall and use them in a highly stressful situation.
- A mobile phone could also be a target for thieves. Care should be taken to use it as discreetly as possible, while remaining aware of risks and keeping it within reach at all times.

Lone working Staff Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA)

The importance of the lone working risk assessment is that it enables managers to anticipate and recognise any known hazards and identify actions to be taken. However, it is recognised that situations change rapidly, and the associated risks will also change, therefore dynamic risk assessment should be an on-going process. In this case a new risk assessment including actions should be completed.

A Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA) should be conducted by staff as necessary for the circumstances in place at the time. What sets DRA apart from the lone working risk assessment is that it is applied in situations that present unpredictable/unforeseen risks or where the risk environment rapidly changes. A DRA enables staff to make a risk judgement and provides staff with a consistent approach to assessing risk. This type of risk assessment is undertaken when the situation faced by staff has increased the risk previously assessed to enable them to start working alone.

The process involves:

- The assessment of risk in dynamic situations is undertaken before, during and after a home visit, potentially hazardous appointment or working period.
- The benefits of proceeding with a task must be weighed carefully against the adverse risk posed to the lone worker.

Appendix

A. Home Visit Form OLHVRA/1

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Home Visit Assessment Form HVF/1				
Student Name		Year & Form		
Address		Date of Visit		
Expected arrival time		Expected time of return		
Who is visiting (name)		Who else is attending the visit?		
What is the reason for the visit?				
Risk Elements			Yes	No
Is this an unannounced visit?				
Is this the first time school have visited this property?				
Have any family members ever refused to engage positively with the school?				
Are there any dangers/hazards associated with the property?				
Are you aware of any intimidating / threatening family members or visitors?				
Is there any domestic violence reported at the property?				
Are there any residents with drug or alcohol dependency or mental health issues?				
Are there any pets in the household that are aggressive?				
Have any risks been identified by any other agency - Police, Social Services?				
Area(s) of concern				
Actions to reduce the risk				
Signature		Signature of Manager		