



OUR PLACE GROUP

Lone Working Policy



Lone Working Policy

1. Policy Statement

This policy is designed to clearly recognise the importance of risk assessments prior to the delivery of a service by a lone worker and has defined the procedure to ensure that appropriate resources are available to promote the health, safety and welfare of lone workers and the children/ young people receiving the service.

A Lone Worker is an employee who performs an activity that is carried out in isolation from other workers without close or direct supervision.

2. Purpose

To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activity within Our Place Group

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015
- Keeping children safe in education
- Working together to safeguard Children

3. Scope

This policy may affect staff who may work alone, children and young people and commissioners.

This policy will work in conjunction with Our Place Group policies including:

- The Health & Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- 1:1 Time alone With Children & Intimate Care and Invasive Procedures Policy

4. Aims and Objectives of the Policy

To ensure the systems in place for lone working are robust enough to prevent risks of harm to the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

That all staff who may work alone perform their roles well and are not placed in a position of avoidable risk of harm in doing so.

That staff always receive appropriate training and understand the processes in place to minimise the risk of working alone.

To prevent incidents, accidents or injuries of working alone.

To ensure processes are robust, clear and concise; and are followed consistently.

5. Policy

Our Place Group recognises the specific, increased risks associated with lone working and will ensure through the use of this policy that:

- All relevant risks to children/ young people and employees will be assessed prior to the commencement of any duties being carried out by a lone worker
- Appropriate resources and procedures will be established to support the health, safety and welfare of children/ young people and lone workers
- If the risks are assessed and are too great, and the health, safety and welfare cannot be assured then duties will not be provided by a lone worker

Our Place Group recognise that lone workers may face particular problems and will not require staff to work alone where this results in unacceptable risks to children / young people or employees.

All workers will be trained thoroughly during induction and will receive regular monitoring and supervision before and during any allocation of lone working. Workers will receive regular instruction in all matters relating to health and safety at work.

All employees have a responsibility to act in such a way as not to put themselves or their colleagues at risk, lone workers will consistently follow the policy and provide safe and effective systems of work at all times.

Where employees work alone, Our Place Group places even greater trust in them to act responsibly and safely.

6. Procedure

All employees will receive a comprehensive induction prior to lone working.

Line managers are responsible for ensuring that safe working practice is carried out in each department, and these systems should be recorded in writing with copies given to all staff.

All staff must satisfy their supervisor that they are competent in all aspects included in the training provided which covers:

- Duties required for the post
- Safety aspects of the premises, machinery and equipment to be used
- Emergency procedures for fire, illness, accident, managing aggression
- How to manage behaviours that may be challenging, how to diffuse difficult situations that may arise as a result and how to follow the correct reporting procedures
- How to raise any concerns in relation to any aspects of lone working
- Information on departmental systems of monitoring, supervision and employee support
- Pay, employment conditions and organisational rules and procedures

Suitable and appropriate risk assessments will be completed where staff will be lone working prior to any lone working duties commencing and will highlight areas of risk and how these will be managed.

All risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and any additional resources or processes identified will be provided.

Children and young people receive guidance in regard to keeping safe and who to talk to if they have any concerns.

All staff are required to draw to the attention of their line manager where amendments may be required to the risk assessment or the processes.

Our Place Group follows HSE (Health & Safety Executive) guidance on lone workers with medical conditions and will consider, following a risk assessment, whether medical advice is required to ensure the lone worker can safely carry out their role when working alone.

Each individual's suitability on medical grounds will be related to the specific job applied for and the particular hazards and risks associated with that role.

Requests for medical reports will be subject to the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 where appropriate.

7. Responsibility

Our Place Group recognises that lone working is a highly responsible role, with limited opportunity for observable practice or for the lone worker to share the responsibility for actions. However, any breaches of trust and failure to follow agreed procedure will be viewed very seriously and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Supervisors are responsible for:

- Setting up and maintaining effective procedures to ensure that all premises, equipment or machinery used by lone workers are safe; defects are quickly reported, repaired and regular maintenance is carried out.
- Regular review of the training needs for their staff, regular refreshers take place and up to date instruction given on processes.
- Having regular contact with any lone workers throughout the shift.
- Hold regular team meetings.
- Ensure lone workers have contact details of who they can contact if they require help or support whilst working.
- Ensure staff fully understand and follow the children / young people's Care Plans and Individual Risk Assessments.

Lone workers will have contact details to allow them to communicate with their line manager and have details for the on-call person where necessary and will be provided with a means to do so i.e., radio or mobile phone.

Recognition will be given to mobile phone reception and other issues that may prevent contact being made in an emergency. Systems will be established, or installed, to facilitate the lone worker being able to contact a nominated person for advice or support both in line with their duties and in an emergency.

Lone workers will establish their intended destination and expected duration when working off site. This will be clearly identified within the off site risk assessment and prior to any deviation the worker will contact the site to update where any changes may need to take place i.e., road works, vehicle failure, alternative destination.

All lone workers have access to a first aid kit both on site and in the vehicles.

Agency or temporary workers will not be used to cover absence of lone working duties, unless they are known to be competent and fully trained in all the relevant procedures and systems of work.

8. Important Information

Staff:

- Should be fully assessed, inducted and competent to complete their duties prior to commencing work
- All risks with lone working should be identified and appropriate processes put in place
- The safety of the premises, equipment and machinery will be well maintained by the employer
- A means of contact will always be made available in the event of an emergency or to seek advice
- Line managers will keep in regular contact with the lone worker during the shift
- Staff will be fully aware of the child / young person's Care and Support Plans and adhere to them at all times.

Children, young people and staff:

- When a person is being supported by a lone worker they can expect to be treated with dignity and respect just as if they were being supported by more than one person
- Children and young people will have guidance on keeping safe and understand who they can talk to if they have any concerns
- Lone workers should have suitable equipment with them at all times to summon emergency support or to clarify any issues about the care and support being provided
- Lone workers should be aware of the Care Plan, risk assessment and needs of the young person receiving the support
- If the lone worker feels vulnerable or equipment is unsafe the lone worker should seek support and report concerns
- Staff should feel supported in their role
- Promoting the safety and welfare of children, young people and staff is vital in providing the service

9. Useful Links

HSE, (2020), Protecting lone workers - How to manage the risks of working alone

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf>

Unison, (2007), You are not alone, a UNISON guide to lone working in the health service.

<http://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2013/06/On-line-Catalogue164073.pdf>