



**Villa Real School**  
*together we achieve*

# Lone Working Policy 2024

Responsibility: Jill Bowe

Date: January 2024

Signed & Adopted by the Governing Body:

Chair of Governors

Date: 04.03.24

Date to be reviewed: January 2026

This policy sets out tasks and issues to be followed to help ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees within School as well as other individuals that may be visiting or working in the same premises as our staff.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, sets out certain duties and responsibilities for employers and employees.

It is the responsibility of your employer to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all staff. The Health and Safety Team will seek to ensure that all work shall be undertaken in such a manner that your health and safety is not at risk by ensuring as safe a working environment as possible.

It is your legal responsibility as an employee under the same law, whilst at work, to take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work.

## **INTRODUCTION**

School staff may be required to work alone as part of the duties. This will range from staff on our own premises to those off-site.

There is no overall legal prohibition on working alone, but the general duties of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the specific duties of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations will apply.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires risk assessments to be carried out where specific work is carried out unaccompanied or without immediate access to another party for assistance. Where it is identified that an employee is a lone worker and an assessment is carried out this should take into account any known or long-term medical condition (mental or physical) which would make them unsuitable for working alone.

A risk assessment specific to lone working should be carried out by a competent person ensuring that the relevant risk control systems are adopted which either eliminate, avoid or adequately control the risk prior to the commencement of the activity. The risk assessment must cover the conditions under which lone working will be permitted, the scope of the work permitted, and the arrangements/ safe systems of work implemented to ensure the safety of the lone worker.

The risk assessment must be communicated to all relevant employees alongside suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training to ensure their ability to understand and implement the required control.

### **What is Lone Working?**

Lone working means working by yourself without close or direct supervision. Lone workers are found in a wide range of situations; some examples are given below.

- only one person works on the premises, e.g. in small workshops, offices and also home workers;
- people work separately from others, e.g. in some training establishments,
- people work outside normal hours, e.g. cleaners, security, maintenance or repair staff etc.

Mobile workers working away from their fixed base:

- on construction, plant installation, maintenance and cleaning work, electrical repairs, ICT repairs, painting and decorating etc.;
- youth workers, social workers, drivers, engineers, health & safety officers etc.

### **What are the hazard and risks associated with Lone Working?**

They may be minimal or significant. Each type of work will have different hazards and risks.

It is important to talk to employees and their safety representatives as they are a valuable source of information and advice. This will help to ensure that all relevant hazards have been identified and appropriate controls chosen; consultation with employees and their representatives on health and safety matters is a legal duty anyway.

### **What do I need to do?**

Establish a safe working procedure for each lone worker or group of staff. Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents. Employers should identify situations where people work alone and ask questions such as:

- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a safe way in and a way out for one person? Can any temporary access equipment which is necessary, such as portable ladders or trestles, be safely handled by one person?
- Can all the plant, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?

**Consider whether the work involves lifting objects too large for one person or whether more than one person is needed to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment.**

- Is there a risk of violence?
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are young workers especially at risk if they work alone?
- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone? If not sure, check with the Occupational Health Unit.
- What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency?
- How will the person be supervised?

### **What else do I need to do?**

Control measures may include:

- instruction;
- training;
- supervision;
- personal protective equipment;
- supervisor/ line manager periodically visiting and observing people working alone;
- regular contact between the lone worker and supervision using either a telephone or radio;
- automatic warning devices which operate if specific signals are not received periodically from the lone worker e.g. systems for security staff;
- other devices designed to raise the alarm in the event of an emergency, and which are operated manually or automatically by the absence of activity;
- checks that a lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of a task.

Employers should take steps to check that control measures are used and review the risk assessment regularly to ensure it is still adequate.

### **What do I do if my Risk Assessment shows that the work cannot be done safely by a lone worker?**

When risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back up should be put in place.

**What if my employee is working at another employer's workplace?**

Where a lone worker is working at another employer's workplace, both employers and the employee must discuss any risks and the control measures that should be taken.

**Where can I get further advice?**

Further advice on lone working and guidance on risk assessments for lone workers is available from the Health & Safety Team. Tel 03000 265781.

Further information is also available on the Health & Safety Executive website [www.hse.co.uk](http://www.hse.co.uk)

**Rapid Risk Assessment – Home visits**

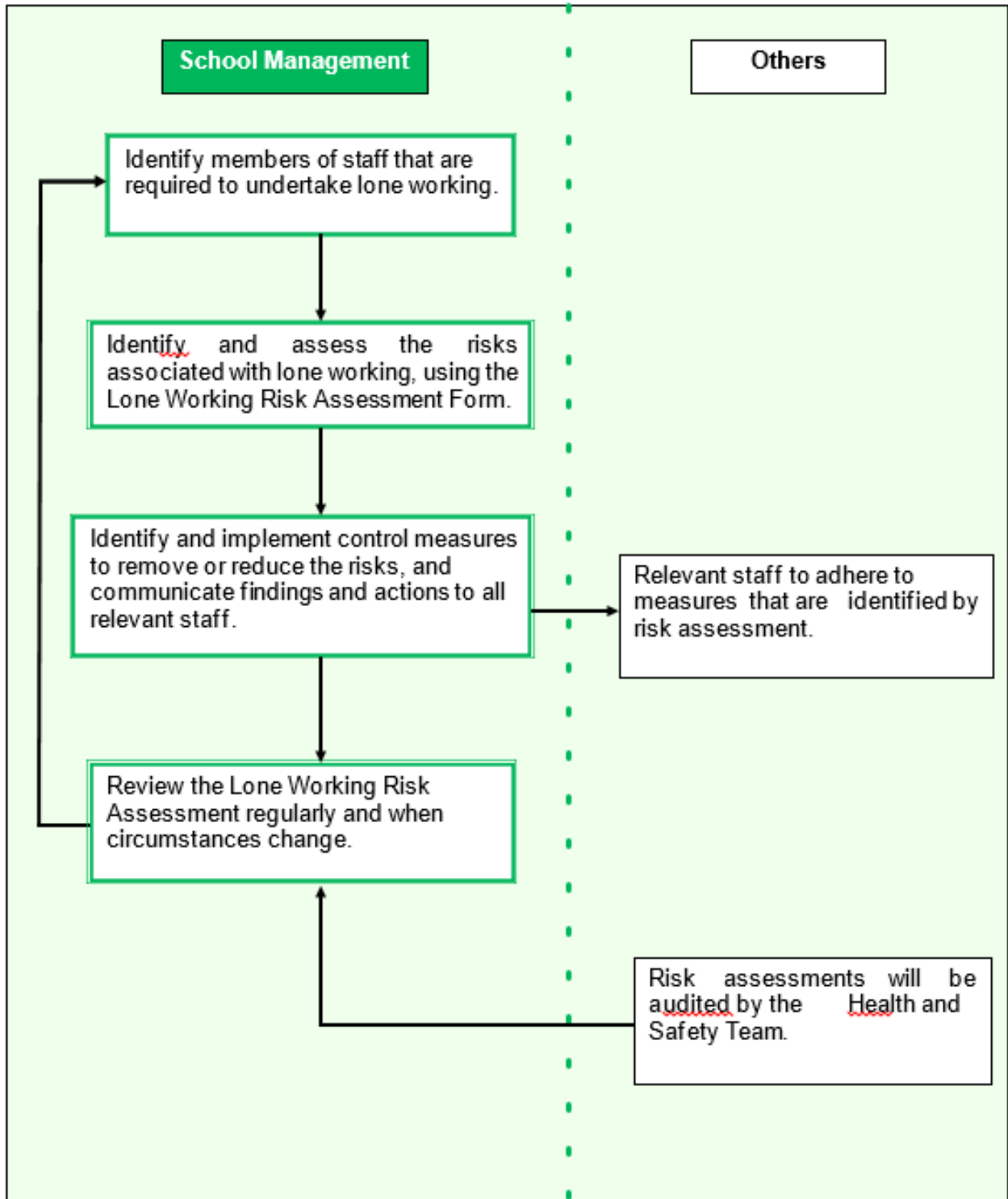
The following is intended as a quick risk assessment tool for staff that have to make home visits on which there are no specific Lone Working or Personal Safety Risk Assessment. It can be used to gauge whether the risks are adequately controlled, and it is reasonable to continue or whether further action is necessary before proceeding with the visit.

This rapid risk assessment is intended to compliment rather than replace the more comprehensive Lone Working or Personal Safety risk assessment forms. Any assessment can only relate to the specific time, place and circumstances under which it was completed.

If high scores are selected for questions 1, 2 & 3 Lone Working should be avoided and you should contact your line manager to discuss the reasons why such a high level of risk has been identified.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. Is there a known history of hostility, verbal abuse, harassment or violence from the person / family member / local residents? Yes = 3, No = 1		2. Is the area where the person lives known to be unsafe? (crime, muggings, gangs, poor lighting etc.)  Yes = 2, No = 1	
3. Is the risk that I am about to undertake likely to trigger anger or violence? Yes = 3, No = 1			
4. Do you know the person and their family you are about to visit  Yes = 1, No = 3		5. If no, are you able to obtain information about the person / family from other agencies if required? Not applicable = 1, Yes = 1, No = 3	
6. Do your colleagues have a system that tracks your activities and whereabouts, including anticipated return to office / home? Yes = 1, No = 3		7. Do you have a mobile phone?  Yes = 1, No = 3	
8. Do you have a personal alarm  Yes = 2, No = 3		9. If required, can a colleague accompany you on the visit at short notice? Yes = 1, No = 3	
10. Do you have training in de-escalation skills? Yes = 1, No = 3		11. If the person becomes physically violent, could you break away from them? Yes = 1, No = 3, Don't know = 3	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>			
<b>Score 11 – 17 low risk</b> Ensure existing controls are maintained	<b>Score 18 – 24 medium risk</b> Reconsider existing controls	<b>Score 25 + high risk</b> Don't lone work till score has been reduced	

## SCHOOL LONE WORKING PROCEDURE



## School Health & Safety Procedure

### Lone Working

#	Process	References
1	The Top Level Assessment Process will identify employees who may be required to work alone. e.g. Caretakers, cleaners etc.	Risk Register Hazard Profile
2	A specific written risk assessment must be produced that identifies the risks to staff due to lone working and the measures required to remove or control those risks.  A Lone Working Risk Assessment Form is available.	Lone Working Assessment Form
3	Control measures to remove or reduce the risks must be implemented as soon as is practical.  Control measures should include the action to take in the case of emergency.  Lone Working Risk Assessment findings and control measures must be communicated to all relevant staff.  Lone Working Assessments should include informing contractors lone working on site of the actions to take in the event of an emergency evacuation of the premises.	
4	Risk assessments must be reviewed regularly and when there is reason to believe the assessment is no longer valid i.e. when circumstances of work change.	
5	Risk assessments will be audited Health & Safety Team.	