



Kidgate Primary Academy

Lone Working Policy

Date reviewed:	January 2025	
Approved by:	Name:	Signed:
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Next review due by:	January 2027	

1. INTRODUCTION

Kidgate Primary Academy has a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its staff while they are at work. At any given time, there are numbers of staff who are working alone, whether as a substantial part of their working life or on an occasional basis.

Kidgate Primary Academy have a responsibility to assess the risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control the risks where necessary; and staff have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and others in lone working situations. Lone working is not inherently unsafe and proper precautions can reduce the risks associated with working alone.

2. PURPOSE

The aim of this policy is to outline Kidgate Primary Academy's responsibilities towards staff working alone by:

- Defining what 'lone working' is
- Taking action to reduce lone workers
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibility to use necessary guidance to assist lone workers.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, including temporary workers and those employed on a casual basis. It should be read in conjunction with the Academy's Health and Safety Policy.

4. DEFINITION

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as those 'who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. They may include:

- People working separately from others in a building
- People who work outside 'normal' hours
- People who work away from their fixed base without colleagues, e.g., visiting people in their homes
- People who work at home

The definition can cover staff in situations with varying degrees and types of risk. It is important to identify the hazards of the work and assess the risks involved before applying appropriate measures. This policy will refer to high risk and low risk activities.

Some staff members may spend most of their working lives with others but find themselves working alone occasionally, for example, when working late. Others will work alone on a daily basis. This policy will refer to frequent lone workers and occasional lone workers.

5. POTENTIAL HAZARDS OF LONE WORKING

People who work alone will of course face the same risks in their work as others doing similar tasks. However, additionally they may encounter the following:

- Accidents or sudden illnesses may happen when there is no-one to summon help or first aid
- Violence or the threat of violence
- Fire
- Attempting tasks which cannot safely be done by one person alone, e.g. heavy lifting, or use of certain equipment
- Lack of a safe way in or out of a building (e.g. danger of being accidentally locked in)

The perception of these hazards or the actual risks may be different for different people. For example the inexperienced or your works plan may underestimate the risks of an activity; some workers may feel particularly vulnerable to violence away from the workplace or after dark; or a medical condition may make it unsafe for an individual to work alone.

The Academy must consider these factors when doing risk assessments. If there are lone workers within an area the manager must take appropriate steps to reduce the risk, particularly for frequent lone workers or lone workers engaged in high-risk activities. They should consider:

- Does the workplace present any special risk to a lone worker?
- Can all the equipment, substances and goods used on the premises be safely handled by one person?
- Is any manual handling involved safe for a single person?
- Is there a risk of violence or the threat of violence? Is the nature of a visit or the person being visited likely to increase the risk?

6. RISK ASSESSMENTS

A lone working risk assessment is in place for caretakers. A risk assessment for any further staff who wish to work alone should be completed as and when required.

7. MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF LONE WORKING

Supervision

Lone workers are by definition not under constant supervision. However, line-managers can ensure that staff understand the risks associated with their work and the relevant safety precautions. They can put into place arrangements for the individual to contact a line-manager if they need additional guidance. Occasional site visits may be appropriate, particularly if there are high-risk activities. Staff new to a job or undergoing training may need to be accompanied initially. Regular contact by phone or radio may be appropriate. The Estates Manager (person in charge of Health and Safety) should assess what level of supervision is required.

Checking System

All out of hours lone working staff should establish their own checking in and out system with either family, friends, or work colleagues. It is advised that lone workers provide a relative or friend with a telephone contact number (e.g. Line Manager's) to call if the lone worker fails to return home at the expected time.

Reporting Back

A system should be in place to ensure that a lone worker returns to their base or their home at the completion of a task away from the normal workplace. For high risk or frequent lone workers, the caretaker may stipulate that the staff member must inform him/her of their whereabouts and the expected duration of the visit so that if the staff member has not reported in or cancelled the call by the expected hour, a call will automatically be triggered to check the staff member is safe.

For occasional lone workers or low risk lone workers, they should inform a colleague where they are going and when they are expected back; arranging to ring the office at the conclusion of the visit or call; issuing a mobile phone number to allow a contact call to be made if the staff member's return is overdue. Use of diary systems or notice boards to indicate whereabouts can form part of this system. All staff involved share a responsibility to maintain such informal systems for safe lone working.

Medical Conditions

Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness. A separate Medical Conditions Declaration form needs to be completed regarding 'Reasonable Adjustments' and Line Managers are to be made aware of all adjustments made.

8. CONCLUSION

Staff who are working alone will:

- Follow the safe working arrangements developed by our Academy for lone working
- Take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety; and
- Inform their line manager/assessor of any incidents or safety concerns
- All staff, including lone workers, are responsible for following safe systems of work and all staff take simple steps to reduce the risk associated with their normal working life.