



Lone Working Policy (2023 – 2024)

(Revised 10 Apr 23)

Adopted by The Hawksmoor Learning Trust	Signature	
	Print Name	
	Date	
	On behalf of the Hawksmoor Learning Trust	

Lone Working Policy

1. Lone working activities are a necessity for certain roles in school.
2. The Hawksmoor Learning Trust (THLT) recognises its H & S responsibilities towards employees;
 - 2.1. who are involved in lone working processes and
 - 2.2. others who may be affected by these activities.
3. Lone workers will not be put at more risk than other employees; specific control measures may be instigated to achieve this.
4. This document outlines a sensible risk-based approach towards lone working. Safe lone working can be achieved by ensuring that safe systems of work are;
 - 4.1. made available through management processes and
 - 4.2. used by all employees.
5. All employees are required to report any incidents which occur in relation to lone working to ensure that THLT can take action to try to prevent future events by risk assessing appropriately in each case.

Defining Lone Working

6. The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'; lone workers may be found in a range of situations eg people who work;
 - 6.1. in fixed establishments where only one person works at the premises,
 - 6.2. separately from others eg in isolated areas of a site or
 - 6.3. outside normal hours eg maintenance employees.

Note on lone working risk assessment. There is no general legal prohibition on working alone but a risk assessment of lone working tasks must be carried out.

7. Lone working can be included as part of an overall risk assessment for an activity or a specific lone working assessment must be carried out. (A lone working risk assessment template and an example of a Lone Worker Risk Assessment are included with this guidance.)
8. The individual lone worker is responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment has been carried out prior to commencing their task.

Identify the hazard

9. Activities identified need to be assessed to determine the level of risk they present. This involves looking at factors such as the;
 - 9.1. potential for violence and aggression.
 - 9.2. environment and other activities taking place in the same working area eg adverse weather, working on an unfamiliar site.

10. In addition, the risk assessment must take account of foreseeable emergencies which may arise eg equipment failure, illness and accidents.

Physical hazards

11. The working environment and activities may present hazards that should be considered as part of the lone working risk assessment eg:

12. **Work environment.** The level of risk varies from one working environment to another.

- 12.1. Higher risk environments can include;
- 12.1.1. construction sites,
 - 12.1.2. docks,
 - 12.1.3. farms and
 - 12.1.4. working on or near to water (including the coastline).
- 12.2. Lower risk lone working environments can include;
- 12.2.1. working at offices that are secure and
 - 12.2.2. driving alone on short duration journeys in built up areas.
- 12.3. There must be a safe way in and out of the workplace.

13. **Activity being undertaken.** The level of risk varies by activity.

- 13.1. Higher risk activities include;
- 13.1.1. working off ladders to carry out maintenance work and
 - 13.1.2. using hazardous machinery.
- 13.2. Lower risk lone working activities include attending meetings at another school site belonging to THLT.

14. **Communication with others and supervision.**

- 14.1. Means of communication vary depending on the work activity and location.
- 14.2. There are patches in the surrounding area where a mobile phone signal is not available which may impact on the ability to summon assistance in the event of an emergency.

Who is at Risk (and When)

15. The lone working assessment must consider who might be harmed as a result of our activities eg:

- 15.1. Employees,
- 15.2. Visitors,
- 15.3. parents & carers and / or
- 15.4. contractors.

16. The following provides details of some specific aspects for consideration when assessing the suitability of lone working for THLT employees:

New employees, trainees including inexperienced volunteers	Lack of familiarity through level of experience or training needs.
Specific medical conditions	Some individuals may have medical conditions that make them unsuitable for working alone. These may include some health conditions, such as unstable epilepsy or diabetes. The consideration of medical conditions should include both routine activities and foreseeable emergencies which may impose additional physical and mental burdens on the individual.

17. The following provides examples of individual consideration for non-employees:

Contractors and visitors	Unfamiliar with site layout and emergency procedures.
People who uses the service attending the school site for a one-to-one meeting.	Unfamiliar with exit route from meeting room may become agitated and leave the room confused or angry.

18. A lone worker may be seconded to other schools or vice versa. In both cases adequate lone worker arrangements must be put in place.

19. Lone working may be encountered during part of a working day as well as for lone working occupations eg:

- 19.1. locking and opening an office base and
- 19.2. driving to different work bases to attend meetings.

20. The above considerations are a guide and are not exhaustive. Each risk assessment must consider;

- 20.1. the vulnerabilities of the person involved in the lone working task and
- 20.2. identify controls to reduce to an acceptable level.

Controlling the Risk

21. It is important to ensure that control measures are proportionate to the risk.

22. A key factor in controlling lone worker risk is to ensure that lone workers are competent in adapting to a foreseeable range of changing and developing situations with little or no contact with their supervisor.

23. The extent of supervision must be proportionate to the;

- 23.1. risk and
- 23.2. competency of the lone worker.

24. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that safe working arrangements are in place for all stages of the activity from the task planning to implementation and completion.
25. These arrangements include ensuring that lone workers are competent in adapting to a foreseeable range of changing and developing situations with little or no contact with their supervisor.
26. **Withdrawing from Lone Working Activity**
 - 26.1. Head teachers must ensure that the lone worker is supported if they decide that they need to terminate the work they are carrying out to protect their (or third parties) safety eg;
 - 26.1.1. when working at height and wind speeds increase during the course of the work and / or
 - 26.1.2. sealing with a situation that becomes threatening or aggressive. In this instance, a review of the arrangements for similar future work must be carried out.
27. **Unsafe Lone Working**
 - 27.1. In circumstances with all control measures in place, if the assessment identifies that it isn't possible for the task to be carried out safely then lone working should not proceed.
 - 27.2. If the individual is unsure about what controls are needed because the task is considered higher risk or requires more technical /specialist knowledge, further guidance should be sought from the Headteacher / Head of School.
28. **Supervisory Monitoring of Lone Working**
 - 28.1. The Headteacher / Head of School must ensure that lone worker monitoring takes place.
 - 28.2. Monitoring can include;
 - 28.2.1. signing off and reviewing risk assessments for lone working and / or
 - 28.2.2. making regular contact with the lone worker using mobile phones or telephone to call or text.
29. **In-house Contact Systems**
 - 29.1. A contact system should be used to maintain telephone contact at pre-determined intervals between a nominated contact and a lone worker to confirm safety.
 - 29.2. The lone worker must provide the contact with an itinerary. In house contact systems rely on;
 - 29.2.1. all contact employees knowing the actions to be taken in the event of a lone worker raising an alert or emergency,

- 29.2.2. employees having the time and concentration to be able to fulfil the requirement of the role and
- 29.2.3. full participation of all employees who are involved in system use in order to ensure that it remains robust and has credibility.

30. Lone Working Alert Response

- 30.1. Line management of all employees who may be involved in receiving an alert must be able to deal with the response procedure effectively.
- 30.2. The type of lone working device selected will depend upon the type of lone work activity involved.

31. Mandatory Control Measures for Potentially Violent and Aggressive Situations

- 31.1. Where there is the potential for violence and aggression the risk categories and mandatory control measures are provided at Annex A.
- 31.2. Some employees may fall into more than one category of lone working; all control measures against each individual category may apply.
- 31.3. Additional information is provided for consideration, this information is a guide only and isn't a fully inclusive list of control measures.

32. Emergency Arrangements

- 32.1. Lone workers should be capable of responding to foreseeable emergencies through the development of planned arrangements eg fire and first aid need. The requirements for emergency planning will depend on the nature of the work being carried out.
- 32.2. Where it is possible, a lone worker should withdraw from circumstances of escalating violence and aggression towards them.
- 32.3. Where a lone worker monitoring system is used it must include a means to raise the alarm in the event of;
 - 32.3.1. failure to contact a lone worker or
 - 32.3.2. an emergency request for assistance.
- 32.4. When using a buddy system, as outlined above, the employer must ensure that there is no delay in raising the alarm with the police.

33. If there is no response from a lone worker to confirm their safety appropriate actions should be outlined to re-establish contact which may involve contacting the police.

34. Risk Assessment Recording

- 34.1. Lone working issues must be considered as part of an overall risk assessment of a job role or activity.

- 34.2. Where lone working has not been considered as part of other risk assessments, a specific risk assessment must be carried out.
- 34.3. It is important to note that the original risk assessment may change as the activity itself progresses.
- 35. Risk Assessment Review
 - 35.1. Lone working risk assessments must be regularly reviewed in line with changes which have been identified eg a violent incident has occurred during the last visit so it is considered that it is no longer safe to lone work in the future.
 - 35.2. All incidents, near misses and / or previously unforeseeable risks must be;
 - 35.2.1. reported by the lone worker as soon as possible,
 - 35.2.2. reviewed by the Headteacher / Head of School and CEO and
 - 35.2.3. flagged on any systems which will warn other workers of the risk.
 - 35.3. If no changes have occurred within a twelve-month period, the lone working risk assessments should be reviewed at that point.
- 36. Head teachers / Heads of School must ensure that there are adequate reporting and feedback mechanisms in place to allow new information to be gathered about any changes which may impact on the risk assessment; any changes to working practice must be reviewed, assessed and communicated.

Date: 10 Apr 23

Jonathan Davis
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Annex A to THLT Lone – working Polic. Risk Categories

Risk Category	Control Measures
<p>Category 1:</p> <p>Employees working in offices or other secure locations outside of normal working hours</p> <p>or</p> <p>who routinely work in these locations on their own.</p> <p>Work of a low risk office type.</p> <p>Examples: Teachers, office based employees.</p>	<p>Mandatory:</p> <p>Employees must be briefed on the measures required to ensure their workplace is secure if they are lone working and emergency procedures.</p>
<p>Category 2:</p> <p>Employees responding to intruder alarm calls for school property out of hours.</p> <p>Examples: School caretakers, employees whose duties include responding to out of hours intruder alarm calls.</p>	<p>Mandatory:</p> <p>For out of hours alarm calls each team must have clear instructions for employees.</p> <p>Employees who are expected to respond to alarm call-outs must have access to a personally issued work mobile with appropriate reception or have indicated that they are willing to use their personal mobile in such circumstances and that it has appropriate network coverage for the area in question.</p> <p>Where possible, lone working to respond to an alarm should be avoided by using contracted key holders.</p> <p>Where it is not possible then a contact arrangement must be put in place.</p>