



**Onside Education
Lone Working Policy
September 2025**

Introduction

Onside Education have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of its staff while they are at work. At any given time, some staff members work alone, either regularly or occasionally. The Leadership Team and Directors are responsible for assessing risks to lone workers and implementing measures to mitigate these risks when necessary. Similarly, staff members must take reasonable care of themselves and others when working alone. Lone working is not inherently unsafe, and appropriate precautions can significantly reduce associated risks.

Purpose

This policy aims to outline Onside Education responsibilities towards staff working alone by:

- Defining 'lone working'
- Implementing actions to reduce risks to lone workers
- Ensuring all staff are aware of and follow necessary guidance to assist lone workers

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 Health and Safety Policy.

Definition

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

- 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

This definition covers staff in situations with varying degrees and types of risk. It is crucial 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 may spend most of their working time with others but occasionally work alone, such as when working late. Others may work alone daily. This policy distinguishes between frequent lone workers and occasional lone workers.

Potential Hazards of Lone Working

Lone workers face the same risks as others performing similar tasks, but they may also encounter additional risks, such as:

- Accidents or sudden illnesses when there is no one to summon help or provide first aid
- Violence or the threat of violence
- Fire
- Performing tasks that are unsafe for one person alone, e.g., heavy lifting or using certain equipment
- Lack of a safe way in or out of a building (e.g., the danger of being accidentally locked in)

The perception of these hazards or the actual risks may vary among individuals. For example, 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.

Onsite Education must consider these factors when conducting risk assessments. If there are lone workers in an area, the manager must take appropriate steps to reduce the risk, especially for frequent lone workers or those engaged in high-risk activities. They should consider:

- Does the workplace present any special risk to a lone worker?
- Can all equipment, substances, and goods 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? Does the nature of a visit or the person being visited increase the risk? Will the staff member be alone in a dark or remote location?

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment must be completed for any additional staff wishing to work alone as required.

While lone workers operate without constant supervision, line managers can ensure they understand the associated risks and necessary safety precautions. They should establish procedures for lone workers to contact a line manager for guidance as needed. Occasional site visits may be advisable, especially for high-risk activities. New staff or those undergoing training may require initial accompaniment. The Head of Programme/Programme Lead should determine the level of supervision needed.

Checking System

Out-of-hours lone workers should establish a check-in and check-out system with family, friends, or colleagues. It is recommended that lone workers provide a contact number (e.g., their Line Manager's) to a relative or friend who can call if the worker does not return home as expected.

Reporting Back

For occasional or low-risk lone workers, it is essential to inform a colleague of their whereabouts and expected return time. They should arrange to call the office upon concluding their visit and provide a mobile phone number for contact if their return is delayed. Systems like diary entries or notice boards can help indicate whereabouts. All staff share responsibility in maintaining these informal systems for safe lone working. Staff must inform their line manager of their planned visit and its nature, as additional support may be deemed necessary.

Intruder

Staff encountering signs of intruders on school premises should refrain from entering and immediately contact the police.

Violence at Work

Staff conducting home visits should implement systems to minimise the risk of violence, such as avoiding solo visits or meeting in isolated locations. Training should include strategies for recognising and mitigating potential risks, including terminating visits if necessary. All incidents of violence must be reported.

Accidents and Emergencies

Lone workers should be prepared to respond to emergencies, including awareness of special out-of-hours procedures. First aid resources should be accessible, either from school staff or through carrying a basic first aid kit for those frequently away from their base.

Medical Conditions

Staff should not work alone if their medical condition might lead to incapacity or unconsciousness.

Tasks Not Suitable for Lone Working

If a risk assessment shows that certain tasks cannot be safely performed alone, arrangements should be made for assistance or reassignment of the task. For instance, tasks requiring heavy lifting may need to wait until another colleague is present.

Traveling to Other Locations

When traveling to other campuses or off-site locations, staff should consider safety measures such as arranging emergency calls and using identifiable landmarks. They should plan routes carefully, particularly in unfamiliar areas, and be prepared to take action if feeling unsafe.

Student Lone Working

Teachers overseeing student lone workers should ensure they understand associated risks and safety measures. Regular check-ins, at least every hour, are recommended, with students instructed to exit the building through the nearest fire exit if the fire alarm sounds.

Conclusion

Ensuring safe conditions for lone workers is integral to overall staff safety. Risk assessments must consider all relevant factors, and the school should communicate expectations clearly to lone workers while providing appropriate training. All staff, including lone workers, share responsibility in following safe work practices to mitigate risks effectively.

Appendix 1

Student Independent Working Guidance: Onsite and Offsite Without Staff Supervision

Students may sometimes work independently on tasks outside the school classroom. It is crucial that students and parents assess associated risks and take necessary precautions, as the school bears responsibility for safety and welfare during such activities.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as individuals who work without close or direct supervision.

Potential Hazards of Independent Working:

- Accidents or sudden illnesses without immediate assistance or first aid available
- Threats of violence
- Fire hazards
- Tasks that require more than one person to safely complete, such as heavy lifting or use of specialized equipment
- Limited safe entry or exit routes, risking accidental confinement

Students should be aware of these risks and the appropriate safety measures.

Considerations:

- Assess whether the work area poses any unique risks for a lone worker.
- Ensure all equipment, substances, and goods can be handled safely by one person.
- Evaluate the safety of manual handling tasks for individuals.
- Address potential risks of violence or threats thereof.
- Consider the safety of students working alone in dark or remote locations.

Accidents and Emergencies

Students with medical conditions that could lead to incapacity or unconsciousness should not work alone. Arrangements should be made for them to be accompanied by someone else.

Certain situations make lone working highly impractical, such as tasks near bodies of water, where students should always be accompanied. Additionally, risks of exhaustion or hypothermia must be taken into account alongside the risk of personal injury.

Possible Scenarios of Lone Working

Scenario	Control Measures
Visiting a student or staff member's home for work reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If travelling via own transport, staff member must have business insurance on their vehicle • Liaison with line manager of location of visit and purpose for the visit (it may be deemed that an additional member of staff is required depending on the nature of the visit) • First aid kit taken or have access to at the location • Inform member of the Admin Team what time they are expected back • If the time expected back at work is later than the contracted hours of the member of the Admin Team then line manager informed
Working with a student on a one-to-one basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure work completed is situated in view of CCTV if possible • Work should be completed in a room with a vision panel • Work should be completed near to where help can be given quickly – i.e. near a classroom
Member of staff takes a group of student (s) on a visit by themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offsite risk assessment is completed and checked by Programme Lead and senior leadership team • Students attending the visit with the member of staff should have the cognitive ability to raise alarm and get help if something was to happen to the member of staff • Staff should have the facility to raise alarm and know who to contact in an emergency (i.e. mobile phone) • Students attending the visit should be capable of remaining safe and following instructions in the event of an emergency.
A meeting with a visitor where a member of staff is by themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of seating plans to ensure the staff member is close to a point of exit must be employed. • Meeting should occur near to where a member of staff can get assistance quickly • Where possible it is advised for a staff meeting to be conducted in a room where CCTV is in operation. • If staff have any concerns or anxieties about having a meeting alone they should see their line manager. • Anxieties about face-to-face meetings can be mitigated by conducting these on the phone or via MS Teams. • All proposed meetings should be recorded on the school weekly briefings

A member of staff works out of hours and is on their own

- Any staff who have medical conditions that may result in loss of consciousness will be covered by individual risk assessments.
- All staff must be offsite by 6pm unless agreed in advance by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Staff must have the ability to make and receive calls through MS Teams and/or a Mobile Phone.
- Recommended that family members of staff have the sickness and absence number to contact in case they do not return home from work.
This number is 07443 096448.

Appendix 2

Risk Assessment for:

Location: Vision Football Factory

Assessment Date: **09/09/202**
5 Name of Assessor(s): **A Gray** Assessment Ref No: **054**

Note: if assessing a task/activity/event, please give detail here: (outline the activities, tasks, work practices, equipment/materials used, environment, people involved etc.)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Is any of the following required due to the high-risk nature of the task/activity/event?

Method Statement/Safe System of Work Yes No **Permit to Work** Yes No

If you've answered **Yes**, please provide a link in the body of the RA and/or here, as to where this/these

Likelihood	
1	Very unlikely
2	Unlikely
3	Likely
4	Very likely
5	Certain

Severity:	
1	No Lost time
2	Under 7-day injury or illness
3	Over 7-day injury or illness (RIDDOR)
4	Specified injury or illness (RIDDOR)
5	Fatality, disabling injury or illness

Risk Matrix scoring guide:

H i g h (15-25)	These risks are unacceptable; significant improvements in risk control are required. The activity should be halted with immediate effect until risk controls are identified/implemented that reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
M e d i u m	Additional control measures should be identified and implemented to reduce the risks associated with the activity or workplaceso far as reasonably practicable
L o w (1-4)	Minimal control measures are required to be implemented to satisfy the level of risk. Maintain current arrangements for riskcontrol

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/ risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When	Residual Risk			Date completed
					L	S	R	
Personal safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils and staff Personal injuries (eg bruises, broken bones) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entry by card only and other doors locked. Guidelines in Lone Working Policy for staff to stay safe whilst travelling to 	Always carry the work charged mobile phone with contact numbers of other staff.		1	5	5	
Tripping, falling or becoming ill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils Falling over Loss of control Personal injuries (eg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only working while managers are present at agreed times and dates. Sign in and out at front desk if available Not climb ladders at height during holidays. 	Always carry a charged mobile phone with contact numbers of other staff.		1	3	3	
Attempting tasks involving two people (eg heavy lifting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collisions Falling over Personal injuries (eg 	Carrying or heavy lifting must not be attempted alone	Await assistance or refuse to attempt heavy lifting		1	3	3	
Risk of injury from working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collisions Falling off 	Ensure Risk Assessments and COSHH sheets are in place and	Do not use high risk chemicals during periods of lone working		1	3	3	

Hazard	Who might be harmed and	CONTROL MEASURES (existing)	What further action is required?	By Whom and	Residual			Date complete
					L	S	R	
with any chemical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal injuries 							
Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trips Falls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign in and out. Keeping up to date with fire safety 	Being aware of designated exits for evacuation		1	5	5	

Assessment	Reviewed by [Name]:	Comments:
10.09.25	Christian Brown	Fine, No reason apart from house visits staff should be working alone. CCTV within the building will help support and protect staff