



Northstar  
New School

## Lone Worker Policy

This policy was reviewed by on:

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**Date:** 28 August 2020

**By:** Euan Macdonald

**Policy will be reviewed on:** August 2021

This policy was ratified/reviewed by Governors on:

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**Date:** 10 September 2020

**Frequency of review:** Every 1 year(s)

**Note:** This document uses the most current Government information and guidance at the time of writing. It may change according to Government policy.

## 1 | Aim

This policy is concerned with employees of Northstar New School who may be required to 'work alone' or work in an isolated working environment at some time during the course of their employment.

## 2 | Rationale

We recognise that as an employer, we have a duty of care towards staff and that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure their Health, Well Being and Personal Safety at all times

In drawing up this policy, due account has been taken of the following:- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974),

Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (1999) and HSE (1988).

## 3 | Definition Of “Lone Worker”

Lone workers are those employees who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. Such as:

- There is only one person working in a premises
- Staff are working separately from others or outside normal working hours e.g. evenings and weekends
- Staff who work away from the centre, off site working, outreach and home visits

## 4 | Risk Assessment/Control Measures

Northstar New School will ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that employees are protected when working alone through the process of hazard identification, risk assessment and elimination; or where elimination of the risks is not possible, to reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

Risk assessments shall be carried out for and by staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

Where staff either work alone / carry out home visits team managers will first complete the lone workers checklist (APPENDIX 1)

The checklists should be used as a tool to assist managers to identify if existing control measures are adequate and if not what modifications or additional actions can be considered necessary to help reduce the risks associated with lone working. (See Lone worker risk assessment; Appendix 2)

Risk assessment for site based lone workers include:

- Safe access and exit
- Risk of violence
- Safety of equipment for individual use
- Communication systems in an emergency
- Site security
- Security arrangements i.e. alarm systems and response to personal alarms. Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision.
- Coming into and leaving the centre.
- Channels of communication in an emergency
- Risk Assessment carried out (Appendix 2)

Risk assessment for mobile lone workers must include:

- Client risk assessment where applicable
- Arrangements for home visits or off site working including consideration of alternatives
- Traveling between appointments
- Reporting and recording visits
- Communication and traceability
- Personal safety and security.
- Risk Assessment carried out (Appendix 2)

## 5 | Personal Safety

The employer has the main responsibility for protecting the health and safety of lone workers.

However, lone workers also have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care to look after their own health and safety
- Safeguard the health and safety of other people affected by their work
- Cooperate with their employers' health and safety procedures
- Use tools or equipment properly, in accordance with relevant safety instructions and training they have been given
- Not misuse equipment provided for their health and safety.

## 6 | Incident Reporting

If Staff find themselves in a situation which makes them feel unsafe they should be aware of how to deal with that incident and how to report it appropriately.

Any incident must be recorded through the incident reporting system; including where staff feel threatened or unsafe.

- Verbal report to Head teacher
- Written report
- Completion of an Incident Report

## 7 | Induction & Training

Employees must be provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to carry out their duties in a safe manner and to identify hazards and risks associated with lone working.

Managers must identify the training requirements of their employees during supervision sessions and give employees the opportunity to have input into this process. Managers must then ensure that relevant training courses are identified and employees have the opportunity to attend.

All new members of staff will undertake shadow visits with the team manager and/or experienced member of staff prior to lone working.

## 8 | Managers Responsibilities

To identify staff who are lone workers and implement this policy.

To ensure that a relevant risk assessment is undertaken to highlight all appropriate risks that lone working presents.

To identify control measures, communication systems and training requirements for staff who work alone within the confines of the building, community venues or home visits.

To ensure the safety of all staff is paramount and all reasonable and sensible assessments of the risks factors are undertaken.

Managers must assess the need for lone working in all cases and must provide alternative arrangements or support when it is unsafe to work alone.

That all new staff members are aware of the policy and procedures as part of their induction programme.

Managers must ensure that systems are in place for staff to be traced and that these systems are checked and reviewed on a regular basis.

To support staff in the:

- Risk assessment of clients
- In the event of an incident which may have caused distress
- Until the individual member of staff is comfortable with unsupervised visits.
- To ensure relevant training

See the checklist for Working Alone in Buildings (Appendix 4) and Lone Worker within the home (Appendix 3). Appropriate risk assessments to be carried out in this regard (Appendix 2).

## 9 | Staff Responsibilities

To ensure your own personal safety at all times therefore staff must not take unnecessary risks.

Staff to be aware of policies and procedures relating to lone working and must comply with them.

Staff must seek the advice of their line manager/Head of Centre if there are any doubts or concerns.

Staff must comply with the reporting, tracing systems and must inform the appropriate person if they need to make a necessary change.

Staff should gain prior knowledge of the family whenever possible.

Staff must take all reasonable care to protect themselves and to implement all guidelines, policy and practice relating to working alone.

To have with you if required a mobile phone which can be used to summons help. It is the workers responsibility to check the equipment is working, charged and fit for purpose.

Where possible to liaise with other agencies involved with the family to establish any concerns. If appropriate a joint home visit should be arranged. Where possible all available details should be collected before visiting a new client. A joint home visit should be arranged with another member of staff if the client is a self referral or there is no prior knowledge of the new client.

Wherever possible phone or write to make an appointment for visits informing them of who you are your role and purpose of visit.

All staff must use and display their identification badges making them accessible for clients to see.

If there are any doubts or concerns about a visit or client then it is the responsibility of the worker to discuss with their line manager/Head of Centre.

If a worker feels uncomfortable / vulnerable at any time then a joint visit with another member of staff can be arranged.

Do not carry expensive equipment, or wear expensive jewelry.

Dress appropriately for the area or client and be aware and sensitive to the client's culture.

Before entering the home the member of staff must make a quick assessment of the environment and if in any doubt to stay out.

All staff should ensure they have a safe exit once in the home. Any concerns then the member of staff must politely make their excuses and leave immediately.

Report any concerns or incidents to your line manager and record in the Incident Book, as indicated in the policy and procedure.

## **10 | Lone Workers undertaking Home Visits and Traveling**

Both managers and staff have a responsibility to ensure working arrangements are as safe as possible. A key factor in this is the manager (or other staff) knowing where staff plan to be and for there to be the means for two-way communication whenever possible.

Where there is a situation where members of staff are in a lone working scenario undertaking home visits or traveling, they should where possible ensure most/all of the following items are adhered to:

- Plan your route, whether driving, walking or using public transport.
- All staff must leave a record of visits, (names and addresses) and time scale with reception staff and expected time of return to base (record details in the red file, kept at reception).
  - ◆ Ensure that they take a mobile phone for contact purposes
  - ◆ Ensure reception has their mobile number and vehicle details
- Ensure visits are carried out in daylight. Staff should not make home visits after the end of the work day. In exceptional circumstances – where agreed by the line manager, visits may require staff to work up to and beyond 4:30 pm. The member of staff must ring the manager at the end of the visit and ensure their team manager has been informed.
- If on arrival to the client's home, you meet with a situation that you did not expect to which gives you concern, leave and make other arrangement.
- You should never enter a house if you are suspicious
- Lone working staff must contact their manager when:
  - The visit is likely to take longer than anticipated and give an updated return time
  - At the end of each visit – if they have consecutive visits
  - Or if the worker makes an unexpected call on one of the clients on their case load
- Domestic pets and other animals can present problems. If you feel unsure or unsafe, ask the client to remove the pet to another room/place.
- Keep car doors locked when traveling. (see Appendix 5 for essential car users)
- Keep valuables etc out of sight in the car, ideally locked in the boot.
- Try to park in open, well-lit places.
- When returning to your car, have the key ready and enter quickly. Lock the doors as a routine.
- If walking keep to main streets/roads. Do not take detours through parks etc. Ensure you do not accept lifts from clients/people you do not know. Always use reputable public transport.
- Avoid walking in isolated or poorly lit places or in subways whenever possible.

Failure to return or check in at the expected time must be reported to line management / member of the leadership team and a decision taken on the most appropriate course of action at that point. (see escalation procedure for more detail)

This may include:

- Ringing the worker
- Ringing the household
- Contacting the Police

## 11 | Escalation Procedure

If a member of staff is concerned about their safety during a visit they must make their excuses and leave.

If a member of staff feels in danger and is unable to do this they must ring the Police.

## 12 | Lone Working within the School

- When in the building alone, you must carry your mobile phone with you (ensuring contact numbers are up to date) and the keys, to enable them to follow fire procedures, if they occur. If a problem arises contact the manager immediately.
- At the end of the day staff on the late shift must let the last remaining person know they are leaving. At this point the gates and front door should be locked.
- Lone workers should also ensure that family members know the time you are expected home.
- If you feel your safety is compromised or you are in danger ring the police immediately.
- All incidents must be reported to the Head teacher and logged in the incident file.
- The Lone worker on the premises and mobile lone worker risk assessment is in the Appendix.
- These procedures will be reviewed annually and will form part of the induction process for all members of staff.



## 13 | Appendix 1

### Example Lone Workers Checklist

Family Name	Address	Contact Details	
<b>Date completed:</b>	<b>By Whom:</b>		

Have you received information about the family?	Yes/No	
Have you read the child protection guidance for Family Workers?	Yes/No	
Do you understand what is in your remit and what is not?	Yes/No	
Are all the relevant people involved aware of times, contact details etc?	Yes/No	
Are you confident all safety measures are in place?	Yes/No	
Are there any areas of concern?	Yes/No	
Have you explained confidentiality?	Yes/No	
Have you discussed the smoking policy?	Yes/No	
<b>Areas of concern:</b>		

<b>What more could be done?</b>		<b>By whom?</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Manager's signature</b>	<b>Family key worker</b>	<b>Other agency</b>
<b>Any other information</b>			
<b>Date of review</b>			