

Lone Working Policy

Frequency of Review	Every 1 year
Author	COO
Approved by	PAT Directors
Reviewed	Sept 2022
Date of Next Review	Sept 2023 (unless there is a material change)

Introduction

1. The Propeller Academy Trust recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves, without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or out of office hours.
2. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended), an Employer has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.
3. The Propeller Academy Trust (PAT) is responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and lone working can be regarded as one of our higher risk activities undertaken by our employees. If lone working practices are to be used, individuals will need to be safeguarded as far as is reasonably practicable.

Scope of the Policy

4. This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of all staff. This includes temporary workers, visiting staff and those employed on a casual basis. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Health & Safety Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
5. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) define lone workers as those 'who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. 'Lone workers' includes:
 - Those working at their main place of work where:
 - Only one person is working on the premises, e.g. caretakers
 - People work separately from each other, e.g. in different locations
 - People working outside normal hours, e.g. cleaners
6. Those working away from their fixed base where:
 - One worker is visiting another agency's premises or meeting venue
 - One worker is making a home visit to an individual
 - One worker is working from their own home

Aims of the Policy

7. The aim of the policy is to:
 - Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working
 - Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable
 - Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone

- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working

Responsibilities

8. The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operations Officer and Headteacher

The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operations Officer and headteacher are responsible for:

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risks associated with lone working
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed

9. Line Managers and Health and Safety Representatives

Line Managers and Health and Safety Representatives are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy
- Taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees
- Identifying situations where people work alone and deciding whether systems can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly
- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
- Ensuring that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, and updating and refreshing this training as necessary
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through a robust system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident
- Providing a mobile phone, and other personal safety equipment, where this is felt to be desirable

10. Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or other and asking for guidance as appropriate

- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone
- Seeking the permission of the headteacher before working alone on the school premises outside normal school hours
- Ensuring they do not arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working. Meetings must be arranged during school occupancy times, or when there are other members of staff on site.

Risk Assessment

11. The process of conducting a risk assessment for lone workers is no different to that followed when assessing other activities. The important point is to carry out the assessment systematically in the following way:
 - Identify the hazards associated with the work and carrying it out unaccompanied.
 - Assess the risks associated with the work and decide on the safe working arrangements to control these risks.
 - Record the findings of this assessment.
 - Implement the safe working arrangements.
 - Monitor and review the safe working arrangements.
12. The risk assessment process should be completed in consultation with employees and will ensure that all relevant hazards have been identified and appropriate controls agreed. Should an assessment already exist for a task which is routinely conducted with others present, this assessment must be reviewed before permitting the same task to be conducted unaccompanied.
13. Precautions should take account of normal working conditions and foreseeable emergencies e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents.
14. Identify all the areas where the lone worker will work and ask the following questions:
 - Determine if the lone worker has any medical conditions that would make them unsuitable for working alone or whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made. If in doubt, seek advice from Occupational Health. Consider both routine, foreseeable work and dynamic situations such as emergencies which may impose additional physical and mental burdens on the lone worker.
 - Does the workplace environment present a special risk to lone workers?
 - Does the person have the means to stay in touch or call help e.g. mobile phone? • Is there safe access and egress for one person?
 - Can one person safely handle any equipment which is necessary, such as portable ladders?
 - Can all the equipment, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?

- Does the work involve lifting objects too large for one person?
- Will more than one person be necessary to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment?
- Will money be handled?
- Is there a risk of violence/abuse?
- Is the surrounding area well lit?

Control Measures

15. Avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.
16. During their working hours, all staff leaving the workplace (or home) should leave written details of where/when they are going and their estimated time of arrival back at the workplace or at home.
17. If, in the course of a trip away from school, plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the school office.
18. Telephone contact between the lone worker and a colleague should be made every hour.
19. Lone workers should have access to adequate first-aid facilities and mobile workers should carry a first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.
20. Staff must sign in and off the site.
21. Lone workers should be provided with a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment where this is necessary. A mobile phone should be carried at all times.
22. In general, staff should never work alone with a student and should never transport a student on their own.
23. Staff attending first alarm activations will attend alone however if there is a second activation prior to responding at the building from the first one, police are automatically informed and will be present. An outside check of the premises must be carried out, to ascertain if entry has been gained, before entering the trust. If there is sign of an entry police support must be gained before the Trust.
24. Staff must comply with fire evacuation procedures and attend fire assembly points, ensuring that they are cleared to leave the site in the event of an incident.
25. In the event that a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone/school land line phone to contact the Head/Deputy Headteacher/Site Manager. They must ensure that they have emergency contact numbers.
26. Access and egress - staff are required to consider weather conditions before coming into and while at work.

Unacceptable Lone Working

27. The following activities are not to be carried out by lone workers under any circumstances:
 - Working at height.

- Manual handling of heavy or bulky items.
- Transport of injured persons.

Monitoring Safety Issues

28. Lone workers must report incidents such as accidents and near misses, including all incidents where they feel threatened, to the Chief Operating officer (COO) This includes incidents of verbal abuse.
29. During supervision, line managers will ask staff working on their own whether there are any safety concerns that are not being addressed. Lone workers are encouraged to seek help and advice if any safety concerns arise.