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# FOREST OF DEAN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

PARKEND PRIMARY & YORKLEY PRIMARY

## Lone Working Policy 2024 - 2026

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Ratified: November 2024

Signed by:

Executive  
Headteacher

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Chair of Governors

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## **Statement of Intent**

The Forest of Dean Community Schools Federation recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves, without close or direct supervision and sometimes in isolated work areas or outside of office hours.

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of staff. The policy outlines lone working procedures and what is expected of employees who undertake lone working.

This policy aims to:

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic way and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce that 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 staying safe 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.

## 1- Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

## 2- Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, '**lone working**' refers to situations where staff, in the course of their duties, work alone either on or off the school premises and are physically isolated from colleagues, possibly without immediate access to assistance.

Due to the possibility of buildings creating isolated areas, it is possible for a staff member to be 'lone working' with other staff members in the building.

When working outside of school hours, these hours are deemed to be between 18:00 and 07:30, Monday to Friday during term times, weekends or during school holidays.

## 3- Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of this policy and follow it.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements in place for identifying, evaluating and managing the risks associated with lone working.
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through a robust system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.
- Taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees.
- Ensuring that staff identified as lone workers are given appropriate information, instruction and training that is updated as necessary.
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.

Lone workers are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their working.
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others, and asking for advice as appropriate.
- Taking part in training related to lone working as required.

- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.
- Seeking the permission of the Executive Headteacher before working alone.
- Ensuring they have the necessary equipment with them while lone working.
- Adhering to all necessary policies and procedures at all times while lone working.

## 4- Risk Assessment

Once job roles involving lone working have been identified, the following factors will be considered:

**Risk of violence** - All jobs involving an element of lone working will be assessed for a risk of verbal threats, or violence. The priority will be those involving face-to-face dealings with members of the public and/or cash handling.

**The worker** - The medical fitness of workers working alone will be assessed, e.g. if pregnant, asthmatic.

**Access** - Some lone working may require access to locations which are difficult to access or exit. Assessments will be made by the individual whether these tasks are suitable to be carried out by one person taking into account environmental factors e.g. weather.

**Plant and equipment** - Plant and equipment used by lone workers will be assessed to ensure that it is suitable for use by one person.

**Chemicals** - Any existing, or planned use of chemicals will be considered with regards to their suitability for use by those working alone and in accordance with COSHH guidelines for the product.

### **Communication: Staff are advised to:**

Avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.

Carry either a mobile phone or have access to a school telephone at all times when lone working.

Let someone know they are coming into work, how long they expect to be and when they are leaving.

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.

### **First aid:**

For those working on our premises, first aid kits can be found for Parkend in the main office, at Yorkley in the cupboard opposite the Executive Headteacher's office (this cupboard is always locked, the key is hung above the door out of reach of children.)

**Emergency procedures:**

In the event that a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone/school phone to contact the Executive Headteacher / Deputy Executive Headteacher. (Please ensure that you have contact numbers – WhatsApp staff group)

**Control Measures**

In order to manage the risks identified, we have introduced the following control measures:

- Staff must not arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working.
- All meetings must be arranged during school occupancy times or when there is more than one member of staff on site for the duration of the meeting.
- Staff are required not to handle cash when lone working, unless a specific risk assessment has been carried out and agreed.
- Late meetings must finish promptly and not leave one member of staff alone on site. This includes Governor meetings.
- Staff must not approach, or let unauthorised persons into the buildings when lone working.
- All staff are required to inform a family member or friend that they are working in school and their expected time of return. Staff working at school must ensure that they are secure within the building.
- All staff (even key holders) are required to give prior notice to the Executive Headteacher before lone working, either after hours or through holiday periods. The school will be locked during these periods.
- Staff attending 'alarm activated' call-outs will complete an outside check of the premises first to ascertain if entry has been unlawfully gained before any attempt is made to enter the school; if there are obvious signs of unlawful entry, staff must not put themselves at risk by entering the building, and police support must be sought.

**Unacceptable Lone Working**

The following activities are not to be carried out by lone workers under any circumstances:

- Working at height
- Meetings with parents
- Working with dangerous equipment

**5- Home visits**

Any member of staff attending a home visit has to notify school where they are going, when they are going and estimated time to return.

The lone worker will notify the office staff / SLT of any changes to their schedule once agreed by the Executive Headteacher.

Visits deemed high risk, e.g. where there is a history of violence or the location is high risk, will only be undertaken if absolutely necessary. In these cases, the lone worker may request a meeting in a more suitable location or to be accompanied by another member of staff. A Home Visit Risk Assessment will be undertaken where necessary.

During a home visit, the lone worker will:

- Carry out a '10 second risk assessment' when they first arrive at the location. If they feel in danger, they should have an appropriate reason to not enter the house and arrange an alternative appointment.
- Be aware of any animals in the house and ask for them to be secured in a separate room.
- Not position themselves in the corner of a room or in a situation where it is difficult to escape.
- Remain calm and focussed at all times, and keep their possessions close to them.

## **6- Safeguarding**

If a lone worker is required to conduct one-to-one sessions with pupils, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be adhered to at all times
- Full and ongoing training regarding child protection, physical restraint and the use of reasonable force will be provided to the worker
- Meetings or sessions will never be held in remote or secluded areas
- At least one other member of staff will be informed of when and where a one-to-one session is taking place
- The lone worker will not use 'engaged' or equivalent signs on rooms used for one-to-one session
- Doors will be kept open during sessions – where this is not possible, the worker will ensure both parties are visible through a window
- When holding the session, the worker will talk to the pupil with a desk between them, or otherwise arrange the room or environment to avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Both parties will sit near to the door during sessions
- If a pupil becomes emotionally distressed or angry, the worker will seek assistance and a record will be kept of the incident

Any allegations against a lone worker will be dealt with in line with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

## **7- Training**

All lone workers will have read this policy and will follow it fully.

Lone workers will undertake additional training that is relevant to their lone working, e.g. First Aid, Team Teach.

## **8- Safety Issues**

Lone workers will report incidents such as accidents, near misses and threatening situations to the Executive Headteacher who will make a record.

## **9- Links to Other Policies**

- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff
- School Closure