



Guidelines for Lone Working

The subject of this guidance deals with members of staff who work by themselves, without close or direct support or supervision.

This guidance is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give staff a framework for considering the risks that certain situations may involve and to manage those risks.

Introduction

The primary operational responsibility for discharging the health and safety requirements with regard to this policy lies with the Headteacher, in his absence a Deputy Headteacher or the Business Manager will carry out this role. In addition, a key role in implementing this guidance lies with the departmental heads and line managers who must ensure all of the following requirements are addressed and implemented. Churchdown School acknowledges its duty to make adequate provision for health and safety of lone workers. It is the policy of the School to fully implement the general requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999.

Who are Lone Workers?

Lone workers can be anyone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision. Some examples found within the school are:-

- A person working on their own in a workshop or laboratory.
- Persons working in an office or a classroom.
- People working outside normal hours on their own.
- Staff on the school site outside normal school hours, including during school holidays.
- Staff working off-site, for example in Primary Schools

Controlling the risks

As required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999 a suitable assessment should be carried out to identify the hazards and the level of risk to which lone workers are exposed.

- Suitable controls will be identified within the assessments.
- Depending on the level of risk there may be some higher risk activities/areas that, due to the level of risk, lone working will not be permitted e.g. certain items of mechanical equipment, certain activities with pupils.

Requirements of lone workers

- It is expected that all staff will keep the school's records up to date with any medical conditions which may affect their safety and wellbeing at school.
- It is important that lone workers are considered for any known medical conditions which may make them unsuitable for working alone. If necessary, advice will be sought from Occupational Health. Consideration will be given to routine work and foreseeable emergencies which may impose additional or specific risks.
- Lone workers must be suitably experienced, have suitable instructions and if necessary, training on the risks they are exposed to and the precautions to be used.

- Suitable support should be available. The nature of the support will depend on the level, type and duration of exposure to any risks. The support may involve some of the following:-
 - a) periodic checks on lone workers i.e. visual
 - b) periodic contact with lone worker i.e. telephone
 - c) general or specific alarms for emergencies
 - d) checks on lone workers to ensure they have returned to the school on completion of extra-curricular activities.

Lone Working - Staff

The following guidance is made provided for staff:

- If you intend to work alone with a pupil or student, consider carefully the risk of a malicious allegation against you. Seek advice from a senior member of staff if you are unsure.
- If you need to work alone with a pupil or student in a room, avoid the use of a room in an isolated part of the school and leave the door open.
- If you are meeting a parent/carer after 4:30pm, use a room near to the reception area of the school and ensure that another member of staff is aware that your meeting is taking place. If you are not sure which room can be used, please ask a member of the senior leadership team.
- You should not assume that having a mobile 'phone offers a safeguard itself. The first priority is to identify and then avoid or at least minimise the risk.
- Ensure that you have a mobile 'phone so that you can call for assistance if necessary. If you are working after 4:30pm, ensure that you have the number of a member of staff who can provide assistance as the school switchboard may not be operating.
- In addition to the above, a radio is retained at reception and may be used by staff to contact the member of premises staff on duty.
- Be aware of the fact that if you are lone working it may be difficult to access first aid assistance and therefore you have to minimise the risks of injury or accidents e.g. do not climb to lift heavy objects which could result in an injury.
- First aid assistance is available when the school is open (including when school events take place) from the site staff.
- If you feel unwell whilst at work do not try and work alone.
- When connecting electrical equipment ensure that you take particular care. Do not pull or stretch cables to make them reach. Ensure they are laid flat on the ground so you don't trip over them.
- During term time, the site staff start to lock outer buildings from 5:00pm onwards and therefore you should ensure that you are aware if the building in which you are working is being locked up. You are advised not to be on your own after 5.30pm in an outer building and to move into the main building if you need to continue to work at school.
- Outside term time, members of staff are required to sign in at reception when they arrive at school and to sign out when they leave.
- In exceptional circumstances which dictate that you have to work later, e.g. meetings, examination moderation, the Business Manager will need to be informed of your location and expected time of departure.
- Unless taking part in a calendared evening event, staff, other than premises staff, must vacate the premises by 6.00pm (5.30pm on Friday), unless they are an authorised key holder.
- On hearing the fire alarm all staff members and visitors must evacuate the building and assemble at the fire point, until the all clear is given.

Monitoring and Review

- The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Guidance will be monitored by Heads of Department, associate staff line managers and relevant senior staff.
- Lone working and risk assessment will be regular agenda items for team meetings.
- Any member of staff with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that it is discussed with their Head of Department or a member of the Leadership Team, as appropriate.