

“Together in Achievement”



# Lone Working Policy

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# Lone Working Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 We recognise that there may be times when employees of the Aspire Multi-Academy Trust are required to undertake work onsite that may involve lone working; individuals may also choose to work alone. Our priority is to make sure that where this happens it is safe to work alone, and any health and safety issues that arise are dealt with.
- 1.2 Aspire academies will avoid the need for employees to work alone where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, academies will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of employees working alone.
- 1.3 Each academy will ensure that a risk assessment is conducted and that arrangements are in place prior to employees working alone (see appendix 1).
- 1.4 All new staff and volunteers should receive an induction, including reference to the lone working policy. Staff and volunteers working for Aspire should know that their safety comes first. They should be aware of how to deal with situations in which they feel at risk or unsafe. They should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response. Managers must therefore ensure that all lone workers' training needs are assessed and that they receive appropriate training.

## 2. Scope and purpose

- 2.1 This policy sets out how we will deal with situations where lone working is required i.e. an individual is working by themselves without onsite supervision and support. It covers onsite lone working, home visits and homeworking.
- 2.2 This policy covers employees of Aspire; however, we also recognise the duty that we have to any contractors who work for us onsite and we will ensure that there are appropriate safeguards in place with the third party providers. All contractors will be expected to comply with all procedures and report concerns.
- 2.3 Individuals are alone at work when they are on their own, they cannot be seen or heard by another worker, cannot expect a visit from another worker for some time and/or where assistance is not readily available when needed. Lone workers are therefore those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. The following employees may be involved in lone working (either onsite or off site) for some periods of their working day:
  - Premises staff: for example, opening and closing the building
  - Cleaning staff: for example, working alone in particular areas of the building although they may not be the only person on the premises at the time
  - Staff who may choose to work late, after school hours, to complete a piece of work
  - Staff working during the holidays
  - Staff who are required to make home visits either to the homes of pupils or other staff members

### **3. General principles**

- 3.1 Lone working will be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable.
- 3.2 Where lone working is unavoidable each academy will have agreed emergency procedures in place so that members of staff working alone can obtain assistance if required.
- 3.3 In all cases of lone working, a risk assessment will be completed by a person competent to do so prior to employees working alone. There will be a generic risk assessment for staff who regularly undertake lone working – for example, premises staff – but for other staff risk assessments will be completed as required. Copies of risk assessments are stored in each academy office. All staff who will be lone working should read the assessment and discuss any issues with their line manager prior to commencing any lone work.
- 3.4 Each academy will ensure that an employee working alone is competent and capable of undertaking the work alone and is fully briefed and trained on the work.
- 3.5 Arrangements will be put in place so that someone else in the academy is aware of a lone worker's whereabouts at all times whether it be onsite or on an education related home visits.
- 3.6 Employees working alone will be provided with adequate information, instruction and training to understand the hazards and risks and the safe working procedures associated with working alone. Records will be kept to record this training.
- 3.7 Anyone who is or who potentially may be a lone worker shall receive information, instruction and relevant training in respect of all identified hazards and the risks involved and all associated risks e.g. violence and aggression.
- 3.8 If a member of staff feels that they are putting themselves at risk through lone working, they should discuss the situation with their line manager. Further efforts by the line manager shall be made to eliminate or reduce hazards starting with a process of reassessment of the task.

### **4. Health and safety, and completing the risk assessment**

- 4.1 The person conducting the lone working risk assessment will:
  - give consideration to the greater risks to expectant mothers and young persons in relation to working alone;
  - involve the employee who is working alone in the assessment process and the development of safe working methods;
  - advise the employee undertaking the lone working of the findings of the assessment
  - work with the employee to make sure any actions are put in place; and
  - maintain a file of all lone working assessments.
- 4.2 Employees working alone will:
  - follow the safe working arrangements developed by the academy and as identified in the risk assessment for lone working;
  - take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety;
  - ensure all precautions and procedures to ensure safety are followed;
  - inform their line manager/assessor of any incidents or safety concerns; and
  - obtain permission from the headteacher to work onsite after normal school hours.
- 4.3 The following are controls that may be established through the risk assessment process:
  - Start and finish times of the lone working will be notified to the employee's line manager;

- Appropriate communication equipment will be provided to lone workers if necessary (for example a charged mobile phone);
  - Appropriate supervision is in place;
  - Additional personnel will accompany the employee
  - There should be a checking in and out system in place after the work has been completed;
  - Employees with relevant medical conditions will not be allowed to work alone;
  - Some high/medium risk activities (or use of some equipment) will not be allowed whilst lone working for example working at heights
  - Emergency arrangements for notifying the Headteacher will be agreed and known by all parties
- 4.4 When the risk assessment indicates it is not safe to work, then lone working will not be approved and another method of working will be agreed. **For the avoidance of doubt, Aspire employees will not conduct any home visits or hold any off-site meetings with parents/carers alone – any such visits/meetings will always be conducted in pairs.**

## 5. Working onsite alone

- 5.1 Each academy will seek to ensure that there will always be more than one person on site. However, where individuals are required to open and lock the building this may require lone working.
- 5.2 A generic risk assessment will set out the safe systems of work for relevant staff and highlight risks and controls. This will be regularly reviewed and updated as required.
- 5.3 At all times management will know who is working on site as all staff/contractors/volunteers are required to sign in.
- 5.4 During the school holidays, arrangements will be made in advance to confirm who is working onsite to ensure safe cover and to avoid lone working as far as possible.
- 5.5 Each member of staff will be trained in the principles of working safely.

## 6. Home visits

- 6.1 Where a home visit is necessary in order to support pupils or staff, then a home visit will be arranged, involving at least two members of staff. All home visits must be approved by the academy Headteacher prior to them being carried out.
- 6.2 A specific risk assessment will be completed for each visit (even if two members of staff are attending) to ensure all issues and potential risks are identified and controls put in place. Information that could indicate that it is a high risk visit will be shared and incorporated into the risk assessment. NB For academies choosing to make home visits to all new Nursery or Reception starters, this risk assessment will be generic, unless the academy has specific relevant information pertaining to a specific home situation.
- 6.3 Employees will sign in and out of the school to indicate when they are offsite.
- 6.4 Employees will ensure their manager or other designated person has an estimated time of return to school.

## **7. Homeworking**

- 7.1 When working at home employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety when working alone at home, and that of anyone else who might be affected by their actions and omissions.
- 7.2 Employees must not have meetings in their home with parents, pupils or other individuals associated with the school and must not give their home address or telephone number.

## **8. Situations where Lone Working is prohibited**

- 8.1 The following examples specify systems of work that legally require more than one person:
- Entry into confined spaces including tanks, manholes, pipes, flues, ducts, ceiling voids, enclosed basement rooms and other spaces where there may be inadequate natural ventilation;
  - The use of ladders which cannot be secured and require “footing” by a second person;
  - Erection of scaffolding;
  - Use of specified dangerous machines;
- 8.2 Persons are prohibited from working alone at the following machines unless they have received sufficient training in work at those machines:
- Woodworking machines
  - Dough mixers
  - Meat mincing machines
  - Meat milling machines
  - Guillotine machines (both powered and manual)
  - Slicing machines used in catering (both powered and manual)
  - Hydraulic and pneumatic power presses
  - Potato chipping machines
  - Food mixing machines when used with attachments for mincing, slicing, chipping or any other cutting operation, or for crumbling.
- 8.2 Sufficient training in the context of these machines must include an appropriate period of one-to-one instruction on the hazards associated with the machine, and the measures required to minimise the risk. The correct use of guards, safety devices and protective clothing where appropriate, must be demonstrated. A written record of training must also be kept.
- 8.3 The Electricity at Work Regulation gives as examples the following electrical work where it is likely that the person carrying out the work should be accompanied:
- Electrical work involving manipulation of live, un-insulated power conductors at say 240 volts using insulated tools; and
  - Other work on, or near, bare live conductors where a person working on his/her own would not be capable of undertaking the work safely without assistance in, for example keeping other persons from the work area.

## **9. Breach of policy**

All employees are required to comply with health and safety procedures and to report any difficulties, failure of equipment or general concerns on health and safety to the academy Headteacher. If procedures designed to protect health and safety are not followed, this could result in a disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

## **10. Review of policy**

This policy is reviewed 3-yearly by the Aspire Board. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

## APPENDIX 1: Lone working Risk Assessment Template

<b>School:</b>			<b>Prepared by:</b>				<b>Checked by:</b>				
<b>Address:</b>			<b>Date of assessment:</b>				<b>Date:</b>				
<b>Name of employee being risk assessed:</b>			<b>Reason for risk assessment</b>			<b>Lone working assessment</b>					
Risk Ref	Type of lone working activity <sup>1</sup>	Hazards <sup>2</sup>	Risk Level			Control Measures	Residual Risk			Further Action	
			Low	Med	High		Low	Med	High	By	Date
1											
2											

<sup>1</sup> For example: working alone in school/home visits

<sup>2</sup> For example: Accidents/delays in emergency assistance, physical assault, verbal abuse, inability to keep in touch

**In authorising this assessment, I confirm that all foreseeable significant risks, relevant guidelines, procedures, and previous risk assessments relating to this activity have been taken into account.**

(Any amendments can be recorded below)

Employee Signature .....

Date .....

Headteacher (or line manager) Signature: .....

Date .....

This section is to be used to record changes or amendments to an original risk assessment due to circumstances arising which were not foreseen at the time of writing the original risk assessment. These changed circumstances may be due to a number of reasons, including: additional hazards being encountered, safe systems of work not being as expected, a change of personnel, illness etc.

You and your team member should discuss the new hazards before continuing.

Reason/s for amendment	Action/s to be taken	Date	Authorised by