LONE WORKING POLICY

**Introduction**

Lone working could be defined as any situation where a worker has no visual or audible contact with a second person that could provide assistance in case of an accident, illness or other emergency. At the TF it also refers to staff members who have responsibility for one or more student on or away from school property in a situation where there are no other staff members are present.

Lone working can occur during normal working hours at a remote location either within the normal workplace or off site, or when working outside normal working hours

**Policy**

The Tutorial Foundation provides educational support to students with Special Educational Needs or learning disabilities. A key focus of the work of the Tutorial Foundation is the Safeguarding and Welfare of these students.

Risk assessments are made for all incoming students to fully understand any issues and risks associated with working with that student, together with any health & behavioural issues that they may have.

Where tuition is being provided there will always be other members of staff / other adult(s) either directly present, or in the immediate vicinity and easily contactable. In the case of working in our external classroom there is an intercom system allowing communication with the main office.

In the normal operation Lone Working, as described above is not permitted. In addition the school accepts that lone working is not acceptable e.g. working with a student with a history of aggression and where the risk assessment findings are that more than one person should be in attendance.

Lone Working as described above is only permitted for specific instances such as focussed school trips, and then only after a Risk Assessment has been completed and reviewed.

The school acknowledges in such cases the need to maintain good communication links with workers when they are unaccompanied. Contact numbers – office and mobile phone – are always confirmed.

If any employee feels that their safety, or that of their students, is being compromised they should contact the Police direct on 999 or the Tutorial Foundation office on 020 8460 0181.

Any employee who is in a situation where they feel uncomfortable and fear for their personal safety should remove themselves from the situation unless this is likely to increase the risk to themselves and/or other employees or students.

This procedure has been formulated not only to protect employees but also to encourage all employees to take reasonable care and responsibility for their own safety. To minimise the potential risk from lone working, employees must adopt a common sense approach to each situation and general guidance notes have been produced (see Appendix 1).

**See related policies – Off-site working, Safeguarding Policy**

**Situations where lone working is not be permitted**

Where the school has identified potentially hazardous working situations where more than one person must be in attendance. These working conditions will have specific written procedures and guidance.

NOTE: These situations are not listed in any particular order or classification.

* When visiting a new or unknown student with no accessible information or when the information available identifies potential risk.
* When visiting a student when it is known that there is a history of violence or aggression (physical or verbal) or the student’s family, relatives or friends have a history of violence or aggression (physical or verbal).
* Where the risk assessment has identified a high risk classification.
* Where the employee is uncomfortable about any aspect of the visit and is significantly concerned for his/her personal safety

**Responsibilities**

The Head Teacher holds the overall responsibility on behalf of the TF for ensuring the safeguarding of lone workers.

The Head teacher must ensure that:

* The aims and objectives of this policy and procedure are met.
* All tutors and members of staff are aware of the issues around Lone Working and the provisions of this policy
* Arrangements are in place for the effective management of lone workers.
* Actively encourage employees to take ownership of their personal safety and security.
* Following an incident undertake a review of work practices within teams
* Identify appropriate training needs for their employees and ensure that these are delivered.
* Ensure all employees are trained in conflict resolution and de-escalation and attend further training

When risks have been identified.

* Have procedures in place to ensure that there is a departmental record of the location of employees who may be in a lone working situation; this may be through a formal diary management system.
* All employees must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and of others and must comply with safety rules and procedures and co-operate with the employer in ensuring safety.

Employees are responsible for:

* Ensuring that a Risk Assessment has been conducted and reviewed before any Off-site visits.
* Ensuring that their personal details are provided to the school and are updated as necessary.
* Reporting incidents to their line manager.
* Ensure that their line manager is aware of their location and that contact details are available.
* If their plans change, ensure that their line manager is made aware of changes.
* Ensuring that all potential risks or concerns are escalated and used to prepare up to date risk assessments.

Policy Sign off and review

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | By whom | Date |
| Policy signed off by | Julia Low | 30.09.2015 |
| Reviewed by | Tim Low | 12.11.2021 |
| Next Review By | Julia Low | 31.10.2022 |

**Examples of procedures taken to mitigate any risk that might arise from lone working:**

* Staff members are fully vetted (references and DBS checks).
* Groupings of students and staff members are carefully considered in the programme planning process.
* Most sessions and activities are in visible locations and there is an expectation of regular visits from staff members, students and members of staff

If a member of staff is in an area of the building where other members of staff may not be easily contacted there is an intercom system connected to the main office.

Off-site tuition is subject to strictly enforced conditions either in a public 3rd party premise or in the home in a room with open door and in all cases another adult in close proximity

Student Mentors

All students have an allocated Key-worker and have regular opportunities for confidential conversation.

Residential provision

There is no residential provision provided by the Tutorial Foundation

All Students

Full risk assessments are undertaken on students to ascertain the suitability of 1:1 working and staff must follow risk assessment guidelines at all times.

**Appendix 1**

**Good practice guidelines**

Employees must adopt a common sense approach when dealing with any lone working situation. These points are made to highlight ‘sensible’ practice and guidance for employees working in isolation.

* Good communication of problems or potential problems is vital to ensure that up to date information is available to employees regarding possible hazards and risks. Employees are encouraged to share information with their colleagues, other specialties and in some cases other organisations. Confidentiality however must be maintained at all times but basic information relating to health and safety problems must be shared to protect the health safety and welfare of employees and learners. Risk assessments must be created using only substantiated information and knowledge whilst avoiding hearsay. When using a mobile phone as a means of communication never give out a personal phone number to a student, if phone communication is a necessity only use a school mobile phone.
* Risk assessments must be regularly updated and read. Employees must familiarise themselves with current information available. Managers must ensure employees will have access to risk assessment findings.
* If a mobile phone is carried ensure the battery is sufficiently charged. Identify if work area is within a mobile phone ‘black spot’ and if so, ensure sufficient time is allocated to allow the ‘black spot’ to be cleared and able to use the mobile phone.
* If travelling, ensure vehicles have sufficient fuel for the journey and that that a map of the location is available, if required.
* Use main roads where possible, particularly at night.
* Park your car in well-lit areas as close to the place of visit as possible. Items should not be left in full view but locked out of sight.
* At night carry a torch and avoid unlit areas where possible.
* On contact with a new environment, begin immediately assessing the area and ascertain potential exit routes in case of problems.
* If unhappy or feel that all is not well, withdraw as soon as is practical and communicate your concerns to your line manager, ensuring that any other employees who may visit the environment/ client/ learner are made aware of your concerns and that the necessary records are up dated.
* Record all incidents of concern using the school Incident Reporting system and ensure that the appropriate entry is made in the all relevant records.

Off-site visits - If the visit involves dealing with a student, the risk assessment should be checked to identify any known problems e.g. potential violence or aggression, environmental risks etc. Staff members should not be on their own with students they do not know and they have not studied the risk assessment of in depth.

All employees must be aware of the need to secure the department / building after the last person leaves. This will ensure that any employees subsequently entering the department / building are confident that they are entering a secure environment.

Employees should make themselves familiar with all emergency alarm and exit procedures for the department / building they are in. Where employees feel uncomfortable about entering any situation they should contact a senior person to make them aware of their concerns and involve their line managers to highlight the reasons for their anxiety. This will allow all concerned to agree a resolution to the problem ensuring employees and client/ learner safety is paramount.

All significant incidents, in particular those of violence or aggression, both physical and verbal, including inappropriate behaviour, must be recorded in line with the school’s Incident Reporting Procedure.

Employees should check with the Head to clarify what other, if any, additional protocols specific to their department should be followed in a lone working situation. This may include for example the carrying and use of mobile phones, torches etc. This will allow all involved to agree a resolution to any foreseeable problems. Employees and student safety should be paramount.

**Appendix 2**

**Checklist for Risk Assessment for occasions of Lone working**

The following are things that should be considered when undertaking a lone working risk assessment:

The Workplace

* Is there good access to and from the premises?
* Are there any foreseeable emergency situations?
* Are there security measures in place, ie. good lighting, CCTV, panic/personal alarms, mirror systems?
* Are there any other hazards identified particular to lone workers?

The Process

* Does the process of work being performed present a special risk to the lone worker?
* Are there any other hazards identified particular to lone workers?

Equipment/Goods

* Can all plant, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
* Does the process of work involve lifting objects too heavy for one person?
* Are there any emergency controls of plant or equipment that cannot be operated by one person?
* Are there any other hazards identified particular to lone workers?

Violence

* Is there likely to be contact with people who may become violent?
* Is there cash on the premises?
* Is there contact with people whose access cannot be carefully controlled?
* Is there a history of violence or threats to employees?
* Are there any other hazards identified particular to lone workers?

The Individual

* Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
* Are young workers especially at risk if they work alone?
* What level and type of supervision is required?
* Does the medical history of the person present any foreseeable hazards, e.g. epilepsy, diabetes?
* Is there a provision for meals, drinks and toilet facilities?
* Is special training required for emergencies in unusual situations, i.e. personal safety?
* Are there first aid facilities available?
* Are communication systems in place, ie. mobile/car phones?
* Are there any other hazards identified particular to lone workers?

Working Patterns

* Does the person have access to safe transport to and from the workplace?
* Are there arrangements in place for regular contact with the person throughout their shift?
* Are arrangements made for reporting in and out at the end of their shift?
* Are there any other hazards identified particular to lone workers?

Other

* Are there any other hazards identified particular to lone workers?