




# Ashford Oaks Primary School

Oak Tree Road, Ashford, TN23 4QR

## LONE WORKING POLICY

### JANUARY 2024

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<b>Signed: Rob Cooke</b>    Chair of Governors	

## **Definition:**

Lone workers are those who work by themselves, without close or direct supervision, in a wide range of situations.

Lone workers within Ashford Oaks Community Primary School include but are not limited to:

- Caretakers
- IT Network Manager
- Senior Leaders
- Administrators, Finance Officers and Business Leader
- Any other member of staff who transports children, carries out home visits, works one-to-one, remains in the school grounds/building before or after the school day or during school holidays

## **Aim:**

Lone workers should not be at more risk than any other employees. We aim to be aware of the potential risks and to put in control measures and carry out risk assessments to ensure our employees are safe whilst working alone on the premises or transporting children. This will result in adequate precautions and safe systems of work for all employees.

## **Scope:**

There are certain circumstances where a safe system of work cannot be ensured for a lone worker and so these duties **must not** be carried out by a lone worker:

- Working at height - using ladders or towers that cannot be secured or require footing
- Work involving substances hazardous to health
- Certain construction work, such as erecting scaffolding/towers
- Arranging meetings with unknown clients/contractors/parents etc.

## **Potential risks and precautions**

### **Caretakers/IT Network Manager:**

- Working at height: only low level working at height activities allowed. For example, window cleaning, painting etc. Activities involving the use of the tall ladders require more than one person on site.
- Electrical maintenance work: no electrical work allowed whilst lone working
- Security: Caretakers/IT Network Manager must ensure external doors are locked at all times - entry and exit via the main entrance.
- All work should be risk assessed before it takes place to identify hazards. These must be discussed with the H&S Lead, Sarah-Jane Sullivan.
- Any injuries which take place must be recorded and discussed with the H&S Lead at an appropriate time. For more serious injuries the H&S Lead or HT must be contacted and an HS157 form completed. Caretakers/IT Network Manager must ensure their partners/families know their schedules.
- Communication: Caretakers/IT Network Manager must ensure they carry a mobile phone with them at all times and that in an emergency all the relevant contact numbers are saved.

### **Senior Leaders, Administrators, School Business Leader, Finance Officer:**

- Access to the building: Key holders will have responsibility for unlocking and locking. If working alone on the premises only the main entrance and school office will be unlocked.
- Intruders: A panic button is installed by the finance officer's desk. This device will alert the police immediately.
- Meetings with unknown clients, contractors and parents: These should not be arranged unless there is more than one member of staff on site and that they are aware of the meeting taking place.
- Visitors to the school: The main gate's intercom system should be used to communicate. Any meetings must be arranged when another member of staff is on site.
- Communication: In an emergency all relevant telephone numbers must be available.
- Any injuries which take place must be recorded and discussed with the H&S Lead at an appropriate time. For more serious injuries the H&S Lead or HT must be contacted and an HS157 form completed. Staff must ensure their partners/families know their schedules.

### **Any other members of staff:**

- All exterior doors are kept locked
- Staff must not open the entrance door to any visitor whilst working in the building alone. All communication must be via the main gate's intercom system.
- Staff advised to carry a mobile phone if working alone [when no children are on site]
- Any injuries which take place must be recorded and discussed with the H&S Lead at an appropriate time. For more serious injuries the H&S Lead or HT must be contacted and an HS157 form completed. Staff must ensure their partners know their schedules.

### **Lone working; one-to-one with children:**

- Staff will have appropriate background knowledge of the child/children in advance of the session, including their EHCP/personal risk assessment, and any medical information. This information should be used to plan for a session with a child/children, in the choices made, consents sought and preparation for meeting the children's needs throughout the session. If longer or high-risk activities are planned, this should be shared in advance with relevant SLT and advice followed.
- Sessions should not be for extensive lengths of time. Longer sessions or greater regularity must be agreed with SLT.
- When lone working, staff should ensure there is access to a landline or walkie talkie, that somebody knows where they are and for how long, and they are aware of the following contact numbers – office and SLT/DSLs.
- All lone working activities undertaken must be age-appropriate and meet requirements outlined in the Health & Safety Policy. Any exceptions to this should be agreed and risk assessed in advance with SLT. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that they and the child/children have appropriate clothing, food, drink or equipment for any activities undertaken. Any incidents or accidents must be reported in accordance with our Health & Safety Policy.
- If during a lone working session a child makes any allegations about the staff member present or another staff member, the staff member must ensure the child/children is safely returned home in the most appropriate manner and then immediately inform the DSL.
- If a child becomes distressed or angry in a lone working situation, this must immediately be reported to the DSL who will take appropriate risk assessment action.

## Home Visits:

- It is sometimes necessary to collect or return a child/children to their home. No home visits should be made other than that necessary. Visits are never without prior arrangement with the family and are always recorded. Staff must never remain alone with a child in their home or visit private areas such as a bedroom.
- Our organisation assesses and mitigates any risk to staff of visiting the young person's home prior to such an arrangement being made.
- Staff will carry out home visits in accordance with the school's child protection policy, admission policy and attendance policy. Where possible 2 members of staff will attend but when this is not available. Before the visit the member of staff will have made a phone contact to ascertain the home circumstances such as, who lives at the home, pets in the home and whether they pose a risk, any other agency involvement.
- Before the staff member enters the home they will inform their line manager they are about to enter the home, once in the home the member of staff will identify an exit, they will sit/stand with quick access to the exit. The staff member will keep a mobile phone available and turned on. If the staff member feels uncomfortable or at risk they will make their excuses and leave. When the home visit is concluded and once outside the home the staff member will inform their line manager they are safe.

## Transporting Children:

Car journeys unavoidably require a secluded one-to-one situation and will be avoided where alternative transport options are possible. Where alternatives are not possible, these journeys will be undertaken only with a specific purpose relevant to the work of Ashford Oaks Community Primary School, by prior arrangement and with the permission of the child's parent/carer.

Any staff member who may need to transport a child/children in a car will be provided with a copy of this policy and sign to acknowledge receipt of this, with the approval of their line manager. Practical measures include the following plus any health and safety issues highlighted by the risk assessment. The HSE provides guidance on driving safety that can be downloaded <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg382.pdf>

- Only workers who are approved to transport children and who have signed to acknowledge this policy, and additional risk assessment where applicable, will be authorised to do so.
- Lone working with any child who it is assessed poses a risk to the staff member or themselves should not be transported in a car by a single staff member.
- If a child urgently needs a lift without prior arrangement, and if there is no alternative, and they may potentially be exposed to a safety risk by a lift *not* being provided, the journey and the reason for it should be immediately reported to a member of the Core Senior Leadership Team (CSLT) and parent/carer. If possible, this should be communicated before the lift. If this is not possible due to the safety of the staff member or the young person, a member of CSLT and parent/carer should be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- In making this decision the staff member needs to assess if the risk presented through not giving a lift is greater than that of giving a lift. If the risk posed to the child/children is greater by not providing a lift the staff member should give a lift to the child/children. While it is not possible to identify the exact situations where this might be necessary in advance, it is recommended that staff members undergo dynamic risk assessment training and discuss scenarios, so staff are empowered to act quickly when necessary.
- If a young person must be transported in a vehicle alone with the driver, they should be asked to occupy a rear seat rather than sit alongside the driver.

- Staff using their own vehicles for transporting children must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, complying with all legislation with its MOT and road tax up-to-date and appropriately insured, that the maximum capacity is not exceeded, and that they are fit to drive without any impact from drugs or alcohol. The driver is legally responsible for ensuring all passengers wear seat belts and that younger, shorter children and those with additional needs use car seats where required under current legislation.
- Where staff members transport children in our school minibuses [registration numbers ending GDK & AOP], staff must have an appropriate licence to drive such vehicles. [Ashford Oaks Community Primary School buys into KCC fleet insurance]. Staff should also have received training provided by KCC or should provide proof of training at another school setting.
- If the behaviour of a child is felt to be putting staff, volunteers or other passengers at risk whilst driving, the driver should park the car/minibus at the first safe opportunity, take the keys out of the car/minibus, and step out of the car/minibus in order to call a member of CSLT take advice.
- Only fully trained staff, with agreement from CSLT, can transport more than one child to and from group sessions. Such staff may drive a maximum of three children. If a car can accommodate more e.g. a 7-seater, an additional adult must also be present throughout the time the children are being transported.

## **Risk Assessment**

A risk assessment has been carried out for all lone workers. Any activity which has not been outlined within this policy must be added to the risk assessment before it can be carried out.