



Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust

Lone Working Policy

Policy start date: January 2017
Amended: January 2018 JC
Reviewed: January 2021 JC (no amends)
Next review due: January 2022



Introduction

Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of its employees whilst working alone. This policy sets out our approach to both identifying these risks and managing them adequately. Any questions regarding its operation should be addressed to the Premises Team or the Principal/Headteacher.

Lone working is not covered by any specific legislation, but the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 apply. This legislation states that “It shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all of his employees” and “It shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work; and as regards any duty or requirement imposed on his/her employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with him/her so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with”.

Employers and employees therefore have a duty to themselves and others with regard to safety and there is an increased risk to the health and safety of employees when they work remotely from other colleagues or other persons and/or outside ‘normal’ working hours.

Lone working differs from situations where people work unaccompanied but with a means of communication available. However, in certain situations where individuals work unaccompanied, it may be necessary to adopt a similar approach to lone working in order to control the risks to the unaccompanied worker. Examples of factors that may need to be taken into account are given below.

DEFINITION:

For the purposes of this policy, a lone worker is an individual who spends some or all of their working hours working alone without direct supervision. This may occur:

- (1) During normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace;
- (2) When working outside normal business hours. These are deemed to be between **07:00 and 18.30, Monday to Friday during term time;**
- (3) Working during the holiday period.

If an individual is working alone in an Academy during evenings, weekends or holidays, they must conform to the requirements of the Academy’s Lone Working Policy. Individuals in these circumstances, must ensure that they have informed a



responsible adult that they are working alone. The name of this person must be recorded alongside the name of the person who is working alone.

At an Academy, people at risk may include anyone who comes into the Academy alone during closure times and particularly, the premises staff and caretaker. Finance officers may also be at risk when taking cash to be banked but this should not be done alone (see section on BANKING, page 6).

PROCEDURES

Within their area of responsibility, the Principal/Headteacher and Premises Team are responsible for ensuring suitable procedures are in place for undertaking risk assessments for all situations requiring lone or unaccompanied working, and, that any remedial action identified, is implemented. Such procedures must also ensure that all necessary personnel are fully aware of any precautions or specific methods of work to be followed, including action to be taken in the event of an emergency.

Lone working may be carried out only following authorisation from the Principal/Headteacher. Where appropriate, an 'approved list' of lone working activities will be drawn up within the Academy, outlining situations where lone working may be authorised and the necessary precautions or work methods to be followed. Provided such requirements can be met, lone working may be deemed to have been authorised and it is the responsibility of the individuals concerned to ensure all necessary precautions or work methods are adhered to at all times.

Any person who becomes aware of circumstances involving lone working, where existing control measures may not be fully effective, must inform the Principal/Headteacher or the Premises Team as soon as possible.

Our **risk assessments** will cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed to be undertaken), where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong. Once all 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 any 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.

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

Work at height - Working at height will not be undertaken when working alone.

Chemicals - Any existing or planned use of chemicals will be considered with regards to their suitability for use by those working alone.



Access and egress - Some lone working may require access to locations that are difficult to access or exit. Assessments will consider whether these tasks are suitable to be carried out by one person.

EXAMPLES:

Examples of factors that will be taken into account when authorising lone or unaccompanied working include:

- The nature of the tasks involved;
- The nature of any substances involved;
- The nature of any tools or equipment involved;
- Means available for raising an alarm in the event of an emergency;
- Any known medical conditions of persons involved;
- The level of knowledge, qualifications and experience of any persons involved;
- The vicinity involved;
- The time of day involved;
- The means available for periodically checking the well-being of any persons involved.

The lone worker should also:

- Advise someone that they are in the Academy;
- Lock the doors at night.

This is not an exhaustive list and individuals will be expected to report all situations to the Principal/Headteacher or Premises Team, which leave them open to any health and safety issues, so that the risk can be assessed and control measures applied where necessary.

Through the risk assessment process, existing control measures will be assessed for their effectiveness.



CONTROL MEASURES:

In order to manage the risks identified, the following control measures must be implemented and the lone worker **must**:

- Not undertake work for which they are not trained/qualified;
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety;
- Not do anything to put them in danger;
- Know, and follow, relevant safe working procedures and guidelines including operating machinery and using hazardous substances;
- Never cut corners or rush work;
- Always follow reasonable targets;
- Stop for regular breaks and, if possible, change activity;
- Inform the Principal/Headteacher or Premises Team of any relevant medical conditions;
- Inform the Principal/Headteacher or Premises Team of any hazards or accidents encountered. All accidents should be reported using the Academy's agreed procedures.

RISK OF VIOLENCE:

Staff may be required to lock themselves in the buildings when lone working.

Staff must not arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working. All meetings must be arranged during Academy occupancy times or when there is more than one informed member of staff on site for the duration of the meeting.

Late meetings must finish promptly and not leave one member of staff alone on site.

Staff must not approach, or let into the buildings, unauthorised persons when lone working.

Alarm activations out of hours must not be attended by only one member of staff.



BANKING:

When processing academy funds, staff members must ensure:

- Another employee is present when counting is taking place.
- Counting is carried out in a secure location within school i.e. not in view of other staff, the general public, visitors or children.

When depositing academy funds, staff members must ensure:

- The academy is aware that depositing is taking place. This must be communicated discreetly.
- Another employee accompanies them throughout the depositing stage.
- A line of communication is maintained e.g. mobile telephone.
- Money is carried in a sturdy non-identifiable bag.
- They park as close to the bank as possible.
- They do not visit another destination prior to the bank.

COMMUNICATION:

Staff members are advised to:

- Avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.
- Carry a mobile phone at all times when lone working. There may be the need to consider a radio or other hand held communications system. This could be utilised at external events.
- Let someone know they are coming into work, how long they expect to be there and when they are leaving. This is particularly relevant to those staff who attend, or are required to work, during any closed days or holidays.
- 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 the premises, first aid kits can be found in various areas, these **MUST** be available and their locations must be communicated to the Lone Worker. It may be good practice to issue all persons required to Lone Work, with a first aid pouch to be worn on their person at all times. This at least allows them to deal with any minor injury to themselves before summoning help.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

In the event that a lone worker falls ill, or into difficulties, they are to use their mobile phone to contact the staff member's nominated responsible person as identified, or the emergency services.

ACCESS AND EGRES:

Staff members are required to consider weather conditions before coming into and while at work.

TRAINING:

Lone workers will be trained in safe working practices.

LONE WORKING DUTIES:

All lone workers are expected to cooperate fully with instructions given by the Principal/Headteacher or Premises Team. They are also expected to follow the Academy's safe systems of work and any associated procedures. Failure to do so may be a disciplinary offence.



PROTOCOL FOR WORKERS THAT ARE OVERDUE: (60 minutes after the agreed contact time)

Where there is genuine concern as a result of a lone worker failing to make contact as agreed, the escalation process must be activated to prevent delay in seeking help.

- The named person must first attempt to contact the lone worker.
- Depending on the circumstances and whether contact through normal means (mobile phone) can be made, the named person, if necessary must contact senior management and may also need to involve the police.
- If it is thought that the lone worker may be at risk, it is important that matters are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- If police involvement is needed, they should be given full access to information held and personnel who may hold it, especially if that information might help trace the lone worker and provide a fuller assessment of any risks they may be facing.
- It is essential that contact and escalation arrangements, once in place, are adhered to. Many such procedures fail simply because staff members forget to make the necessary call when they finish their shift. The result is unnecessary escalation and expense, which undermines the integrity of the process.