GPS Lone Working Policy & Procedures

1. Introduction

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring staff, volunteers and contractors enjoy a safe working environment. It is recognised that there are occasions when teaching, support, administrative, grounds and cleaning staff may be required, or choose, to work alone or in isolated situations. This however may introduce risks for a normally non-hazardous work activity, and it is through this policy that we seek to safeguard against those risks.

2. Categories of Lone Worker

Within Grangetown Primary School a lone worker will most probably fall within one of the following categories:
- Those who work in an otherwise unoccupied part of the building.
- Those who work in an isolated part of the school grounds.
- Those responding to an alarm call out after normal school hours.
- Those carrying out home visits within normal school hours.

3. Definition of Lone Working

Where staff are engaged in work (either outdoors or indoors) where there are no other people who could reasonably be expected to come to their immediate aid in the event of incident or emergency.

4. Risk Assessment

It is the responsibility of the Health and Safety Co-ordinator/Head Teacher to ensure that an annual Health and Safety and Risk Assessment is undertaken and that members of staff are aware of the content of this as well as the risks of Lone Working. The risk assessment will take into account the type of tasks undertaken, the environment, health and safety instructions and training received and the individual's medical history.

Hazards identified will be evaluated by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator/Head Teacher for the likelihood of the hazard causing harm. Measures will be introduced if the assessment shows that existing precautions are inadequate to eliminate or adequately control the hazard. The risk assessment will be subject to review to ensure it is relevant and currant to the workings of the school.

Contractors will be given the opportunity by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator to complete a Lone Working Risk Assessment as necessary and receive the appropriate Health and Safety information.

All employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, and other people affected by their work and to co-operate by adhering to the following controls:

- Staff should seek the permission of the Head teacher to work alone in the building outside of normal school hours.
- The experience and training of all staff and the activities to be undertaken will be taken into consideration before allowing lone working. Lone workers must be considered capable of responding correctly in an emergency situation by the Head teacher and /or Health and Safety Co-ordinator. Whenever possible it is recommended that staff work with a colleague.

5. Home Visiting Guidelines

We have adopted a Policy that no home visits will be carried out by a single member of staff. If a home visit is deemed necessary, staff will work in pairs.

Home-Visits are infrequent, but are necessary on certain occasions e.g. following up an attendance issue, delivering an urgent letter. It is the preferred policy of the school that meetings take place in school.

If there is any suspicion of danger or risk, we always seek to have the meeting on site, in school. If the risk is significant, we reserve the right to seek police involvement.

Even though staff are paired-up, the following guidelines still apply.

Before leaving for visits

- Check records: anything known
- Check route and location, consider the time of day
- Make sure that the Office staff are aware of your itinerary - details left at main school reception
- Ensure you have mobile phone and your phone is fully charged and in good working order

On arrival to the visit

- If in doubt do not enter the premises – seek advice/assistance
- If violence is threatened leave immediately
- If there are any concerns about any other present, ie carers, family or children, appropriate action may be taken which may include calling the police or children's services

During the visit

- Be alert of your surroundings. If you have any doubts about your safety do not enter the premises
- Be aware of your exit routes, and always try to ensure that there is nothing/nobody between you and the exit point
- Be aware of the interactions between you and the interviewee/any other person present
- Do not take anything into the house that may impede your escape, or be prepared to abandon any equipment you have taken, in the event of needing to leave in a hurry

- Do not take any items of major value with you
- In the event of threatened or actual violence, take all reasonable steps to protect yourself, and LEAVE
- Do not deliver correspondence personally which may initiate a hostile/aggressive response.

6. Further Guidelines for 'lone working'

- Staff should not enter the school premises if there are signs of intruder's but are advised to immediately call the police.
- Staff should activate the door security system when lone working and ensure that areas of the school not in use are kept secure. Staff must not place themselves in danger by challenging intruders or vandals but should call the police for assistance.
- Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.
- All lone working staff should establish their own checking in and out system with family, friends or work colleagues. It is advised that lone workers provide a relative or friend with a telephone contact number (Head teachers, DHT, Site Supervisor) to call if the lone worker fails to return home at the expected time.
- Staff will receive information and/or training to help ensure they understand the risks associated with lone working and to minimise these risks. All lone workers, in an otherwise unoccupied building, should follow the school's 'Fire and Emergency Procedure for Users others than School Personnel'. Staff have a responsibility for making themselves familiar with and following the school's safety procedure and location of safety equipment.
- Contractors should have access to their own first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.
- If staff rely on mobile phones they must ensure that their network has a god reception within school. Although phones can give extra reassurance, they do not provide complete protection and staff should still be alert for their own personal safety at all times.
- In the situation where two or more people are working in isolated areas of an otherwise unoccupied building, personnel should keep each other informed about their movements.
- Lone workers should not undertake activities that involve the handling of money, working at height, any task that has been identified as medium or high risk or which are potentially hazardous given their own level of experience and the nature of the task. Staff working at height in an isolated building must follow Grangetown Primary School's Working at Height Procedures.
- It is the responsibility of all school personnel and contractors to adhere to the lone working procedure and to report any difficulties, failure of equipment or general concerns on health and safety to the Head teacher and /or Health and Safety Co-ordinator. If members of staff fail to follow procedures designed to protect their safety, this could result in a disciplinary matter as they will have contributed to their injury and any compensation claims for damages or unfair dismissal may be reduced accordingly.
- The School respects the right of the employee, under the Trade Union Reforms and Employment Rights Act 1993, to refuse to carry out work where there is a serious and imminent risk of danger.
- The Health and Safety Co-ordinator and /or Health and Safety Governor will regularly monitor the implementation of these procedures. Following any incident an investigation

will be carried out and its findings used to inform change to procedures and working practices.

- Reviewed & Updated by L McAnaney, HT - September 2021
- Next Review: September 2022