

Clarendon Primary School and Children's Centre

Lone Worker/Personal Safety Policy

Introduction

It is recognised that Home School Link Workers (HSLWs) and Outreach Workers (ORWs) are required to work by themselves in the community without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas and periodically out of office hours.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 employers have a legal and moral responsibility to effectively manage the risks associated with individual members of staff working on their own. Also to ensure that employees receive such information, induction, training and supervision as is necessary. Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (updated 1999) employees are also responsible for informing their employers of any situation or condition, which they consider a serious danger and any shortcomings in the employer's health and safety arrangements.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of HSLW/ORWs or other school and children's centre staff.

"Lone Working" is inclusive of:

Those working at their main place of work where:

- Only one person is working on the premises
- People work separately from each other, e.g. in different locations
- People work outside of normal office hours

Those working away from their fixed base where:

- One worker is visiting another agency's premises or meeting venue
- One worker is making a home visit to an individual/family
- One worker is working from his or her own home.

Aims of the Policy

The aim of the policy is to: -

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed regularly and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk as far as is reasonably practicable
- Ensure that the necessary support and training is available to all staff providing practical advice on safety when working alone
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all incidents, including near misses, relating to lone working
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working

It is not intended to raise unnecessary anxiety but to provide an appropriate framework for managing risk and avoiding conflict.

Responsibilities for Line Managers and Health and Safety Representatives include:

- Ensuring that all staff are familiar with the policy and practice guidance and understand the requirements at induction stage
- Ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken as necessary and reviewed at regular intervals

- Ensuring procedures and safe systems of work are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
- Ensuring that staff have access to appropriate information, instruction and training, updating and refreshing this training as necessary
- Ensuring there is an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents and near misses
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident or near miss
- Providing equipment to enable staff to work safely alone

Responsibilities for Employees include:

- Ensuring they have read and understood the policy and practice guidance and are satisfied with safety measures put in place
- Taking reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety i.e. checking directions for their destination, ensuring car is road worthy, ensuring items such as laptops, mobile phones are carried discreetly, and avoiding poorly lit or deserted areas
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working
- Taking personal responsibility for sharing information regarding their whereabouts
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone

Lone Working/ Personal Safety Awareness Practice Guidance

Check list for newly appointed staff

- ✓ Copy of Car insurance kept on file - to cover business use if necessary
- ✓ Copy of policy and practice guidance given in induction pack
- ✓ Check available dates for Lone Worker/Personal Safety training in your area and secure place as a matter of priority
- ✓ Confirm DBS current and stating the HSLW/ORW role
- ✓ Surrey Safer Staffing badge obtained

Before setting out

- ✓ Always make an appointment by letter or telephone – Never cold call
- ✓ Gather as much information as possible about the family and location you are visiting before attending appointment
- ✓ Complete a PET risk assessment (People – Environment – Task) and leave copy on child's file
- ✓ Consider either joint working or public area for appointment if information is limited
- ✓ Details of visit to be left at designated base or with assigned member of staff, e.g. contact no, car registration and description of clothes worn
- ✓ Paper or electronic diary or movement board to be kept up to date daily
- ✓ Check mobile phone in working order, charged and with credit
- ✓ ID badge on person – (Consider vulnerability if worn around the neck)
- ✓ Clarify “code word” agreed (if this is part of your lone working system)
- ✓ Only carry what you need whilst working and do not draw attention to yourself by overtly displaying valuables
- ✓ Plan your route, if driving check you have sufficient petrol for journey
- ✓ Give thought to clothes and footwear – Avoid any that may hinder your movements in an emergency.
- ✓ Give thought to appropriate dress when visiting areas and families and be sensitive to circumstances and culture

Your appointment – on arrival

- ✓ Where possible always attempt to park your car facing the way you intend to drive out
- ✓ Assess the area – are you happy to continue? Never enter any location you have assessed as unsafe.
- ✓ Call in to relevant base to alert staff of your arrival

- ✓ If your itinerary changes call in and make the relevant staff aware
- ✓ Separate car keys from your other belongings
- ✓ Only take in with you the minimum amount of material belongings required
- ✓ Once you have knocked on the door or rang the doorbell stand clear of the doorway and be aware of personal space. Looking through letterboxes is confrontational and invades the families' personal space.
- ✓ Be mindful of any indication of alcohol or substance misuse from anyone present. Do not continue appointment if either factor has been identified
- ✓ If an animal being present makes you uncomfortable, ask respectfully if they can be placed in a separate room. If this is not acknowledged reschedule your appointment for a different venue
- ✓ If anyone present is inappropriately dressed do not continue with appointment. Leave the building until the situation has been rectified. Again if this is not possible reschedule your appointment for an alternative venue
- ✓ Always be the last to enter the building and situate yourself closest to the exit, making a mental note of alternative exit routes
- ✓ Throughout your visit be aware of signs or signals that could indicate a potential problem. Your personal safety is paramount and your ongoing (dynamic) assessment on the situation is crucial.

Your appointment – on leaving

- ✓ Call in to relevant base to alert staff that your visit has now finished
- ✓ If writing up notes in your car, do not park remotely and always lock your doors

On your return

- ✓ Review your risk assessment and make additional notes if you feel this is necessary.
- ✓ Any serious concerns discuss with your Line Manager and if agreed take separate action i.e. complete incident report form, attach warning note to child's file and share any relevant information in the appropriate way
- ✓ When completing incident report forms make sure you include all relevant details linked to the incident i.e. time, date, location, surroundings, people present, reason for visit, other extenuating circumstances. Try to keep factual and limit opinion-based content. Always write report in black pen and complete by signing and dating.

For cluster working, robust systems need to be in place that ensure workers' safety. Each individual school/ Children Centre is responsible for members of staff working with their children and families.

If a member of staff does not report in as expected, an agreed plan of action should be put into operation.

The following response to be initiated:

- Phone colleague's mobile
- Call colleague at home (up to date personal information is vital)
- Contact appointments in reverse order
- Contact line manager/ Headteacher
- Call police

Any individual nominated to deal with the response should be fully aware of their role and responsibilities.

Incident reporting

Full reporting and recording of all incidents, including near misses, relating to lone working should be recorded with your Line Manager and then on the Surrey central web site at <https://surreycc-safety.net/scc/>. There is a tutorial available once you have accessed the site. By completing a form on line the report will be linked directly to your school and you will be given a reference number.

Appendix 1

PET Assessment Template



Name of Child/ Parent:

Date last updated:

Signature:

PERSON (see risk factor checklist)

ENVIRONMENT

TASK



Appendix 2 THE RISK FACTOR CHECKLIST

BEFORE YOU GO	Yes	No
Is the person I am dealing with facing high levels of stress?		
Is the person likely to be drunk or on drugs?		
Does the person have a history of violence?		
Does the person have a history of criminal convictions?		
Does the person have a history of psychiatric illness?		
Does the person suffer from a medical condition that may result in loss of self-control?		
Has the person verbally abused me in the past?		
Has the person threatened me or others with violence in the past?		
Has the person attacked me or others in the past?		
Does the person perceive me as a threat?		
Does the person think of me as a threat to his/her liberty?		
Does the person have unrealistic expectations of what I can do for them?		
Have I felt anxious for my safety with this person before?		
Are other people present who will reward the person for violence?		
WHEN YOU ARE THERE		
Is the person showing signs of a typical behaviour?		
Are there weapons or similar cues to violence?		
Is there a breakdown in the normal pattern of non-verbal communication?		
Is the person showing signs of rapid mood swings?		
Is the person showing over-sensitivity to suggestions or criticisms?		
Am I alone and without backup?		
Are colleagues unaware of my whereabouts?		
Am I without means of raising the alarm if attacked?		

Am I likely to be trapped without an escape route if the person becomes violent?		
Am I unaware of how I react in violent situations?		

Appendix 3

DA Checklist for Early Help Services including Home School Link Workers & Children Centre Staff

This checklist can be used as a tool by early help professionals in cases where domestic abuse and violence has been identified as a factor within a family (either current or historic). However it should only be used where staff have undertaken Domestic Abuse, Personal Safety training and in line with the organisations Induction Procedures

Areas for Consideration	Yes/No	Action to be taken/Comments
<p>Have you considered your own emotional and physical safety when engaging with parents who are using abuse and violence within their relationships?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you considered the day/time & venue of meetings/conversations? • Do you have a safety plan in place? • Do you feel you have adequate support in place to manage this situation? If not identify what you need and who is best placed to offer this to you? • Have you completed a PET Assessment 		
<p>Do you feel you know sufficient information about all family members i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does either parent have other children not resident within then household? • Does either parent have a history of DA incidents, offending or court orders against them? • Does either parent use aliases? 		
<p>Have you fully considered the impact of the abuse on each child?</p> <p>Consider what they have witnessed, their relationship with each parent, whether they are encouraged to colluded or feel protective towards family members</p>		
<p>How you fully considered the level of emotional abuse within the family e.g. are there rules the non-abusive parent and/or child has to abide by, can they go out freely, does the perpetrator control who they see and when?</p>		
<p>Have you completed a genogram for family? (if you have been appropriately trained)</p>		
<p>Have you spoken to both parents separately?</p>		
<p>Have you explained to the child (separately & in an age appropriate way) and family why you are</p>		

involved and what your role will be? If yes have you addressed any anxiety around this they may have?		
Have you considered whether safety planning with the non-abusive parent is required? If yes seek specialist support from local DA Services		
Have you discussed safety planning with the child/ren or young person? If yes seek specialist support from local DA Services		
Have you considered the non-abusive parent's readiness and capacity to engage in services and with external processes?		
Have you considered the impact the DA has had on parenting capacity?		
Have you considered what positive change looks like for this family/child? What is realistic?		
Have you considered whether the non-abusive parent is able to engage with their local DA services e.g. ESDAS, yourSanctuary, Chapter 1 or North Surrey? If yes, make referral		
Does this case meet the referral criteria for MARAC and/or referral to Children's Social Care?		
If further incidents of Domestic abuse occur does this affect the level of risk to the children/family? If yes seek immediate support from your line manager		

Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Services telephone numbers:

- **East Surrey Domestic Abuse Services: 01737 771350**
Serving Reigate and Banstead, Mole Valley and Tandridge
- **yourSanctuary: 01483 776822**
Serving Woking, Runnymede and Surrey Heath
- **North Surrey Domestic Abuse Services: 01932 260690**
Serving Epsom and Ewell, Elmbridge and Spelthorne
- **Chapter 1: 01483 577392**
Serving Guildford and Waverley

Surrey Against Domestic Abuse website:

www.surreyagainstda.info

Appendix 4

Incident Report Form

Nature of Incident (please circle): Safeguarding, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Accident or Complaint.

Who is this Concerning (Name, Address, Date of Birth and Telephone Number)

Explanation of Incident (Including time, date, location and persons present)

Action Taken

Name and Position of Staff Member:

Staff Signature and Date:

Reported to: (Manager's name or authority reported too)