

Lone Working Policy

Bushbury School



Reviewed by:	Headteacher	Date: May 2025
Approved by:	MD Education Services	Date: May 2025
Next review due by:	May 2026	

1. Aims

Horizon believes that lone workers should not be at more risk than other employees. Horizon understands lone workers to be those who work without close or direct supervision or company for substantial periods of time.

Our teachers and teaching assistants work in a variety of settings often, occasionally without any other members of staff present. In this context Horizon understands its duty as an employer being to assess any risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control those risks where necessary. The organisation recognises that staff working alone in potentially isolated conditions have no immediate back up or support and so are at a greater risk of injury through aggression or violence directed towards them from young people, relatives, carers, or the general public.

The organisation also recognises that staff working alone need to rely on their own judgement and initiative and may be at a greater risk of making mistakes or errors.

Horizon believes that training is particularly important for lone workers and research shows that adequate training is the single most critical factor in avoiding panic reactions in unusual situations. In particular, lone workers need to be deemed competent to work alone, to be sufficiently experienced and to understand the risks and precautions needed fully. Horizon understands its duty as an employer to ensure employees are competent to deal not only with the day-to-day facets of their work but with circumstances which are new, unusual or beyond the scope of their training, for example, if threatened with aggression and violence.

Definitions

By definition, lone workers are those who work without constant supervision throughout their working day, or at time when there is no one else on the premises, therefore procedures must be put in place to monitor lone workers to ensure they remain safe and to provide supervision on a regular basis. This includes supervisors periodically visiting and observing those working alone and regular contact between the lone worker and supervision by telephone.

This organisation believes that supervision helps to ensure that employees understand the risks associated with their work and that the necessary safety precautions are carried out. The extent of supervision required depends on the risks involved and the ability of the lone worker to identify and handle health and safety issues.

When a member of staff visits a young person in their own home, he or she may be at risk through health and safety hazards in and around young persons' homes and of physical or verbal assaults and hostility from the young person, relatives, and the general public. Recent evidence suggests that such incidents may be on the increase and home visiting protocols should take this into account, particularly in high-risk areas such as high crime rate areas.

In this organisation:

- The assessment of all new referrals should include a risk assessment which includes threats from health and safety hazards and from aggression and violence and other threats to lone working.
- All lone workers should review these risk assessments and recommend changes where necessary as they will have the most relevant and up to date knowledge of the potential risks in an area.

- Lone workers should carry mobile phones so that they can summon help quickly, all phones should include an emergency contact number which will be attended at all times that staff are working
- School staff should call in at regular intervals to report that they are safe, including at the end of a shift
- Details of all home visits should be centrally logged and access to the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the young person should be stored
- The Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher should contact the MD of Education in the event of any emergency situations
- In a situation where a staff member feels under immediate threat of their physical safety they should contact the police directly or inform the Head teacher or Operations Director who should contact the police for them; the administrator should be careful to take all appropriate information from the lone worker, such as location and telephone number, and to pass this on to the police, after the incident the lone worker should fill in an incident for.
- If a student Absconds whilst working with a lone adult the adult is to call school and inform SLT. An appropriate response will follow based on the student and activity risk assessment.

It is strongly advised that staff carry in their cars the absolute minimum amount of equipment and that they always park their car in a well-lit, public place if at all possible. Thefts from cars are a major area of concern and muggings of care staff are a real threat, especially in high crime areas. If on foot then care staff should avoid dark, unlit, isolated routes to work.

In cases where tutoring is to be provided in a high crime area or to a young person with a known history of aggression or associated violence, then a full risk assessment should be completed by the Head teacher. Where there is significant risk then the care plan should be altered accordingly, either by reviewing the case with the relevant case manager or by arranging for care workers to attend in pairs.

Untoward Incidents

Untoward incidents, including all incidents which involve the use or threat of aggression or violence, should be reported, recorded, regularly reviewed, and audited.

Related Policies

Behaviour Policy
Health and Safety
Staff Code of Conduct
Risk Assessment

Training Statement

All staff should read this policy and be trained in personal security procedures. Security training should be included in the induction training for all new staff and in-house training sessions on security should be conducted at least annually and all relevant staff should attend. As part of the induction process supervisors must satisfy themselves that each member of staff is competent and safe to work alone and that they are clear about how to act in ways that will maximise their own safety and about what to do in an emergency.