

Lone Working and Safety Protocols Policy

Date of last review: October 2020
Review date: October 2023
Contact: Chief Executive, Education Futures Trust

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In school

- It is not advisable to be alone with a child/parent on his/her own in a room without a vision panel. In the case of an internal door with no vision panel, the door should be left open or ajar.
- A member of the staff should be made aware of where the member of staff is working and with whom.
- In the case of a discussion with a child where a disclosure is being made, care should be taken to record the child's account. Do not ask leading questions.

In the office

The points above are relevant when working with a child/parent on his/her own in the office.

For staff working alone in the office:

- staff should not conduct 1-1 meetings with caseload (parents, children or family members) without other staff present in the office.
- lone workers should avoid answering the door after normal working hours, unless they have made prior arrangements with the caller.
- wherever possible, managers should leave the office before the cleaner, in order to enable the contract firm to secure the building.
- managers who need to leave after the cleaning staff should carry a personal alarm.

Visits Out

- Written parental permission for the journey/visit will have been obtained, including a medical checklist and consent for emergency treatment
- A risk assessment should be made prior to any visit/journey.
- An adult with parental responsibility for the child should be aware of the purpose of the visit, the length of the journey and the approximate time of return.
- There should be a home emergency contact number available and a person available on that number for the whole period of the visit
- If a late return is anticipated (i.e. longer than 15 minutes after the expected return time) a phone call should be made to the child's home.
- When transporting children by car, it may be necessary to carry children on their own. Children should travel in the rear seat.
- The child/children should be securely seated i.e. seat belts checked and safety issues explained
- When carrying more than one child, separate the children if at all possible.

- If unsafe behaviour occurs, the vehicle should be stopped at a safe point and the parent contacted by phone.
- The Trust official badge should be worn by staff on all occasions when children are taken on visits.

Home Visits

- A risk assessment should be made prior to any home visit.
- The relevant manager should be informed of any perceived risk, and the appropriacy of the home visit discussed.
- In these circumstances it may be appropriate for another member of staff to support the home visit.
- If the member of staff makes contact with a manager and refers to 'Tell Bobby I'm going to be late' the police must be called immediately.
- If the manager is not obtainable, the office/another member of staff should be phoned using the same coded message.
- It is recommended that unannounced visits be avoided unless under special circumstances
- The lone working risk assessment should be updated after the first visit, and subsequently, should there be any further change in the home.

Protective Behaviours

- Electronic calendars should always contain the name, address and telephone number relating to the home visit.
- If a change is made to the details or timing of the home visit, the office should be informed.
- Mobile phones must be charged and carried when making a home visit.
- A manager must be available for home visits that are conducted outside normal working hours.
- Personal alarms are available for staff making home visits.
- It is advisable to request that pets (e.g. reptiles, large dogs) are secured in an area of the house away from the meeting.
- If undertaking a home visit to see an adult on their own, it is advisable to be as visible as possible from outside the house.
- If, when reaching the home, you feel that there is an increased/changed risk, you should give your apologies, explain that you are unable to meet and offer to rearrange the meeting.
- If during the home visit you feel uncomfortable, find a reason to terminate the meeting and leave as soon as it is safe to do so.

This advice is to help you conduct safe home visits – use your judgement and be aware of the potential risks or hazards.

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