Lone Working Policy and Procedure

November 2023

Signed (Chair of Trustees):	
Date:	November 2023
Date of Review:	November 2024

The Arbor Academy Trust reviews this policy annually. The Trustees may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Trust receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This document is also available in other formats e.g. e-mail and enlarged print version, on request to the School Offices and is displayed on the schools' websites.

Contents

How to Manage Lone Worker Risks in 7 Key Steps

1. Recognise Who is a Lone Worker

Lone workers are 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, either employees who work separately from others in an establishment, or mobile workers who work away from a fixed base' .
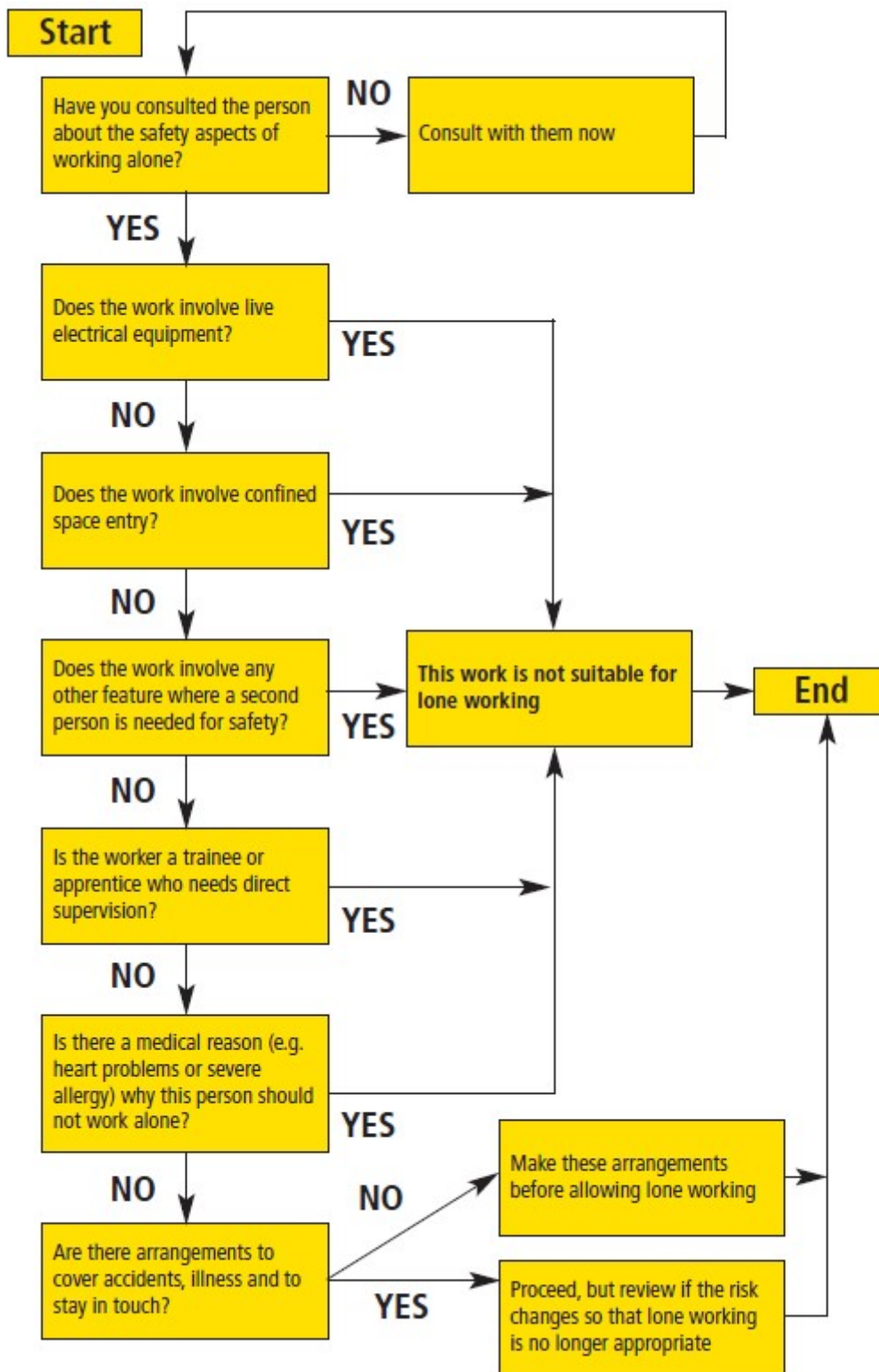
2. Understand the Supervision Requirement

There will be positions such as SSO/ Caretakers where supervisor should be present at all times however this supervision must be 'suitable and sufficient'.

3. Know When to Avoid Lone Work

There are though five situations in which lone working is not appropriate. These are set out in the table below, together with the reasons. In addition, lone working should only take place after consultation with the head of school/ Executive Principal or CEO within the Trust. If Lone Working takes place the member of staff will be advised 'what would happen in an emergency'. The flow chart on the next page shows how to bring these factors together in practice.

Lone Working Flowchart

Start

Have you consulted the person about the safety aspects of working alone? — NO → Consult with them now

YES

Does the work involve live electrical equipment? — YES →

NO

Does the work involve confined space entry? — YES →

NO

Does the work involve any other feature where a second person is needed for safety? — YES → This work is not suitable for lone working → End

NO

Is the worker a trainee or apprentice who needs direct supervision? — YES →

NO

Is there a medical reason (e.g. heart problems or severe allergy) why this person should not work alone? — YES →

NO

Are there arrangements to cover accidents, illness and to stay in touch? — NO → Make these arrangements before allowing lone working

YES → Proceed, but review if the risk changes so that lone working is no longer appropriate

Situations Where Lone Working is Illegal or Not Recommended	
Situation	Rationale
1. Work with live electrical equipment.	Having a second person present can be a lifesaver in the event of electric shock: they can shut off the power, call for help and carry out CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) on the victim.
2. Work in confined spaces.	Having at least one other person present is a crucial element of a safe system of work under the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997.
3. Other work where a second person is essential to safety.	Examples include ladder work where the ladder is too heavy for it to be safely lifted by one person and crane/vehicle operation where the driver's visibility is restricted, making a guide or banksman necessary.
4. Trainees and apprentices.	Inexperienced people are especially vulnerable: the law expects a higher degree of supervision than for a fully-trained adult worker. Therefore, trainees and apprentices should never work without direct supervision, except in a very low risk environment such as an office.
5. Known health problems such as special vulnerability to heart attack, severe allergies, etc.	Here, the second person contributes to safety by coming to the person's aid. It's good practice to encourage employees to tell managers of any specific health problems, but employers can only act on what a person has chosen to share. Treat any personal health information as strictly confidential and only relay it where there is a sound reason to do so (e.g. with first aiders), and then only with the individual's agreement.

4. Formally Assess Lone Working

Where lone working is planned or a feature of your work, you should include it in your risk assessments. Particular hazards to consider include:

- Potential for violence or threatening behaviour towards an individual carrying cash or high value equipment.
- The use of machinery, electrical or other equipment or chemicals.
- Working in remote areas, particularly after dark and outside normal working hours.
- Encountering intruders.
- Working at heights, using ladders and lifting.
- Competency, ability and the individual's medical status.

This will be carried out by the Head of School/Headteacher within your school. When the risk assessment is carried out the attached checklist will be followed.

Lone Working Risk Assessment Checklist

Many workers work alone quite lawfully, either regularly or occasionally. Use the checklist below as the basis for your assessment of the associated risks.

Risk Assess Lone Working		
Policy	**Yes**	**No**
Do you have a written lone working policy?	☐	☐
Have you given a clear definition of lone working (the HSE's definition is 'Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, either employees who work separately from others in an establishment, or mobile workers who work away from a fixed base')?	☐	☐
Have you considered the main situations in which lone working may occur, for example, working late, caretaking, cleaning, work during weekends, travel, field work?	☐	☐
Have you brought your policy to the attention of all your employees and managers?	☐	☐
Do you have arrangements to review and update your policy (we recommend at least every two years)?	☐	☐
Procedures		
Have you consulted potential lone workers about their needs?	☐	☐
Do staff who need to work alone let their manager or another designated person know?	☐	☐
Is the work such that one person can adequately handle the risks of the job?	☐	☐
Have you considered emergencies such as fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents?	☐	☐
Have you dealt with specific risks, for example, where furniture or equipment such as ladders could not be moved safely by one person alone, by making sure someone is there to help?	☐	☐
Have you made it clear what work is permitted/prohibited (for example: 'no work that involves live electrical equipment, confined space entry or roof work when you are by yourself')?	☐	☐
Have you assessed risks from cleaning chemicals and other hazardous substances?	☐	☐
Have you found out if the person has a medical condition, for example, known heart problems, that could make it unsafe for them to work alone?	☐	☐
Have you considered the risk of violence/aggression?	☐	☐
Have you taken account of factors that could put the person at greater risk, for example, because they are young, pregnant, disabled or a trainee?	☐	☐
Have you arranged communication, for example, staff check in with a supervisor/manager at a pre-arranged time and have mobiles (with key numbers saved) to call for help if needed?	☐	☐
Have you considered lone working both on and off the premises?	☐	☐
Have you covered the security aspects of lone working, for example, whether people can enter the premises when only one staff member is present?	☐	☐
Are there any special factors in your work that might increase the risk?	☐	☐
Can staff members who are working by themselves summon help, for example, by using a mobile phone?	☐	☐
Have you considered issuing lone worker alarms or a similar device such as a lone worker smart phone app?	☐	☐
Have you made sure it's impossible for staff working late to be left locked in the building?	☐	☐
Do you have a signing in/out system so that you can see who is on the premises?	☐	☐
Are staff who make sensitive visits accompanied (for instance, in education or healthcare)?	☐	☐
Have you had any incidents involving lone working that might mean you need to take extra precautions?	☐	☐
Do you have arrangements to monitor, review and update your procedures?	☐	☐

5. Lone Working Policy

1. Introduction

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 acts or omissions at work; and as regards any duty or requirement imposed on his employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with him 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.

The definition of a lone worker is: "*Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision*".

Persons at Risk

At Arbor Academy Trust, people at risk may include anyone who comes into the building alone during closure times and particularly contractors and site services staff.

Hazards

These may include, for example:

- A potential for violence or threatening behaviour towards an individual carrying cash or high value equipment.
- The use of machinery, electrical or other equipment or chemicals.
- Working in remote areas, particularly after dark and outside normal working hours.
- Encountering intruders.
- Working at heights, using ladders and lifting.
- Competency, ability and medical condition of the individual.

This is not an exhaustive list; individuals are expected to discuss any potential lone working with their immediate line manager so the risk can be assessed and any necessary control measures applied.

2. Control Measures

All staff will:

- Not undertake work for which they are not trained/qualified.

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety, for example, use kick stools when working at height.
- Not do anything to put themselves in danger.
- Know and follow relevant safe working procedures and guidelines including for 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.
- Tell their manager about any relevant medical conditions.
- Report any hazards or accidents encountered.
- [add in here details specific to your own organisations]

Arbor Academy Trust will:

- Provide opportunities for meetings and support.
- Assess the risks to all lone workers and communicate the findings.
- Provide appropriate training or resources such as protective equipment or clothing to minimise the risks.
- Consider alternative work methods where possible to reduce exposure to the hazard.

Where possible outside of normal working hours, staff should arrange to be in the building with others. Keyholders are also advised to inform someone when they are attending an alarm call out. Staff should inform the Site Manager and Head of School when they are on the premises and when they are leaving. It is also advisable that staff inform someone at home that they are working out of normal hours.

3. Emergency Services Information

Dial 999 and be ready to give the following information:

- Your name.
- Telephone number: [add in the best number to use in your circumstances].
- Address: [insert your address and postcode].
- Your exact location on the premises.
- A brief description of the situation.
- The best way to enter the building.

This policy will be reviewed as required, or if a situation occurs which necessitates any amendment.

6. Put in Place Control Measures

The safeguards needed will be situation-specific so we can only give general pointers here. What's needed though should become clear during the risk assessment (see above). Your safeguards are likely to include measures such as:

- Where people work alone in a building, having systems for signing in and out, and for checking in with a manager, supervisor or with security.
- Restricting the work to what is low risk.
- Calling in or being available to be called at designated times, ensuring regular if not constant contact between the employer and the individual.
- Providing radios, mobiles or a lone worker alarm or app (there's more on this in the next step).