

Lone Working Policy

Kington Primary School



Date written: June 2022

Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

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.”

Employers and employees therefore have a duty to themselves and others with regard to safety and this school recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of employees whilst working alone. This includes any members of staff that are working from home with permission.

For the purposes of this policy, lone workers are:

“those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”.

Persons at Risk

At Kington Primary School, people at risk may include anyone who comes into school alone during closure times, cleaning or morning club staff, employees attending out-of-hours or off-site meetings, and particularly the site manager opening/closing the building. It also includes members of staff taking cash to be banked.

There is no legal prohibition to working alone, however any hazards must be identified, risk assessments carried out and measures put into place to control any risks. All employees should consider whether it is really necessary for them to work alone and if arrangements can be made for others to work at the same time. As this is not always possible, all staff are made aware of this policy and the procedures required for lone working.

Hazards

These may include, for example:

- A potential for violence or threatening behaviour towards a member of staff e.g. 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 (including individuals who are pregnant).

Control Measures

In order to manage the risks identified, we have introduced the following control measures:

- Lone-workers should have an agreed communication method and time with another person and agreed emergency protocols in place should they be out of contact.
- Ensure that external doors are kept locked when lone working.
- Staff must not arrange meetings with parents or members of the public when lone working. All meetings must be arranged during school occupancy times or when there is more than one member of staff on site for the duration of the meeting.
- Home visits will be completed in pairs.
- Not handle cash when lone working.
- Late meetings must finish promptly and not leave one member of staff alone on site.

- Know, and follow, relevant safe working procedures and guidelines including operating machinery and using hazardous substances.
- Training in de-escalation techniques, manual handling and working at height will be completed regularly for relevant staff.
- Staff must not approach, or let into the building, unauthorised persons when lone working.
- Inform the headteacher or health and safety representative of any relevant medical conditions.
- Staff attending alarm activations will only attend either with police support or in pairs. An outside check of the premises must be carried out, to ascertain if entry has been gained, before entering the school. If there is sign of an entry, police support must be gained before entering school.
- Health and safety measures are discussed as a regular agenda item in staff and governor meetings including arrangements for lone-working.
- Individual risk assessments are necessary to deem whether an individual is able to work alone, manage the risks and identify when the lone-working arrangement should stop or withdraw. These should be reviewed on at least a yearly basis.

Staff are advised to:

- Avoid lone working wherever possible by arranging to work in pairs or as a group.
- Not to do anything to put themselves in danger.
- Carry a mobile phone or stay near the school telephone at all times, when lone working, in case of emergency.
- Let someone know you are coming into work, how long you expect to be and when you are leaving.
- Comply with fire evacuation procedures.
- Consider weather conditions before coming into and while at work.
- For those who are working from home, staff should keep in regular contact to monitor for signs of isolation or stress.

Unacceptable Lone Working

The following activities are not to be carried out by lone workers under any circumstances:

- Working at height.
- Manual handling of heavy or bulky items.
- Undertaking work for which they are not trained e.g. operating machinery.

Conclusion

All lone workers are expected to co-operate fully with instructions given by the Headteacher. They are also expected to follow the above guidance and procedures in the Lone Working Policy and the associated full Health and Safety Policy. Changes to working practice must be assessed and communicated to all relevant staff.

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