



HOPEBRIGHT

S C H O O L

Lone Working Policy

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LONE WORKING POLICY

Hopebright School Bolton is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff to act in the best interests of pupils at all times.

1. Introduction

Hopebright School Bolton recognises that there may be occasions when staff are required to work alone, either on or off site, as part of their role and responsibilities.

The school acknowledges that lone working can present additional risks to health, safety, safeguarding and wellbeing. This policy sets out the arrangements in place to reduce risks associated with lone working and to ensure that staff are supported appropriately.

This policy applies to all staff including agency staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants and any other individual working for, or on behalf of Hopebright School Bolton.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safe Working Practice Policy (Code of Conduct)
- Off-Site Visits Policy
- Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Educational Visits Risk Assessments
- Fire Safety Procedures

2. Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

- ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff who work alone.
- minimise risks associated with lone working activities.
- provide clear guidance and procedures for lone working.
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities regarding lone working.
- ensure safeguarding considerations are central to all lone working arrangements.
- support staff to work safely and confidently.

3. Legal framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)



- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

Hopebright School Bolton recognises its duty to assess and reduce risks to staff and others affected by lone working.

4. Definition of lone working

Lone working refers to situations where staff work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

This may include:

- working alone in a classroom or office.
- working outside normal operating hours.
- opening or closing the school premises.
- home visits.
- travelling alone for work purposes.
- one-to-one working with pupils.
- off-site educational activities.
- working in isolated areas of the school.

Lone working does not necessarily mean a staff member is physically alone, but that assistance may not be immediately available if required.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- ensuring effective lone working arrangements are in place.
- ensuring suitable risk assessments are completed.
- ensuring staff receive appropriate information, instruction and training.
- monitoring incidents and reviewing control measures.
- ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed.

Managers and senior staff

Managers and senior staff are responsible for:

- identifying situations where lone working may occur.
- carrying out and reviewing risk assessments.
- ensuring staff understand safe working procedures.
- responding appropriately to concerns or incidents.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- following this policy and associated procedures.
- taking reasonable care of their own safety and the safety of others.

- reporting concerns, hazards and incidents promptly.
- cooperating with risk assessments and safety measures.
- maintaining professional boundaries at all times.

6. Risk assessment

Hopebright School Bolton recognises that effective risk assessment is essential to safe lone working.

Risk assessments will consider:

- the nature of the task or activity.
- the environment and location.
- the time of day.
- safeguarding considerations.
- communication arrangements.
- the experience and training of staff.
- the medical needs or vulnerabilities of the individual.
- the behaviour and needs of pupils involved.
- previous incidents or known risks.

Control measures may include:

- avoiding lone working where possible.
- ensuring staff have access to communication devices.
- implementing check-in procedures.
- increased supervision or staffing arrangements.
- environmental safety measures.

Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and following any incident, concern or significant change.

7. Safe working arrangements

Where lone working cannot be avoided, Hopebright School Bolton will implement appropriate control measures to minimise risk.

Staff working alone must:

- inform an appropriate colleague or manager of their location and expected timescales.
- maintain regular communication where appropriate.
- ensure they have access to a charged mobile phone or other communication device.
- follow agreed check-in and check-out procedures.
- avoid working in isolated areas where possible.
- ensure doors and access points are secure.
- report any concerns immediately.

Staff must not:

- place themselves in situations of unnecessary risk.
- undertake activities beyond their training or competence.

- meet pupils or families in unsuitable locations.
- work alone where risk assessments prohibit it.

8. Communication procedures

Effective communication is essential during lone working.

The school may implement:

- signing in and out procedures.
- regular welfare check-ins.
- agreed contact arrangements.
- emergency contact procedures.
- lone worker monitoring systems where appropriate.

Where a member of staff fails to respond to agreed contact arrangements, appropriate action will be taken to confirm their welfare.

9. Home visits and off-site working

Home visits and off-site lone working activities require careful planning and risk assessment.

Staff undertaking home visits must:

- obtain approval from senior staff.
- ensure a risk assessment has been completed.
- ensure someone knows their location and expected return time.
- carry identification and a charged mobile phone.
- avoid entering situations where they feel unsafe.
- maintain professional boundaries at all times.

Where possible:

- visits should be pre-arranged.
- another member of staff should attend if risks are identified.
- visits should occur during reasonable hours.

Staff must leave immediately if they feel threatened, unsafe or concerned.

10. Violence, aggression and challenging behaviour

Hopebright School Bolton recognises that lone working may increase vulnerability to aggression, abuse or violence.

Staff must:

- follow behaviour management procedures.
- use de-escalation strategies where appropriate.
- withdraw from situations where risk escalates.
- seek support immediately where concerns arise.

Staff must never:

- place themselves at unnecessary risk.
- attempt to physically intervene unless appropriately trained and it is necessary, proportionate and lawful.
- continue lone working where significant safety concerns exist.

All incidents involving aggression, threats or violence must be reported and recorded.

11. Emergency procedures

All lone workers must be familiar with emergency procedures including:

- fire procedures
- lockdown arrangements
- first aid procedures
- safeguarding reporting processes
- emergency contact arrangements

In an emergency, staff should:

- contact emergency services where required.
- prioritise personal safety and the safety of others.
- inform senior staff as soon as possible.

12. Safeguarding and professional boundaries

All lone working activities must be conducted in accordance with safeguarding procedures and professional standards.

Staff must:

- maintain clear professional boundaries.
- avoid situations which could be misinterpreted.
- ensure one-to-one working is transparent and appropriately risk assessed.
- ensure, where possible, that there is visual access or an open door during one-to-one sessions.
- report and record any concerns immediately.

Staff must not:

- engage in inappropriate personal contact or communication.
- arrange unauthorised meetings with pupils or families.
- put themselves in situations which increase the risk of allegations or misunderstandings.

13. Reporting and recording incidents

All lone working incidents, concerns, accidents or near misses must be reported promptly.

This includes:

- accidents and injuries
- safeguarding concerns
- aggressive or threatening behaviour
- communication failures

- unsafe environments
- breaches of procedure

Records must be factual, accurate and completed as soon as reasonably possible.

14. Training and support

Hopebright School Bolton will ensure that staff receive appropriate information, guidance and training relating to lone working.

This may include:

- safeguarding training
- behaviour management and de-escalation
- health and safety training
- emergency procedures
- risk assessment awareness
- conflict management training

Staff are encouraged to raise any concerns regarding lone working arrangements with senior leaders.

15. Monitoring and review

The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in response to:

- legislative changes
- significant incidents
- safeguarding concerns
- operational changes
- updated national guidance

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Head Teacher.