

# 2019 -2021

Potential in Everyone Academy Trust  
CEO – David Whitehead

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## Lone Working Policy

<b>Committee</b>	Finance and Staffing
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<b>Associated Documentation</b>	
Health and Safety Policy	
Lone Working Guidance Notes for School Leaders and Central Team Managers	

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This policy must be read in conjunction with the Trust's latest guidance document: 'Lone Working Guidance Notes for School Leaders and Central Team Managers'

# Part A – Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

Lone Workers as defined by the Health and Safety Executive are, “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.”

Potential in Everyone Academy Trust takes their responsibility for ensuring Employees who work for the Trust can do so in a safe and healthy environment very seriously. It accepts its statutory responsibility to provide safe and healthy working conditions for employees, clients and others who use or visit its premises.

This policy is aimed at both school leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) who have a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all their staff; and at employees who have responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by their work activity.

The Guidance Notes for School Leaders and Central Team Managers support this policy assist managers to devise safe systems of work and to ensure a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for their staff can be carried out for lone working duties.

Lone workers must not be placed at any more risk than any other employee and the Trust is required to assess and address any risk to the health, safety and welfare of staff, service users, pupils and contractors and those who may be affected by what we do. This includes volunteers who for the purposes of this policy shall be included in references to Employees.

Many staff work in isolated situations, such as working outside normal working hours or visiting families at home. Although not an exhaustive list, detailed below are examples of lone workers

- People who work from home other than in low-risk office type work
- People who work on their own outside normal working hours EG caretakers, cleaners, catering, premises, IT staff, maintenance or contractors
- Caretaking staff
- Staff who visit families at home in isolated or potentially dangerous locations

This policy is intended to provide an overview that sits alongside the Trust Health and Safety Policy and enables school leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff), in partnership with their staff, to be aware of their responsibilities to reduce and manage risks. It must be read in conjunction with the Guidance Notes for School Leaders and Central Team Managers. School leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) and Employees must:

- Assess and manage risks to lone workers
- Write specific guidance for their own team/establishment.
- Provide safe places and systems of work
- Identify training needs and provide information and training
- Review and improve working conditions, practices and procedures

## 2. Aim of this Policy

To ensure adequate control measures are put into place to safeguard all staff who work alone at any point during their contractual duties. All hazards must be identified, and all significant risks will be recorded on a risk assessment. These risks must be reviewed on a regular basis especially if there is a change in the situation; a near miss has occurred or an accident or incident has taken place

## 3. Scope of the policy

This Policy applies to all current employees and volunteers of Potential in Everyone Academy Trust.

## 4. Adoption Arrangements and Date

This policy was adopted by the Board of Directors of Potential in Everyone Academy Trust on 12 July 2019 and supersedes any previous policy.

## 5. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Directors every two years or earlier if there is a need.

## 6. Responsibilities of the Trust

- To help school leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) understand what they need to do to comply with their legal duties towards lone workers under:
  - The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
  - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- To identify employees that work alone
- To ensure adequate control measures are put into place to safeguard all Employees who work alone at any point during their contractual duties
- To ensure the health and safety of any volunteers, contractors or self-employed workers undertaking lone working on Trust premises
- To ensure school leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) involve workers when considering potential risks and putting measures in place to control the risks
- To ensure school leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) take steps to ensure risks are removed where possible, or putting in place control measures, e.g. carefully selecting work equipment to ensure the worker can perform the required tasks in safety
- To deliver instruction, information, training and supervision so that lone workers are not exposed to greater risk than those who do not work alone
- To review risk assessments periodically or when there has been a significant change in working practice.

## 7. Responsibilities of the Employee

- To take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of other people affected by their work activities
- To understand the hazards they face and not take any unnecessary risks
  - Follow the arrangements that the Trust puts in place. EG to comply with Trust health and safety policies and procedures
- Inform their school leader (for school based staff) or central team manager (for centrally based staff) of any danger to health and safety and any shortcomings in their health and safety arrangements
- Cooperate with the Trust in meeting their legal obligations
- Never put yourself in danger with dealing with an emergency. If in doubt, get out, then raise the alarm

## 8. Further Reading

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence/law.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm>

# Part B – Process

## 9. Lone Workers

People working alone or in isolation from others may be at particular risk either because of circumstances of their day to day working or because an emergency may occur. They are at extra risk if they are not in regular contact with others and are not kept informed of any changes that may affect them.

Lone workers must not be at more risk than other employees. This may require extra risk control measures. Precautions must take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents. School leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) must identify situations where people work alone and ask questions such as:

- Does the workplace present a specific risk to the lone worker, for example due to use of temporary access equipment, such as portable ladders or trestles that one person would have difficulty handling?
- Is there a safe way in and out for one person, e.g. for a lone person working out of hours where the workplace could be locked up?
- Can all the plant, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person? Is there machinery involved in the work place that one person cannot operate safely?
- Are chemicals or hazardous substances being used that may pose a particular risk to the lone worker?
- Does the work involve lifting objects too large for one person or is more than one person needed to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment?
- Is there a risk of violence and/or aggression?
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are young workers especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are there any reasons why an individual might be more vulnerable than others and be particularly at risk if they work alone (for example if they are young, pregnant, disabled, trainee or travel a lot)?
- Do individuals have a medical condition that may affect their suitability to work alone? School leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) must consider both routine work and foreseeable emergencies that may impose additional physical and mental burdens on an individual and if necessary seek medical advice.
- What happens if a lone worker becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency?
- If the lone worker's first language is not English, are suitable arrangements in place to ensure clear communications, especially in an emergency?
- Does the lone worker have enough instruction, information, training and/or supervision so they do not take unsafe action that puts them in danger if faced with an unfamiliar task or situation?
- Can the lone worker raise the alarm or get assistance in the event of an emergency affecting them?
- Has the lone worker's activities and location of work been sufficiently planned to ensure the risk to them has been minimised?

## 10. School Leaders and Central Team Managers Duties

School leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) are responsible for ensuring adequate control measures are put into place to safeguard all employees who work alone at any point during their contractual duties. These responsibilities include

- Safe systems of work for all staff.
- Ensure that there are appropriate security systems in place to secure the building.
- Provide security devices for members of staff when they are working in the office or out in the community, if assessed as appropriate.
- Carry out personal risk assessments for all lone workers using the Trust template in the Lone Working Guidance notes for School Leaders and Central Team Managers.
- During one-to-one sessions discuss the control measures that are in place to ensure they are still adequate or discuss amendments.
- Identify any training needs and ensure these are met.
- Set up an adequate system for recording home and out of office visits. Ensure this is kept up to date daily, for example: staff reporting to the office; their location and general movements for the day, where this is required as part of the risk assessment.
- Ensure systems are agreed, on how to raise the alarm and copies of the procedures are given to all relevant staff. Ensure raising the alarm is regularly practiced
- Ensure that anyone who is not able to raise the alarm is not left alone.
- Ensure that during induction all lone working procedures are discussed, a copy of relevant information is obtained, and a training plan is agreed by both the staff member and the manager.

- Ensure Employees are fit and healthy to be left working alone and seeking advice and assistance, if necessary, from Occupational Health.
- Ensure lone workers have reasonable access to welfare facilities including water and soap for hand washing, sanitary accommodation and a suitable rest area for eating and drinking
- Ensure lone working procedures allow for lone workers to request additional support when they feel vulnerable.
- Discuss this policy on a regular basis during team meetings, and especially if an incident has occurred.
- Be approachable and have empathy if a worker has suffered a trauma, involving aggressive or violent behaviour. Debrief the workers, if required. Provide practical support when needed.
- Ensure that there is counselling readily available if needed.
- Report any incidents on an accident form and send it to the relevant department.
- Record and monitor all accidents and incidents and report findings to the relevant people.

## 11. Staff Responsibilities

Employees have a duty of care for themselves and anyone else who could be affected by their actions. Therefore, Employees have a responsibility to ensure that they:

- Are aware and follow all policies or procedures.
- Always plan ahead.
- Are fully aware of the risks when working alone.
- Do not put themselves in potential danger.
- Ensure that they have made themselves aware of the nearest place of safety.
- Be aware of the on-site security procedures.
- Ensure that access is available to personal alarms/mobile phones or some form of personal communication.
- Use the phone-in system to confirm safety, using the system which is in place according to your policy.
- Are aware of what to do in an emergency
- Aware of the risk of allegation when working with children on a 1:1 basis in enclosed environments (Music lessons, Counselling sessions, individual reading lessons etc.) or when comforting a distressed child.

## 12. Risks Associated with Violence

Below are some indicators that may make violence more likely and must be considered in your risk assessments. Employees may need to consider if the people with whom they come into contact (e.g. welfare or attendance officers visiting pupils' parents at home) could:

- Threaten violence
- Be a menace with weapons
- Bear grudges
- Feel victimised
- Harbour a grievance
- Suffer from mental health issues
- Have a dependency on drugs or alcohol
- Associate with violent people

There are various warning signs that you can look out for - they could be:

- Tensions apparent within a group
- Restless or agitated behaviour
- Being deliberately provocative or attention seeking
- Unusual quietness or excitability
- Physical signs such as raised voice, aggressive body language

## 13. Control Measures

School leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) must put into place appropriate control measures to reduce the risk to lone workers. Listed in the School Leader and Central Team Manager's Guidance Notes are various control measures that can be put into place to reduce the risk to lone workers in the following situations:

- Threats to staff
- Transporting pupils
- Attending courts

- Home visits
- Reception areas and interview rooms
- Key holders
- Caretakers and Site Managers

Circumstances vary in different situations; therefore, controls need to be re-evaluated for each individual occasion to ensure that the correct measures are in place to reduce the risk to its lowest level.

Precautions must take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents.

Suitable procedures and systems must be used to monitor the wellbeing of lone workers and will include at least a check on them during and at the end of the working period

As part of the safe system of work school leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) must consider equipment, which may be appropriate in particular circumstances. These include intrusion detectors, (which set off a desk-top alarm if a window or door is opened), portable alarms, and personal attack alarms, cordless telephones (for moving about inside a building or mobile telephone when working outside).

## 14. Training

School leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) must consider whether employees need training to improve their basic knowledge of issues associated with lone working and help them deal with situations accordingly. Training is particularly important where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in uncertain situations. Training may also be crucial in enabling people to cope in unexpected circumstances and with potential exposure to violence and aggression.

Lone workers are unable to ask more experienced colleagues for help, so extra training may be appropriate. They need to be sufficiently experienced and must understand the risks and precautions involved in their work and the location that they work in. School leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) must set the limits to what can and cannot be done while working alone. They must ensure workers are competent to deal with the requirements of the job and are able to recognise when to seek advice from elsewhere. For example, staff working in various units may need control and restraint training, while staff who use their cars to visit families at home, particularly out of normal working hours, may need guidance in handling situations such as breakdowns or potential attacks.

If your workplace is subject to particular risks or hazards, your local policy must reflect these.

Depending on the worker's role, a training plan will be considered and introduced through induction. This is to cover all aspects of lone working and to ensure that the worker can protect themselves in vulnerable situations.

## 15. Supervision and Monitoring of Lone Workers

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.

The level of supervision needed is a management decision, which must be based on the findings of a risk assessment, i.e. the higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It must not be left to individuals to decide whether they need assistance.

Where a worker is new to a job, undergoing training, doing a job that presents specific risks, or dealing with new situations, it may be advisable for them to be accompanied when they first take up the post.

Procedures must be put in place to monitor lone workers as effective means of communication are essential. These may include:

- Supervisors periodically visiting and observing people working alone
- Pre-agreed intervals of regular contact between the lone worker and supervisor, using phones, radios or email, bearing in mind the worker's understanding of English
- Manually operated or automatic warning devices which trigger if specific signals are not received periodically from the lone worker, e.g. staff security systems
- Implementing robust systems to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home once their task is completed.

## 16. Driving for Work

Employees who drive for work may have to do so alone. Suitable control measures must be in place to reduce the risk to this group of workers. The Trust's Driving for Work Policy should be read in conjunction with this policy.

## 17. Emergencies

School leaders (for school based staff) and central team managers (for centrally based staff) must assess, seeking medical advice if necessary, if an individual is suitable to work alone.

Risk assessments must identify foreseeable events such as becoming ill, having an accident or in the event of any emergency. Emergency procedures must be established, and workers trained in them.

Information regarding emergency procedures must be supplied to lone workers. Risk assessment may indicate that mobile workers will carry first-aid kits and/or that lone workers need first-aid training. They must also have access to adequate first-aid facilities

## 18. First Aid Requirements

First aid for travelling, remote and lone workers: employers are responsible for meeting the first-aid needs of their employees working away from the main site. The assessment of first-aid needs must determine whether those who travel long distances or are continuously mobile will carry a personal first-aid box; and whether employees will be issued with personal communicators/mobile phones.

## 19. Risk Assessments

Specific risk assessments will be completed for individual cases or situations using the Trust template in the Lone Working Guidance notes for School leaders and Central Team Managers.

## 20. Miscellaneous

There are certain circumstances where two staff must always be involved, and a safe system of work must be followed, areas include:

- Entering confined spaces.
- Working at Height. Using ladders that cannot be secured and require footing.
- Certain fumigation work and other work involving substances hazardous to health.
- Work with explosives.
- Unloading petroleum spirit at petrol filling stations and other premises.
- Certain construction work, such as erecting scaffolding.
- Work involving trainees and young people who have not received enough training and achieved an appropriate level of competence.

## 21. Reporting of Accidents and Incidents:

Any accidents, incidents or near misses must be recorded on the Trust's accident form and a copy of the form sent to the appropriate Headteacher. The original copy must be retained by the Headteacher in the employee's personnel file. The Trust Business Manager must be informed of all accidents, incidents and near misses involving workers.

If an accident happens and causes either a major injury or the loss of over 3-days work or unable to carry out normal duties for over 3-days, the Trust Business Manager will report the incident to the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with Reporting of Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) '95.

The Headteacher is to be informed of any incident involving violence, which includes verbal abuse, physical assault and property damage. The Accident and Near Miss Report form and the Risk Assessment template can be found in the appendices of the Guidance Notes for School Leaders and Central Team Managers which should be read in conjunction with this policy

## 22. Monitoring and Review

All accidents, incidents or near misses must be logged so they can be monitored to identify trends and see if a review needs to be carried out on any risk assessments due to the outcomes.

Regular whole Trust monitoring will take place of accidents, incidents and near misses in relation to lone working. Any data gathered will not identify individual Employees

An equality impact assessment will be undertaken to ensure that no groups or individuals with protected characteristics are unintentionally disadvantaged by the policy or practice.

### **23. Confidentiality**

The Trust will respect the confidentiality of all information relating to Employee's lone working

The Trust recognises its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation and associated legislation and the rights of Employees with regards to the personal data held on them.

All records relating to the management of lone working will be gathered, processed, held and shared in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act (2018).

Please refer to the Trust's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice for further details. An equality impact assessment will be undertaken to ensure that no groups or individuals with protected characteristics are unintentionally disadvantaged by the policy or practice.