



Lone Working Policy

Purpose:

Lone working is occasionally unavoidable but is not encouraged and wherever possible the team of staff should aim to work together. The purpose of this policy is to alert staff to the risks presented when an individual is working alone at the Lets Play Project and will establish the risk factors and measures which can be taken to minimise the risk.

Definition of lone working:

A lone worker is an employee or trustee who performs an activity that is carried out in isolation from other workers, without close or direct supervision. Such individuals may be exposed to risk because there is no one to assist them and so a risk assessment may be required.

Scope:

This policy applies to all staff who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition. Volunteers will not be working alone during play sessions and so should be outside the scope of this policy.

Some Core staff work outside office hours and/or alone due to flexible working patterns in order to undertake their job role (i.e. setting up and clearing up during holiday periods mainly).

The Let's Play Project's principles for supporting lone workers include:

- 1.1. A commitment to supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- 1.2. Recognising and reducing risk
- 1.3. A commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff
- 1.4. A clear understanding of responsibilities
- 1.5. The priority placed on the safety of the individual over property
- 1.6. A commitment to providing appropriate training for staff

Identifying Risk

Risk Assessments must be carried out in all scenarios of lone working as they arise. The Risk Assessments must identify

- 2.1. The environment – location, security, access.
- 2.2. The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances.

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2.3. The individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk.

2.4. History – any previous incidents in similar situations.

2.5. Any other special circumstances.

Communication

Good communication pathways are essential to help minimise any potential risk factors. Both the Project Manager and the members of Core Staff who may be lone workers need to communicate established practises and expectations.

Security of buildings

The Project Manager and Core Staff must ensure that:-

3.1. All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building and that emergency exits are accessible.

3.2. Alarm systems are tested regularly (where applicable).

3.3. When working alone they have a contact list and first aid kit.

3.4. If there is any indication that the building has been broken into staff should not enter but make a phone call and wait for assistance.

3.5. External doors are locked to avoid unwanted visitors familiar with fire exits and alarms – front door must be bolted when working alone.

3.6. There is access to a telephone in an emergency when working alone

Personal safety

4.1. Staff should avoid working alone if unnecessary and where possible the final two people should leave together and lock the gates

4.2. Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the Managers

4.3. Staff must ensure that they sign in and out of building registers.

4.4. Staff must inform the Managers when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following an external commitment rather than returning back to the Hub.

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4.5. When working alone no one should partake in potentially hazardous tasks (heavy lifting etc.), this should be done with another member of staff.

4.6. Staff working away from the office should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone at all times.

4.7. If someone is working in the office alone they must call the Managers (Sammy/Tracey) at the start and end of lone working. If the designated people can't be reached via phone call then text them as well as calling another member of the Core Staff Team so they are aware of your whereabouts.

Home Visits

- No one should be asked to go on a home visit alone if they are not comfortable doing so. Please inform the Managers if this is the case.

If a member of the Core Staff team carry out a home visit alone (which is normal practice and is agreed with the Managers) the following must be adhered to:

- A new risk assessment will be made by the member of staff completing the home visit prior to it based on any information made available by the family, school or social services. A new risk assessment will be made before each home visit.
- The home visit needs to be made visible to all Core Staff on the shared Outlook calendar including details of who the home visit is with and where the home visit is taking place and expected start and finish time.
- Leave valuables in the car boot or in office.
- Assess the situation. If there is any doubt over safety do not enter the premises. Instead make an excuse (if necessary) and leave calmly.
- Stand sideways and one step back from the doorway after ringing/knocking (this is less intimidating).
- Identify who you are and where you are from if necessary. Always have identity badge on.
- Enter the premises only when invited and where reasonable (i.e. unless there is a plausible reason) do not allow the door to be locked behind you – from the inside so as to require a key to exit or bolted)
- Sit as close to the exit of a room as possible so as to have clear access to the doorway.
- Take note of any potential hazards, potential weapons etc around and familiarise yourself with exits
- If someone becomes aggressive or confrontational, do not engage.
- Always carry a charged phone with you.
- Have a prearranged code phrase to use on the phone for potentially difficult situations – e.g. “Can you let Mrs Smith Know I’m going to be late for our appointment”. This should give staff on the other end of the phone the prompt to ask yes and no questions such as are you in danger? Do you need someone to come and help? etc

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- Call the Managers once you are on the premises of the home visit and once you have left the premises safely. If you are unable to reach the Managers via phone send them a text as well as calling the Hub/member of the core team so someone knows of your whereabouts. .
- If the Manager/s does/do not receive a call within an hour and a half of the home visit appointment start time then she will call the member of staff doing the home visit to ensure their safety.

- **Traceability**

Phone the person to check in and ensure you actually speak to the designated person. If you can't get a response from the designated person then speak to someone else on the team. Always ensure someone knows where you are but always update the Project Manager via text also.