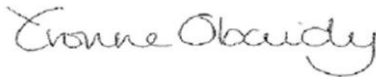


# SUMMERFIELD EDUCATION CENTRE

## Lone Working Policy



Ratified by the management committee: 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2022	
Review Date: December 2022	

The Management Committee is committed to ensuring staff, volunteers and contractors enjoy a safe working environment. It is recognised that there are occasions when teaching, support, administrative, grounds, caretaking/cleaning staff may be required, or choose, to work alone or in isolated situations. This however may introduce risks for a normally non-hazardous work activity.

### Categories of lone workers

A lone worker will most probably fall within one of the following categories:

- Staff that are required to work alone for all or most of the time, such as cleaning staff working in the evening or early mornings.
- Staff staying on to finish work after others have left, or those who regularly work late or start early, before anyone else gets into the building
- Staff who are key-holders or who are left to turn out the lights, set the alarm and lock up the premises after everyone has gone home.
- Staff who complete home or community visits.

### Definition of Lone Working

Where staff are engaged in work (either outdoors or indoors) where there are no other people who could reasonably be expected to come to their immediate aid in the event of an incident or emergency.

## **ON SITE LONE WORKING**

### **Controls**

- Staff should seek the permission of the Head Teacher to work alone in the building outside normal school hours.
  - The experience and training of all staff and the activities to be undertaken will be taken into consideration before allowing lone working.
  - The lone worker should notify someone of their intended time at work and their intended time of return.
  - All lone working staff should establish their own checking in and out system with either family, friends or work colleagues. It is advised that lone workers provide a relative or friend with a telephone contact number (Line Manager's mobile phone numbers) to call if the lone worker fails to return home at the expected time.
  - Staff should not enter the school premises if there are signs of intruders but are advised to immediately call the police.
  - Staff should ensure that areas of the school not in use are kept secure.
  - Staff must not place themselves in danger by challenging intruders or vandals but should call the police for assistance.
  - Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.
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- Only agreed tasks are to be undertaken avoiding high risk activities, i.e. working at height.
  - Lone workers must be considered capable of responding correctly in an emergency situation by the Head. Whenever possible it is recommended that staff work with a colleague.
  - Lone workers should not undertake activities that have been identified as medium or high risk or which are potentially hazardous given their own level of experience and the nature of the task.
  - Staff will receive information in the staff handbook and/or training to help ensure they understand the risks associated with lone working and to minimise these risks. All lone workers, in an otherwise unoccupied building, should follow the school's Fire and Emergency Procedures.
  - Staff have a responsibility for making themselves familiar with and following the school's safety procedures and location of safety equipment.
  - In the situation where two or more people are working in isolated areas of an otherwise unoccupied building, personnel should keep each other informed about their movements.

### **Key Holders:**

- Key holders may need to attend premises outside of normal business hours. This may be to carry out normal work activities or following the activation of an intruder alarm or because of some other emergency that might have occurred.
- Key Holder's information is registered with Alarm Company.
- Good practice dictates that at least three key holders should be appointed in order to cover holidays and sickness etc.
- Please see Appendix 1 for intruder alarm activation procedures.
- It is the responsibility of all school personnel and contractors to adhere to the lone working procedures and to report any difficulties, failure of equipment or general concerns on health and safety to the bursar. If members of staff fail to follow procedures designed to protect their safety, this could result in a disciplinary matter as they will have contributed to their injury and any compensation claims for damages or unfair dismissal may be reduced accordingly.
- Staff should be proactive in bringing to the attention of the Head Teacher any aspect of work related risks which may occur when lone working.
- The Head Teacher and Chair of Management will regularly monitor the implementation of these procedures. Following any incident an investigation will be carried out and its findings used to inform change to procedures and working practices.

## **OFF SITE LONE WORKING**

### **POTENTIAL MITIGATION MEASURES FOR CONSIDERATION**

Lone workers will hold individual timetables detailing the times of the day and places they are visiting and what work is carried out. It is the responsibility of the lone worker to complete these and ensure the school hold their diary – work diaries, including electronic devices, ensures a central location for managers to know where staff are expected to be at certain times of the day. These will be held by Summerfield Education Centre office and the relevant line manager.

### **This information is critical if Line Managers, Directors or Police are involved:**

- Name, address and telephone number of staff.
- Car registration number
- Make and model of car
- Mobile telephone number of staff
- Name, address and telephone of each pupil/parent/carer
- 'Buddy' contact details if appropriate
- Details of any risk assessments undertaken
- Photograph of staff

- Consider a code word to be used when in danger

**This information should be held by relevant managers and nominated individuals, otherwise it is to be kept confidential and not to be placed in a position where pupils/parents/carers or the general public have to access it. This will be held centrally in the Summerfield School Office.**

## **THINK BEFORE YOU GO**

- Plan ahead.....
- Have you been supplied with all the information about the person you are visiting and about the environment?
- Are there any records or reports available to you before you go?
- Do people know where you are going?
- Consider whether you are wearing appropriate footwear or clothing in case you need to run away.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewellery.
- Avoid wearing anything that can be grabbed to prevent you running away e.g. scarf
- Have you got someone to check in with (a buddy)?
- Do you have a mobile phone/telephone numbers or anything else to help to keep in touch? Is the mobile accessible and working? Is it charged? Does it have enough credit?
- How are you getting there and back?

## **WHEN YOU ARRIVE**

- Park taking into consideration the possible need to leave quickly
- On approach to the home there may be certain indications of the situation within the home, for instance, violent arguing
- Remember you are the visitor
- Stand back from the door and slightly to one side as it opens as this affords you a split second to react if necessary
- Say who you are, why you are there and show your ID if you have one
- Check who you are talking to
- Only enter the house if the person you have arranged the meeting with is there.
- Wait to be invited in or ask if you can go in
- If it is possible, try and assess the person's attitude and mental state before entering the premises
- Acknowledge that it is their territory; let them lead the way
- Check as you go in how the front door locks
- Take only what you need into the house
- If the person answering the door makes you feel uneasy about entering the premises, then make an excuse and do not enter

## **DURING YOUR VISIT**

- Study your surroundings. Look for an exit
- Ensure you can get out quickly if necessary, try to sit nearest the door
- Try not to react to bad, dirty or smelly surroundings
- Politely request for any pets, if you think they may get aggressive, to be secured away from the main room where treatment may be given
- Remain alert. Watch for changes in mood, movements or expressions
- If there is a TV or radio on in the house, with the volume raised, politely ask if they could turn it down – this will make sure you and the person you are talking to can hear what is being said
- Do not spread your belongings around as you may need to leave in a hurry
- If the person is making you slightly concerned, try not to stand in the kitchen as this can be the most dangerous room in the house
- If you feel at risk – have an excuse ready so you can leave as soon as possible e.g. that you need to get something from your car
- If you are prevented from leaving or threatened, stay calm and try and control the situation

#### HOME VISITS - CAR

- Ensure your car is, at all times, in a road worthy state with sufficient fuel, and have business insurance when necessary.
- Do not leave for a visit without being sure of your route. Have directions and a map in the car
- Park in well lit, public areas where possible, and away from waste ground and subways
- Lock possessions in the boot of your car
- If confronted in the car do not get out
- When driving through built up areas ensure your car doors are locked and the windows closed when possible

#### WHEN VISITS ARE COMPLETED

- Advise your base that you have finished your visit
- Inform them of your next destination
- Ensure all incidents are reported immediately as per the Summerfield Incident procedures.

#### ADDITIONAL ADVICE

- Care must be taken of staff's work diaries whilst on home visits; they must not be left unattended at any time
- Never give out your home telephone number or address. Advise them of the school telephone number
- Shout 'fire' rather than 'help' – it can get more response
- Whilst driving, if you feel your safety is being compromised, drive to a place which is well lit and busy e.g. shops, petrol stations

Staff are representatives of Summerfield Education Centre and should therefore follow all procedures in line with Summerfield Education Centre and all staff are expected to follow Staff Code of conduct at all times.

### **Review of Policy and Procedures:**

The Management Committee reviews this policy and the procedures on an annual basis. A risk assessment is completed annually.

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Alarm Activation Procedures**

On receiving a telephone call notifying of intruder alarm activation establish the identity of the person making the call i.e. Patrol Alarms.

**Arrange with either a member of your family or other responsible person to call the Police to the premises if they have not heard to say that all is well. This call should be made between 30 to 45 minutes after the estimate time of arrival. What to take:**

- Identification of who you are, for example an employee badge. This helps if police do attend the scene or are later called to the scene.
- A torch of a reasonable size and power
- Your mobile phone

#### **On arrival at the premises**

If the Police are in attendance, make sure they have checked all sides of the building. Then enter with the Police and check all areas.

If the Police are not in attendance walk slowly round as much of the premises as possible checking for forced entry e.g. broken glass, prised doors, windows etc. including the roof and walls. Evidence of flash lights being used or other lights left on within the building; noise from within the building or outside; suspicious/unfamiliar vehicles parked in the immediate area. If in any doubt leave the site and call the Police by dialling 999.

If all appears to be quiet, enter and check premises. Switch on appropriate lights and proceed to re-set the alarm. If there are signs of a break in leave at once and call the Police as above.

If in doubt leave the site immediately, even if you have the use of a mobile phone. Arrange to meet the Police nearby. This is for your own safety.

#### **On entering the premises:**

Carefully note all information displayed on the alarm controls. Take no action at the control panel beyond un-setting the protected areas.

Check that the telephones are in working order. If the telephones do not work, it is likely that the lines have been cut by intruders who have, or who may try again, to attack the school. If the Police are in attendance they should be made aware of the telephone not working.

If alone and, at any point, it is suspected there has been a break-in, then leave the premises and call the Police. If there has been a break-in, re-enter the premises and check carefully with the police and following their instructions. Please note that a crime reference number will be required for insurance purposes.

**After checking the premises:**

**Notify the member of family or other responsible person, who is expecting to be contacted, to let them know that all is in order. Consider arranging to make further calls if appropriate.**

Arrange for any emergency repairs to be made so the premises can be secured. If there is no apparent break-in, secure the premises and set the alarm system. If the reason for the alarm activation cannot be identified it may be necessary to arrange with the Site Manager the following day to contact the alarm company to check the system for faults.