

Townley School and Pre-School



Policy for Lone Working

The Governing Body 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, 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 worker

Within Townley a lone worker will most probably fall within one of the following categories:

- Those who work in an otherwise unoccupied part of the building
- Those who work in an isolated part of school grounds
- Those responding to an alarm call out after normal school hours

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.

Risk Assessment

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that an annual Health and Safety and Risk Assessment is undertaken and that members of staff are aware of the content of this as well as the risks of Lone Working. The risk assessment will take into account the type of tasks undertaken, the environment, health and safety instruction and training received and the individual's medical history.

Hazards identified will be evaluated by the Headteacher for the likelihood of the hazard causing harm. Measures will be introduced if the assessment shows that existing precautions are inadequate to eliminate or adequately control the hazard. The risk assessment will be subject to review to ensure it is relevant and current to the workings of the school.

Contractors will be given the opportunity by the Headteacher to complete a Lone Working Risk Assessment as necessary and receive the appropriate Health and Safety information.

Controls

Staff should seek the permission of the Headteacher to work alone in the building outside of 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. Lone workers must be considered capable of responding correctly in an emergency situation by the Headteacher. Whenever possible it is recommended that staff work with a colleague.

Staff should not enter the school premises if there are signs of intruders but are advised to immediately call the police.

Staff should activate the door security system when lone working and 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.

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 (usually the Headteacher's phone numbers) to call if the lone worker fails to return home at the expected time.

If the Headteacher is working alone, they will inform the caretaker and/or a member of staff as negotiated.

It is not normally practicable for the Headteacher to periodically visit and visually monitor people working alone.

Staff will receive information 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.

Contractors should have access to their own first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.

If staff rely on mobile phones they must ensure that their network has good reception within school. Although phones can give extra reassurance, they do not provide complete protection and staff should still be alert for their own personal safety at all times.

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.

Lone workers should not undertake activities that involve the handling of money, working at height, any task that has been identified as medium or high risk or which are potentially hazardous given their own level of experience and the nature of the task.

All school personnel are reminded about the importance of maintaining a healthy work/life balance.

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 Headteacher.

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.

The School respects the right of the employee, under the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993, to refuse to carry out work where there is a serious and imminent risk of danger. They also can advise others to do the same without being dismissed as a result.

Staff should be proactive in bringing to the attention of Headteacher any aspect of work related risks.

The Resources Committee 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.