

Lone Working Policy

Version	1.1
Approving Body	Trust Board
Date ratified	27th September 2023
Date issued	1st October 2023
Review date	30th September 2026
Owner	Director of Resources
Applies to	All Trust Schools, all Trust staff

Version	Date	Reason
1.0	October 2020	To establish a Trust wide policy
1.1	October 2023	Periodic review

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1. Introduction

1.1 We recognise that there may be times when employees of Initio Learning Trust are required to

work carry out visits or undertake work onsite that may involve lone working; individuals may also choose to work alone. Our priority is to make sure that where this happens it is safe to work alone, and any health and safety issues that arise are dealt with.

1.2 The Trust will avoid the need for employees to work alone where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, the Trust will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of employees working alone.

1.3 The Trust will ensure that a risk assessment is conducted and that arrangements are in place prior to employees working alone.

2. Scope and purpose

2.1 This policy sets out how we will deal with situations where lone working is required i.e. an individual is working by themselves without onsite supervision and support. It covers onsite lone working, home visits and homeworking.

2.2 This policy covers employees of the Trust however we also recognise the duty that we have to any contractors who work for us onsite and we will ensure that there are appropriate safeguards in place with the third party providers. All contractors will be expected to comply with all procedures and report concerns.

2.3 Individuals are alone at work when they are on their own, they cannot be seen or heard by another worker, cannot expect a visit from another worker for some time and/or where assistance is not readily available when needed. Lone workers are therefore those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. The following employees may be involved in lone working (either onsite or off site) for some periods of their working day:

- Premises staff for example opening and closing the building
- Cleaning staff for example working alone in particular areas of the building although they may not be the only person on the premises at the time
- Staff who may choose to work late, after school hours, to complete a piece of work
- Staff working during the holidays
- Staff who are required to make home visits either to the homes of pupils or other staff members

3. General principles

3.1 Lone working will be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable.

3.2 Where lone working is unavoidable each school will have agreed emergency procedures in place so that members of staff working alone can obtain assistance if required.

3.3 In all cases of lone working, a risk assessment will be completed by the Headteacher or their delegate. There will be a general one for staff who regularly undertake lone working, for example premises staff, but for other staff risk assessments will be completed as required. All staff who will be lone working should read the assessment and discuss any issues with their line manager prior to commencing any lone work.

3.4 The Headteacher will ensure that an employee working alone is competent and capable of undertaking the work alone and is fully briefed and trained on the work.

3.5 Arrangements will be put in place so that someone else in the school is aware of a lone worker's whereabouts at all times whether it be onsite or on an education related home visits.

3.6 Employees working alone will be provided with adequate information, instruction and training to understand the hazards and risks and the safe working procedures associated with working alone.

3.7 Anyone who is or who potentially may be a lone worker shall receive information, instruction and relevant training in respect of all identified hazards and the risks involved and all associated risks eg violence and aggression and vehicles/driving.

3.8 If a member of staff feels that they are putting themselves at risk through lone working, they should discuss the situation with their line manager. Further efforts by the line manager shall be made to eliminate or reduce hazards starting with a process of reassessment of the task.

4. Health and safety, and completing the risk assessment

4.1 The person conducting the lone working risk assessment will:

- give consideration to the greater risks to expectant mothers and young persons in relation to working alone;
- involve the employee who is working alone in the assessment process and the development of safe working methods;
- advise the employee undertaking the lone working of the findings of the assessment
- work with the employee to make sure any actions are put in place; and
- maintain a file of all lone working assessments.

4.2 Employees working alone will:

follow the safe working arrangements developed by the Trust and as identified in the risk assessment for lone working;

- take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety;
- ensure all precautions and procedures to ensure safety are followed;
- inform their line manager/assessor of any incidents or safety concerns; and
- obtain permission of the Headteacher to work onsite after normal school hours.

4.3 The following are controls that may be established through the risk assessment process:

- Start and finish times of the lone working may be notified to the employee's line manager;
- Communication equipment may be provided;
- Supervision may be in place;
- Additional personnel may accompany the employee
- There may be a checking in and out system in place after the work has been completed;
- Employees with relevant medical conditions may not be allowed to work alone;
- Some high/medium risk activities (or use of some equipment) may not be allowed whilst lone working

4.4 When the risk assessment indicates it is not safe to work, then lone working will not be approved and another method of working will be agreed.

5. Working onsite alone

5.1 The Trust will seek to ensure that there will always be more than one person on site. However where individuals are required to open and lock the building this may require lone working.

5.2 A generic risk assessment will set out the safe systems of work for relevant staff and highlight risks and controls. This will be regularly reviewed and updated as required.

5.3 During the school holidays, arrangements will be made in advance to confirm who is working onsite to ensure safe cover and to avoid lone working.

5.4 Each member of staff will be trained in the safe system of work.

6. Home visits

6.1 Where a home visit is necessary in order to support pupils or staff, then a home visit will be arranged. All home visits must be approved by the Headteacher or their delegate prior to them being carried out.

6.2 A risk assessment will be completed for each visit to ensure all issues and potential risks are identified and controls put in place. Information that could indicate that it is a high risk visit will be shared and incorporated into the risk assessment.

6.3 Employees will sign in and out of the school to indicate when they are offsite.

6.4 Employees will ensure their manager or other designated person has an estimated time of return to school.

7. Homeworking

7.1 When working at home employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety when working alone at home, and that of anyone else who might be affected by their actions and omissions.

7.2 Employees must not have meetings in their home with parents, pupils or other individuals associated with the school and must not give their home address or landline telephone number.

8. Situations where Lone Working is prohibited

8.1. The following examples specify systems of work that legally require more than one person:

- Entry into confined spaces including tanks, manholes, pipes, flues, ducts, ceiling voids, enclosed basement rooms and other spaces where there may be inadequate natural ventilation;
- The use of ladders which cannot be secured and require “footing” by a second person;
- erection of scaffolding;
- use of specified dangerous machines;

8.2 Persons are prohibited from working alone at the following machines unless they have received sufficient training in work at those machines:

- Woodworking machines
- Guillotine machines (both powered and manual)
- Kilns

8.3 Sufficient training in the context of these machines must include an appropriate period of one-to-one instruction on the hazards associated with the machine, and the measures required to minimise the risk. The correct use of guards, safety devices and protective clothing where appropriate, must be demonstrated. A written record of training must also be kept.

8.4 The Electricity at Work Regulation gives as examples the following electrical work where it is likely that the person carrying out the work should be accompanied:

- Electrical work involving manipulation of live, un-insulated power conductors at say 240 volts using insulated tools; and
- Other work on, or near, bare live conductors where a person working on his/her own would not be capable of undertaking the work safely without assistance in, for example keeping other persons from the work area.

9. Breach of policy

All employees are required to comply with health and safety procedures and to report any difficulties, failure of equipment or general concerns on health and safety to the Headteacher. If procedures designed to protect health and safety are not followed, this could result in a disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

10. Review of policy

This policy is reviewed every 3 years by the Trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.