

St John's Highbury Vale CE Primary School



'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' Philippians 4:13

Lone Working Policy

**Ratified: Summer 2026
Review Date: Summer 2029**

At the heart of our school vision is a desire for an authentic and life-giving relationship with ourselves, one another, our world, and with God. We believe that it is through Christ who gives us the strength, all can achieve within a learning environment where every child is valued as a unique individual created in the image of God, and where teaching and learning is of consistently high standard.

STJHV Statement of Intent

St John's Highbury Vale in Islington is committed to providing a nurturing and inspiring environment where every child is empowered to reach their full potential. Grounded in our Christian ethos and guided by our values, we strive to create a vibrant and dynamic educational experience that prepares our pupils to lead fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society.

St John's Highbury Vale CE Primary School is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees, volunteers, contractors and other persons who may be affected by school activities.

Policy Statement and Legal Framework

The Governing Body recognises that some employees may be required to work alone or without close or direct supervision at various times during the school day, outside normal school hours, during holiday periods, or away from the school site. The school acknowledges its duty of care to ensure that lone working arrangements are properly risk assessed, monitored and managed.

This policy is written in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Guidance on Lone Working
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- First Aid Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Visitor Management Procedures
- Educational Visits Policy
- Data Protection Policy

This policy applies to:

- all school employees;
- agency staff;
- volunteers;
- contractors working on behalf of the school;
- members of the senior leadership team;

It applies whenever an individual works:

- on the school premises without close or direct supervision;
- outside normal working hours;
- in isolated parts of the school building or grounds;
- away from the school site on school business;
- during school holiday periods;
- in situations where they are working without another authorised adult immediately available to provide assistance in an emergency.

Defining lone working

For the purposes of this policy, lone working is defined as:

Any situation in which a member of staff works by themselves without close or direct supervision and without another competent person immediately available to provide assistance in the event of an emergency.

Examples within the school context include:

- teachers, leaders or other employees working on site outside normal school operating hours, particularly when few or no other authorised adults are present;
- premises manager opening or securing the premises alone;
- staff meeting parents or visitors outside normal school hours where no other staff are immediately nearby;
- home visits;
- staff undertaking authorised one-to-one work with pupils in accordance with safeguarding procedures;
- contractors undertaking maintenance tasks out of school hours;
- staff attending external meetings or training alone.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed annually;
- ensuring adequate resources are available to manage lone working safely;
- monitoring health and safety compliance.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ensuring suitable and sufficient lone working risk assessments are completed;
- authorising lone working arrangements where appropriate;
- ensuring staff receive information, instruction and training;
- ensuring monitoring and emergency arrangements are robust;
- investigating incidents linked to lone working;
- ensuring appropriate notification and check-in arrangements are in place for members of staff, including members of the Senior Leadership Team, who may be working alone.

Line Managers

Line managers are responsible for:

- maintaining oversight of staff who may work alone;
- ensuring signing in/out and check-in procedures are followed;
- ensuring appropriate lone-working records and notification procedures are maintained;
- reviewing lone working arrangements regularly.

Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- following this policy and all risk control measures;

- informing an appropriate manager or colleague when they intend to work alone or remain on site outside normal operating hours;
- participating in risk assessments;
- reporting hazards, incidents or concerns immediately;
- following agreed signing-in, logging and check-in procedures;
- withdrawing from unsafe situations.

Risk assessment

There is no general legal prohibition on working alone; however, no planned lone working activity may take place unless a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been completed.

The risk assessment must consider:

- the nature of the activity;
- the location;
- access to communication;
- security of the premises;
- likelihood of violence, aggression or intruder risk;
- medical needs of the employee;
- manual handling or physical hazards;
- emergency evacuation arrangements;
- safeguarding implications.

Lone working must not proceed where the risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level.

Higher-risk lone working activities must be specifically authorised by the Headteacher.

Dynamic risk assessment must also be exercised by employees at the point of work. Staff must stop work and seek assistance if conditions become unsafe.

Lone working may be considered as part of an overall activity risk assessment or, where appropriate, through a specific lone-working risk assessment.

Routine low-risk activities may be managed through dynamic risk assessment and normal school procedures, whereas higher-risk or unusual activities may require a separate documented assessment.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate risk assessments are completed and reviewed. This responsibility may be delegated to a competent person where appropriate.

Specific Lone Working Situations in School

Staff Working Outside Normal Hours on School Premises

The school premises are secured and locked at 9:00 pm. Staff are encouraged to leave the premises by 6:00 pm wherever possible. Any member of staff remaining on site after 6:00 pm must inform the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher or another designated senior leader.

Staff accessing the school site during weekends or school holiday periods must notify the Headteacher or designated senior leader in advance, even where more than one person is attending the site.

Employees working beyond normal hours must:

- inform the Headteacher, AHT or designated senior leader if remaining on site after 6:00 pm or attending during weekends or holiday periods;
- sign in and sign out where applicable;

- ensure external doors remain secure;
- avoid working in isolated areas where possible;
- keep a charged mobile phone available.
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Where cleaners, premises staff or other authorised adults remain on site, staff may not be considered to be completely alone; however, all notification and site security procedures must still be followed.

Staff should avoid remaining on site alone late into the evening wherever reasonably practicable.

Opening and Closing the Premises

Site manager, cleaners or leaders opening/closing the building alone must:

- follow agreed site security procedures;
- carry communication devices;
- report suspicious activity immediately;
- avoid investigating intrusions alone;
- ensure another member of staff or designated contact is aware they are on site where work is taking place outside normal operating hours.

One-to-One Meetings with Parents or Visitors

Meetings taking place after normal school hours or when most staff have left the premises must:

- be notified to another member of staff;
- take place in rooms with visibility panels or open access where possible;
- be located close to exits;
- not take place when a member of staff is alone on site;
- be terminated immediately if behaviour becomes threatening.

Staff should not arrange to meet parents or visitors alone on site during weekends or school holiday periods unless specifically authorised and appropriate safeguarding and lone working arrangements are in place.

Home Visits or Off-Site Visits

Home visits require:

- prior authorisation;
- recorded itinerary;
- expected return/check-in time;
- assessment of known risks;
- paired visits or additional control measures where risks are identified through assessment.

Staff undertaking home visits or off-site visits must ensure that another member of staff or designated contact is aware of their location and expected return time.

Contractors

Contractors working alone must:

- sign in through school systems;
- receive emergency procedures;
- have site-specific hazards explained;
- comply with school safeguarding, health and safety, and site security procedures at all times.

Safeguarding Requirements

Lone working arrangements must not compromise safeguarding of pupils or staff.

Staff must not place themselves in situations where they are isolated with a child in a manner that could give rise to risk, allegation or misunderstanding unless this forms part of an authorised role and safeguarding procedures are followed.

Where one-to-one pupil work is necessary:

- doors should remain open where appropriate or visibility maintained;
- another member of staff should be aware of the session and its location;
- sessions should take place in rooms with visibility panels or appropriate visibility wherever reasonably practicable;
- safeguarding reporting routes must be followed if any concern arises.

This section operates in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

Communication and Monitoring Procedures

All lone workers must ensure that a colleague or line manager is aware of:

- their location;
- expected duration of work;
- mobile contact number where relevant;
- planned completion/check-in time.

Staff attending the school site outside normal working hours, including during weekends and school holiday periods, must notify the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher or designated senior leader in advance and follow agreed signing-in and sign-out procedures.

Monitoring arrangements may include:

- signing in/out logs;
- text or phone check-ins;
- buddy systems;
- agreed welfare calls.

Personal data collected for monitoring and lone working purposes will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and retained only for legitimate health, safety and safeguarding purposes.

Emergency Procedures

Lone workers must have access to:

- a telephone or mobile phone;
- first aid arrangements;
- fire evacuation procedures;
- emergency contact details.

If a lone worker fails to check in:

1. direct phone contact must be attempted;
2. nominated emergency contacts must be informed where appropriate;

3. appropriate welfare check procedures should be initiated;
4. emergency services should be contacted if there is reason to believe the individual is at immediate risk.

Staff must never place themselves at further risk by attempting to deal with intruders, violence or dangerous situations alone.

Incident Reporting

All accidents, near misses, violent incidents, safeguarding concerns, threats, security breaches or failures of lone working arrangements must be reported immediately to the Headteacher.

Incidents will be:

- recorded in accordance with school procedures;
- investigated;
- reviewed to determine whether amendments to risk assessments, procedures or control measures are required;
- managed in line with the school's safeguarding, health and safety, and reporting procedures where applicable.

Equality and Individual Considerations

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Individual risk assessments and reasonable adjustments will be considered for:

- pregnant employees;
- employees with disabilities;
- employees with temporary medical conditions;
- young or inexperienced staff.

No employee will be required to undertake lone working where medical, physical or psychological factors make this inappropriate.

Training

All relevant staff will receive:

- lone working policy briefing;
- emergency response information;
- safeguarding reminders;
- violence and aggression management guidance where relevant;
- information on reporting, communication and signing-in procedures relating to lone working.

Training records will be maintained.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- legislation changes;
- an incident occurs;
- school working practices change;
- new lone working activities are introduced.

The Governing Body and Headteacher will monitor implementation through:

- risk assessment audits;
- incident reviews;
- staff feedback;
- health and safety inspections;
- review of lone working communication, notification and signing-in procedures where applicable.

Appendix A – Lone Working Checklist

Before lone working staff must confirm:

- Appropriate lone working risk assessment arrangements are in place;
- A colleague knows where I am.
- I have a means of communication.
- I know emergency procedures.
- I can leave the situation if unsafe.
- My expected finish/check-in time is known.
- I have followed school signing-in and notification procedures where applicable;
- where working outside normal hours, weekends or holiday periods, the Headteacher or designated senior leader has been informed

Appendix B – Linked Documentation

- Lone Working Risk Assessment Form
- Visitor Signing In Procedures
- Emergency Contact Record
- Incident/Near Miss Reporting Form