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Policy for

## Lone Worker Policy

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Prepared by:	Adopted by Board of Directors	Signed	Renewal Date (3 year cycle)
		----- Chair of Board of Directors	

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As an employer, The Aspire Educational Trust has to comply with a number of general and specific duties to protect the health, safety and well being of both its employees and those who may be affected by its activities. These duties are set out in section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 1.2 AET therefore has a duty to ensure the safety of all employees whose job involves working alone.

## 2.0 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 Although there is no specific lone working legislation, a general duty is placed on the organisation under Section 2 of Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees. This means that the Trust must provide safe places and systems of work - and this includes employees who work alone
- 2.2 Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires a suitable and sufficient assessment to be undertaken of risks to the health and safety of employees whilst at work and this includes all activities undertaken by lone workers.

## 3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 **The Principals** are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are prepared for lone working activities which occur within their area of responsibility and to communicate the findings of these risk assessments to the employees who may be affected by them
- 3.2 **Principals** must ensure that employees comply with the findings of the risk assessment and undertake lone working activities in a safe manner - in accordance with any method statements / safe systems of work which apply to the activity
- 3.3 **Employees** have a responsibility to co-operate with their Principal, not to undertake any lone working activities that may cause themselves or others harm and to adhere to the information, instruction and training provided. They should report any concern to their line Principal or Trade Union representative

## 4.0 DEFINITION OF 'LONE WORKER'

4.1 Lone workers are those employees who work on their own (without close or direct supervision) or alone with clients - either away from the workplace or when the workplace is empty of most other employees.

4.2 They are found in a wide range of situations including:

4.2.1 Employees who work in fixed establishments (e.g.: when only one person works on the premise, or where an employee works outside normal hours . such as cleaners or security staff).

4.2.2 Mobile employees working away from their fixed base (e.g.: rent collectors, pest control workers, support workers, etc).

## 5.0 **POTENTIAL HAZARDS**

5.1 Employees could encounter any of the following:-

- verbal or physical assault, or sexual harassment
- robbery or attack (especially employees who are thought to be carrying money, mobile phones or other valuable items)
- personal injury arising from an accident (e.g. from a fall from height, work equipment or a road traffic accident)
- illness or psychological trauma (e.g. arising from being forcibly / physically detained)
- use of dangerous equipment and tools (including power tools)
- failure of machinery (e.g. collapse of scaffold)
- problems with communication (e.g.: inadequate mobile phone signal)
- being attacked or bitten by an animal

5.2 The risks to employees could be greater under the following scenarios:-

- lone workers visiting peoples' homes
- employees travelling alone either at night, in extreme weather conditions or along seldom used roads
- employees meeting with people previously unknown to them
- rent collectors or any employee who handles cash
- in remote or isolated workplaces

## 6.0 **RISK ASSESSMENT AND CONTROL MEASURES**

- 6.1 Lone working should be avoided whenever reasonably practicable. However, when this is not possible, Principals (or their nominated deputy/ safety co-ordinator) must ensure that suitable written risk assessments are prepared (in consultation with relevant employees) to identify specific hazards of their employees' lone working activities which have not been identified in the general risk assessment. Safety Representatives should be consulted, to ensure that all relevant hazards have been identified and the most appropriate controls chosen. For more information on the risk assessment process please refer to the risk assessment policy which can be found on the corporate health and safety pages of CEntranet.
- 6.2 All Lone Workers must be adequately trained and provided with any necessary equipment as identified by the risk assessment e.g. fully charged mobile phones, personal attack alarms, personal protective equipment (such as hi-visibility jacket, outdoor clothing) etc. Any other relevant personal protective equipment (PPE) must also be provided, subject to the risk assessment and the CEC PPE policy.
- 6.3 The Principals must take steps to ensure that the identified control measures are used and should also review the risk assessment regularly to ensure that it remains adequate. When the risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back-up should be put in place. This will include the Principal ensuring that alternative communication arrangements are in place in known areas of poor mobile phone reception.
- 6.4 Where a lone worker is working at / from another employer's workplace, that employer should inform the lone worker's employer of any local risks and the control measures that should be taken. However it remains the responsibility of the employees' employer to undertake the risk assessment.
- 6.5 Risk assessment should help to decide the right level of supervision. There are some high-risk activities where at least one other person may need to be present. For example:
- some high-risk confined space working where a supervisor may need to be present, as well as someone dedicated to the rescue role
  - demolition of certain structures
  - in derelict buildings

6.6 Consideration should be given to some issues which need special attention when planning safe working arrangements, such as:

**6.6.1 The lone worker should be suitable and capable of undertaking lone working duties.** This may include:-

- Competence . knowledge and experience
- Training, particularly for new staff (consider young persons who may initially need direct supervision)
- Medical fitness (including pregnancy . medical advice could be sought via the Occupational Health Service)

**6.6.2 The lone worker being able to adequately control the risks of the job:-**

Efforts should be made to ensure that lone workers should not be at more risk than other employees - therefore extra risk control measures may be required. Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents.

**6.6.3 The medical fitness and suitability of the employee to work alone:-**

Medical advice could be sought if necessary, via the Occupational Health Service

**6.6.4 The training which is required to ensure the competency of the lone worker:-**

Training is very important where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in situations of uncertainty. Details of Handling Aggression training courses can be obtained from the Corporate Health & Safety Team. Information, instruction and training must be provided and the lone worker must fully understand the hazards and risks associated with the work, the precautions to be taken and how to respond to unplanned events.

**6.6.5 Supervision requirements of the lone worker:-**

The extent of supervision depends on the risks involved and the ability of the lone worker to identify and handle health and safety issues. The level of supervision required is a management decision that should be based on the findings of the risk assessment. The higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It

should not be left to individuals to decide whether they require assistance.

Individual Services / Service Areas will be responsible for ensuring suitable and sufficient monitoring systems are in place to track the lone worker, according to the risk and agreed procedures. Each Principal will monitor and review their systems and consider improvements where necessary.

**6.6.6 The action to be taken if the lone worker becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency: -**

Lone workers should be capable of responding correctly to emergencies. A risk assessment should identify foreseeable events. Emergency procedures should be established and employees trained in them. Information about emergency procedures and danger areas should be given to lone workers who visit the Academy. Lone workers may require access to adequate first aid facilities. Consideration should be given to mobile workers carrying a first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.

**6.6.7 Planned working out of hours:-**

Principals should ensure that they have adequate arrangements in place to accommodate planned working out of hours activities.

**6.6.8 Communication with others**

- Means of summoning help
- Means of raising alarm
- Response procedure, plans and equipment

**7.0 SAFE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

7.1 Prior to commencement of lone working, the Principal will ensure that agreed arrangements are in place for regular communication between the lone worker and their contact person. Appropriate contact must be made to ensure that the lone worker is safe. The employee is required to phone in at the end of the last visit. Failure of the lone worker to phone in at the end of the visit or at the expected contact time, and failure of the employee to respond to a call from their contact person, will invoke the emergency procedure (see 8.0).

7.2 Lone workers must follow an arrangement that enables the main base / contact person to be aware of the details of the visit . e.g. location, order

of visits (if more than one), expected duration at each location and anticipated return time etc. An expected time of return or ~~ring in~~ time must also be displayed on the board. An appropriate person should monitor this with an agreed procedure to follow in the event of that person not ringing in. This information must be **easily** visible or retrieved e.g. by use of a whiteboard, signing in / out book and / or via an IT facility.

- 7.3 At certain agreed times throughout the day, the Lone Worker should regularly ring in to their contact person to confirm their progress and current whereabouts. This is in addition to any enquiry call the officer may make to the office during the course of the day. As a guide this could be every 90 minutes - or sooner if visits / activities are considered to be high risk.
- 7.4 Where it is genuinely not possible to produce an address or site list then contact time(s) must be agreed, between the employee and a responsible monitoring officer.
- 7.5 A mobile phone should be available and switched on at all times whilst working alone
- 7.6 Principals should be satisfied that the lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of the task by a final phone call.
- 7.7 Upon request, employees should be provided with a personal alarm
- 7.8 Outside normal working hours, each Principal will have to make suitable arrangements for tracking the intended whereabouts of their lone working employees and for ensuring that they ring in to ~~sign off~~ when the job / visit has been completed. Failure to ~~sign off~~ should result in an appropriate agreed response, subject to the risk assessment and control measures in place for the job.
- 7.9 **Lone workers must not enter any properties, sites or locations if they feel threatened or suspect that they are in a situation where their personal safety may be at risk.** This could be exacerbated by the behaviour or speech of anyone close by or inside the property . e.g. if they display signs of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Similarly, if any change in tone or nature of an individual present or near by occurs, then the lone worker should pass no comment, terminate the visit and vacate the property, site or premise immediately. Care should also be taken if animals, especially dogs are present.
- 7.10 In certain situations when entering a building, lone workers should, where practicable, remain between the exit door and occupant of the area/room . so that they could effect a rapid escape if necessary.
- 7.11 If lone workers anticipate problems (violence or aggression), feel vulnerable, or the client to be visited is known to be potentially dangerous, then wherever possible arrangements should be made for that person to

attend the Service area's office rather than a home visit being offered. If this is not possible, then a specific risk assessment should be undertaken and consideration should be given to employees visiting in pairs, or accompanied by a Police Officer / security attendant (where appropriate). A specific risk assessment should be undertaken for known problem areas of concern.

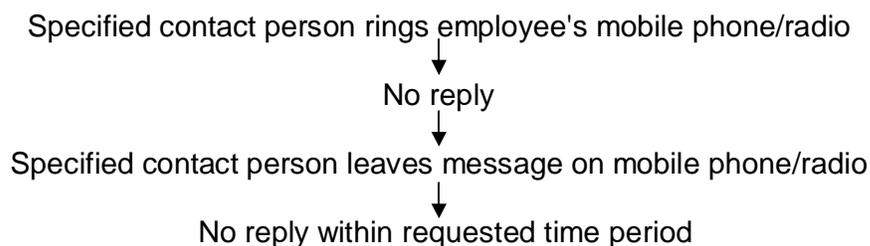
- 7.12 The employee must inform their specified contact person immediately of any incident or near miss which occurs and ensure that the MAT Business Manager is informed so relevant documents can be filed.

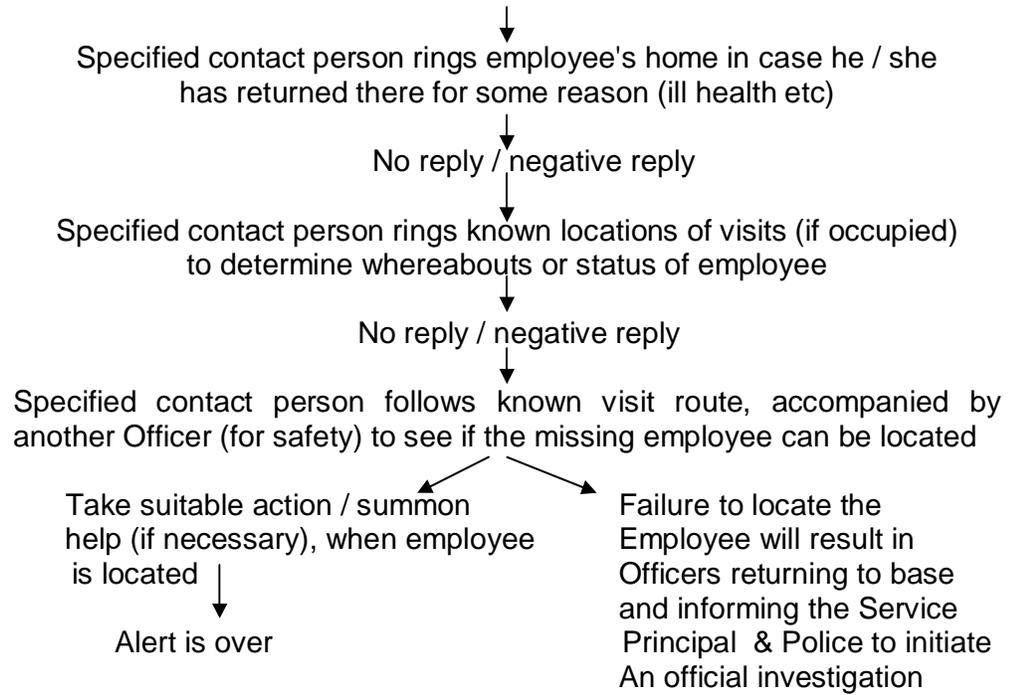
## 8.0 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Remember that the person you are visiting may have a grievance against the organisation or any public body and that person will see you as a representative not an individual.
- 8.2 When carrying out a domiciliary / home visit remember that the premise is the occupier's territory and treat it accordingly.
- 8.3 Understand that the reason for the home visit / job may represent a threat to that person.
- 8.4 If the person is demanding takings or other council's valuables, then they should be handed over immediately without argument.
- 8.5 If the employee is going home directly after the last visit then the employee must let their responsible person know when he / she has finished work.

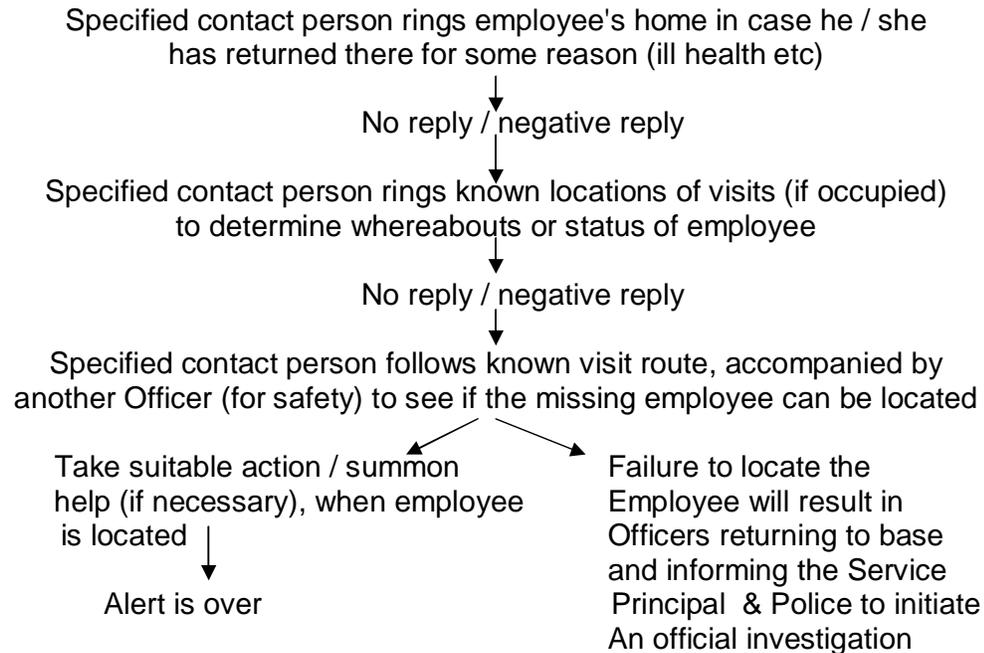
## 9.0 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

When the risk assessment has indicated that a degree of significant risk may be involved, then the Principal may issue / lone worker may request a radio or mobile phone. In this instance, failure to make contact with the specified contact person at the base or failure to respond to the radio / mobile phone call from the specified contact person within a pre-determined and agreed time limit will invoke an "emergency procedure" determined by the Principal. An example of this is as follows:





- 9.2 When the perceived risk is low, then the Principal may decide that it is not necessary for the employee to carry either a mobile phone or radio. Therefore failure of the employee to have reported back to the specified contact person will invoke an "emergency procedure" determined by the Service Principal . An example of this is as follows:



- 9.3 Principals should arrange for all employees involved in lone working to supply emergency contact details and brief vehicle details such as colour, make, registration number etc. This could provide important identification information for the Police. It will remain the responsibility of the employee to ensure that these details remain current.
- 9.4 After the incident the Service Principal should prepare a report for the Business Manager of the circumstances surrounding the incident in order to ensure that a similar future event does not occur. Policy or procedural changes may then be required.

## 10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The AET accepts that there are occasions when staff are required to undertake lone working.
- 10.2 The AET does not accept that employees should have to work in fear of physical or verbal abuse or threat.

- 10.3 It is important that staff bring any incident that they are concerned about to the attention of their Principal and complete an Accident / Incident report when necessary.
- 10.4 All health and safety policies and procedures must be followed. Make sure there is a valid risk assessment for the task

## **11.0 RECORDS**

- 11.1 Each Principal shall ensure that Lone Working assessments are kept up to date. They must also monitor and review their systems regularly.

<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Section:</b>	<b>Date of assessment:</b>
Children and families		
<b>Carried out by:</b>	<b>Job title:</b>	<b>Review date:</b>
L. Treadway		
<b>Risk Assessment for:</b>		

No.	Potential Hazard	Groups of People at Risk	Existing Control Measures	Risk Priority	Additional Controls Required to Minimise Risk
1	Violence - including physical force verbal abuse threatening gestures and harassment aggression	Site Maintenance Officer, School Meals Provider, teachers and other support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal mobile phone carried by Site Maintenance Officer, School meals Provider and other staff lone working</li> <li>Staff to ensure school entrances are secure when lone working</li> <li>Staff not to approach or engage with people visiting site who are considered to pose a threat</li> <li>Incidents reported on accident / incident form</li> </ul>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff to notify headteacher if they intend visiting site when no other employees are present</li> <li>Staff to use frequent contact sytem attached</li> </ul>
2	Accident or injury	Site Maintenance Officer, School Meals Provider, teachers abnd other support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobile phones carried by employees</li> <li>All tasks to be risked assessed for possible accident or injury. Only low risk tasks to be carried out when on site alone.</li> <li>Incidents reported on accident / incident form</li> </ul>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees to log their presence on site with personnel in the Children's Centre and inform them when leaving</li> <li>Staff to notify headteacher if they intend visiting site when no other employees are present</li> <li>All potential lone workers to attend 1 day emergency aid training</li> <li>Staff to use frequent contact sytem attached</li> </ul>

<b>RISK PRIORITY</b> <b>HIGH ,MED OR</b> <b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH; accident likely with possibility of causing serious injury or loss</b> <b>MEDIUM: possibility of accident causing minor injury or loss</b> <b>LOW; accident unlikely with control measures in place</b>  <b>LOW RISK</b>
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## **SAFETY SYSTEM OF WORK EXAMPLES**

- 1. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN CASE OF CAR BREAKDOWN**
  - 2. ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN VISITING OCCUPIED PROPERTY**
  - 3. ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN VISITING EMPTY PROPERTY**
  - 4. ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN VISITING LAND, PARK, ETC**
  - 5. METHOD FOR TRACKING EMPLOYEES E.G. USING A WHITEBOARD**
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### **1.0 ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN CASE OF CAR BREAKDOWN**

- 1.1 If the vehicle is privately owned then the driver should either contact their own breakdown service or his / her Principal .
- 1.2 If the vehicle is in a dangerous position the Police should be notified and necessary precautions taken, to warn other vehicles, until the Police arrive.
- 1.3 The driver should contact his / her Principal to make them aware of the situation and agree a time period when further phone calls will be made to monitor progress.
- 1.4 If the vehicle is on the motorway it advisable not to sit in the vehicle, but to keep close enough to gain entry into and lock the vehicle, via the passenger door, if suspect persons arrive. Ensure the door is locked immediately
- 1.5 Police recommend that stranded drivers who are alone, sit in the passenger seat and inform other people that their companion has gone for help.

### **2.0 ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN VISITING OCCUPIED PROPERTY**

The employee should:

- 2.1 Identify themselves and clearly display their ID badge.
- 2.2 Maintain a route of easy escape in case of emergency e.g.: try to ensure that they are between the person and the door.
- 2.3 Always be aware of a change in circumstances or the person's behaviour.
- 2.4 Carry a personal alarm with they think this may be useful in deterring an assailant

- 2.5 Consider that pets may be a potential threat, even if told that they are friendly.
- 2.6 Remember that the person may not always agree with the employee or the decisions. If the person is or becomes argumentative, then the employee should not respond.
- 2.7 Get out of the situation immediately if they feel uncomfortable.

### **3.0 METHOD FOR TRACKING EMPLOYEES E.G. USING A WHITEBOARD**

- 3.1 A "white board" could be installed in an easily visible area.
- 3.2 When a member of the staff is going out on a site visit, they should ensure the following information is displayed on the white board before leaving base:
  - The correct date.
  - The location they are visiting.
  - The risk level of the site visit, which should be colour coded for degree of risk:
    - GREEN** . low risk . visiting sites where other employees or clients are present and there is little risk to personal safety.
    - AMBER** . medium risk . Travelling considerable distances to sites or venues alone where there is a higher than normal risk of being involved in a road accident.
    - RED** . high risk . visiting sites alone where the risk of personal injury through accident or violence is possible.
  - Their mobile phone number or the number of their work mobile phone if they are using that instead.
  - The time they left base and the approximate time they are due to return.
- 3.3 The person going out on site should make another member of the Service Area, who will be remaining at base, their Specified Contact Person and inform them of their intended movements
- 3.4 The Specified Contact Person should ring the person on the site visit within pre-determined time limits to ensure they are safe. If the person on site does not answer when called, then the Specified Contact Person should leave a message on the mobile.

- Green visits are low risk so calls should only be made if person is late back from site visit.
  - Amber visits are a medium risk therefore calls only need to be made at either end of the journey.
  - Red visits are high risk therefore the ~~S~~pecified Contact Person~~q~~ should call the person on the site visit at regular, agreed intervals.
- 3.5 If there is no reply to the message within the pre-determined time limit, the ~~S~~pecified Contact Person~~q~~ should ring the persons home to check if they are there.
  - 3.6 If there is no reply from home then the ~~S~~pecified Contact Person~~q~~ should ring all the locations the person had planned to visit to determine their whereabouts.
  - 3.7 ~~S~~pecified Contact Person~~q~~ will inform their Principal that the person visiting site is unaccounted for.
  - 3.8 The Service Principal will arrange for someone to follow the employee~~s~~ intended route in an attempt to locate missing person
  - 3.9 If the employee remains unaccounted for then the Service Principal will inform the Police.
  - 3.10 If the employee on site realises that he / she is not going to get back to base within the time specified for the visit, then they should ring their ~~S~~pecified Contact Person~~q~~ and review their return to base time.
  - 3.11 If the ~~S~~pecified Contact Person~~q~~ has to leave base before the employee on the site visit returns, then they should pass on the details of the site visit to another person at base to ensure monitoring of the employee on site continues. The person on site should be informed if the ~~S~~pecified Contact person~~q~~ changes.
  - 3.12 When the employee on the site visit returns to base, they must inform the ~~S~~pecified Contact person~~q~~ and make the necessary adjustments to the white board.
  - 3.13 If the employee on site feels they are at risk of harm, for whatever reason, then they should leave site immediately and contact base on the mobile phone.