

Green Lane School



Lone Working Policy

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1. Policy Statement

The Governing Body of Green Lane School is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

The school recognises that there may be occasions when staff are required to work alone or in isolated circumstances. Lone working may increase the risks associated with otherwise routine activities.

This policy sets out the arrangements in place to minimise those risks and ensure that lone working is carried out safely and appropriately.

Wherever reasonably practicable, lone working will be avoided. Where it cannot be avoided, suitable control measures will be implemented.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Health and Safety Policy and relevant risk assessments.

2. Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where a member of staff works by themselves without close or direct supervision and without another colleague who could reasonably be expected to provide immediate assistance in the event of an incident, illness or emergency.

This may occur:

- Before the school day begins
- After the school day ends
- During school holidays
- In isolated parts of the building or site
- During call-outs or emergency attendance
- When working off-site

3. Categories of Lone Workers

At Green Lane lone workers may include:

- Site Manager responsible for opening and securing the site
- School Business Manager arriving before the main body of staff
- Staff arriving early before other colleagues are present
- Staff remaining on site after most staff have left
- Maintenance Officer responsible for locking the site
- Cleaning staff working after the school day
- Staff working during school holidays
- Staff responding to alarm call-outs
- Staff working in isolated parts of the building or grounds
- Contractors working outside normal school hours
- Staff carrying out duties off-site (e.g. home visits)

The school is located on a shared site with another special school and a SEND college, meaning that other staff may be present on the wider site even when school staff are limited.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is developed in accordance with:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- HSE guidance on lone working

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place
- Monitor the effectiveness of lone working arrangements
- Ensure adequate resources are available to implement this policy

5.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure suitable lone working risk assessments are carried out
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training and guidance
- Ensure safe systems of work are implemented
- Review lone working arrangements regularly

5.3 Health & Safety Leaders

The Health and Safety leaders will:

- Support the implementation of this policy
- Ensure staff understand lone working procedures
- Monitor compliance with risk assessments
- Investigate incidents and share learning

5.4 Staff

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Follow the lone working procedures outlined in this policy
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety
- Report hazards, incidents or concerns
- Ensure they sign in and out of the building
- Keep mobile phones charged and accessible when lone working

6. Lone Working Arrangements at the School

6.1 Opening the Site

The Site Manager opens the school site at approximately 6:00am and may initially be working alone.

Control measures include:

- Carrying a mobile phone or cordless phone
- Ensuring external doors are secured after entry
- Checking the site for signs of forced entry before fully opening
- Contacting emergency services if suspicious activity is suspected
- Avoiding confrontation with intruders

The School Business Manager and other staff begin arriving from approximately 7:00am, reducing the duration of lone working.

6.2 Evening Lock Up

The Maintenance Officer is responsible for securing the site.

- Official working hours: until 6:00pm (although blended working between GLS and cleaning contractors)
- Supervises cleaning contractors 3:45pm – 8:00pm
- Locks and secures the site at approximately 8:00pm

Control measures include:

- Mobile phone access
- Ensuring contractors have signed in
- Securing buildings progressively
- Maintaining communication where necessary

7. General Lone Working Safety Measures

7.1 Communication

Staff must:

- Carry a mobile phone when lone working
- Ensure phones are charged and operational
- Have key emergency contacts saved

7.2 Signing In and Out

The school operates a digital sign-in system.

This ensures:

- Staff whereabouts are known
- Expected times of arrival/departure are recorded
- Emergency evacuation records remain accurate

7.3 Personal Safety

Staff should:

- Avoid unnecessary risks
- Lock doors when working alone inside buildings
- Ensure areas not in use remain secure
- Not challenge intruders or suspicious individuals
- Contact 999 if they feel unsafe

7.4 Parking and Site Safety

Staff are encouraged to:

- Park in well-lit areas
- Avoid poorly lit routes
- Be aware of surroundings when arriving or leaving

8. Illness or Injury While Lone Working

If a staff member becomes unwell or injured while lone working they should:

- Contact a colleague if possible
- Contact emergency services if necessary
- Leave the premises and seek medical attention if able to do so safely

Control measures include:

- Access to first aid equipment
- Access to telephones
- Encouraging staff to keep emergency contacts available

Staff working alone outside normal hours are encouraged to inform a family member or friend of their location and expected time of return.

9. High-Risk Activities

Certain activities must not be carried out while lone working, including:

- Working at height
- Accessing the school roof
- Electrical testing or repairs
- Working in confined spaces
- Hot works
- Excavation work

These tasks require additional personnel, risk assessments and safe systems of work.

10. Contractors

Contractors working alone on site must:

- Sign in at reception
- Follow school health and safety procedures
- Receive relevant safety information
- Provide their own risk assessments where appropriate

Contractors should not undertake high-risk work while alone.

11. Emergency Call-Outs

If staff attend school outside normal hours due to an alarm or emergency they must:

- Ensure they have keys and a working mobile phone
- Check the site externally before entering
- Contact 999 if there are signs of intrusion
- Never enter a building alone if someone may still be inside

Personal safety must always take priority.

12. Violence, Abuse or Aggression

Although rare, staff may encounter aggression from members of the public.

Control measures include:

- Secure access controls to buildings
- Appropriate staff training
- Avoiding situations where staff are alone with aggressive individuals

Any incident must be reported and investigated.

13. Site Security and Environmental Hazards

The school will:

- Maintain secure fencing and gates
- Conduct regular perimeter inspections
- Ensure adequate lighting
- Identify and repair trip hazards, potholes and damaged surfaces

The Site Manager / Maintenance Officer will arrange repairs where necessary.

14. Training and Induction

All staff will receive:

- Health and Safety induction
- Lone working guidance
- Information on emergency procedures
- Access to relevant risk assessments

Additional training may be provided where necessary.

15. Incident Reporting

Any incidents, accidents, near misses or safety concerns relating to lone working must be reported to the Headteacher or a member of SLG.

Incidents will be reviewed to identify improvements to procedures.

16. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following any incident
- Following changes to working arrangements