

Southend YMCA Community School



Lone Working Policy

Approved by: The
Governing Body,
Headteacher & DPO

Date: April 2026

Last reviewed on:
1st April 2026

Next review due by: 1st April 2028

LONE WORKING POLICY

For Southend YMCA Community School

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of staff who are required to work alone outside of regular school hours or in isolated areas of the school. Lone working can present increased risks to staff, and it is essential that proper procedures are followed to minimize these risks and ensure a safe working environment. Lone working should be avoided if possible and the options of working from home for example should be explored if relevant to do so.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff working alone within the school premises, including teachers, administrative personnel, caretakers, cleaners, and any other employees who may be required to work outside of normal working hours or in areas not regularly occupied by others.

3. Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where an employee works in isolation, with no immediate access to other staff members or emergency assistance. This may occur during:

- After-school hours
- Early morning or evening shifts
- During school holidays
- In isolated or less-frequented areas of the school (e.g., the school kitchen, maintenance areas, etc.)
- Home visits

4. Risk Assessment

Before engaging in lone working, a risk assessment must be conducted by the line manager or supervisor to identify and address any potential hazards associated with the work environment. The following factors must be considered:

- Type of work being conducted
- Location of work (e.g., isolated areas of the school)
- Potential hazards specific to the role (e.g., cleaning chemicals, maintenance equipment)
- Emergency procedures and communication options

5. Responsibilities of Staff Members

All staff members who are required to work alone must:

- Ensure they are familiar with the risks associated with their tasks and surroundings.
- Ensure that their line manager or supervisor is aware of the lone working arrangement.

- Follow established health and safety procedures.
- Complete any necessary paperwork or reports related to lone working tasks.
- Staff must not place themselves in danger by challenging intruders but should call the police for assistance.
- Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.
- Staff working alone have a responsibility for making themselves familiar with and following the school's safety procedures and location of safety equipment.
- Staff and Contractors should have access to their own first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries
- 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 is potentially hazardous given their own level of experience and the nature of the task.
- Lone worker must collect 'Safepoint Alarm' from the school office and wear at all times when on site alone and make themselves aware of the instruction on how the device works.

6. Home Visiting

Before conducting a home visit consider the following:

- Is a home visit the most appropriate way of dealing with the issue?
- Have you checked the records to see if any previous violent incidents have been recorded?
This is an aspect that should be recorded confidentially within the SIMS system
- Are you aware of whom will be present on the visit including visitors and other family members?
- If you have concerns about a particular visit – is it possible for you to visit with a colleague?
- If you have any doubt – discuss this with your manager as your personal safety is paramount. Control measures prior to the visit:
 - When making the appointment to visit, log the time and date clearly and ensure it is recorded in the office so staff are aware of your whereabouts. This can also allow others to raise concerns if you do not return or contact the office at the expected time.
 - Ensure appropriate clothing is worn. No long earrings, long scarves or ties.
 - Be aware of where you park your car; street lighting and sheltered or obscure locations.
 - Be aware of trouble spots in the local area.

- On each visit take a mobile phone.
- Consider what is taken into the visit. Do you need to take a handbag, purse/wallet, briefcase? Or could you simply take a note pad, pen, relevant forms and mobile phone?
- Should the need arise, ensure you have a plan for getting out of the home safely. If you are in any doubt when you get to the house – do not enter. During and after a home visit:
- Staff should wear their work ID badge or carry it with them • Staff should never give members of the public their personal contact details e.g. home telephone number, addresses or vehicle details.
- Assess and report any safeguarding concerns to the Lead Safeguarding Officers
- Consider household pets & animals in the home (ask for them to be kept in a room away from the interview area)
- Consider general standards of hygiene. Carry some Hand Hygiene Gel in your car. • Staff should always carry a (charged) mobile phone and have a number stored of a colleague you can contact in an emergency.
- Staff should never undertake home visits during severe weather periods as this could have an adverse effect on travel arrangements 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 Head Teacher.
- If attending a home visit alone take the 'Safepoint Alarm' with you and return to the school office upon your return.

7. Responsibilities of Supervisors/Managers

Supervisors and managers must:

- Conduct a thorough risk assessment before permitting any lone working.
- Provide employees with any necessary training related to health and safety, emergency protocols, and the use of communication equipment.
- Ensure that employees have access to appropriate communication devices to report emergencies.
- Review the lone working arrangements periodically and update risk assessments as needed.

8. Personal Safety and Security

Staff should always be vigilant about their personal safety and take necessary precautions, such as:

- Locking doors when working in isolated areas.
- Avoiding working in areas without sufficient lighting.

- Keeping mobile phones fully charged and easily accessible.
- Reporting any security concerns or incidents immediately to the designated contact.

9. Training

All employees who are required to work alone will receive training on:

- The risks associated with lone working.
- Proper use of communication equipment.
- Emergency protocols.
- First aid basics, if relevant to the role.
- How to recognize and report hazards or concerns related to their work environment.

10. Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the school's Full Governing Body to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any incidents or near-misses involving lone working should be reported and reviewed to make necessary improvements.

11. Conclusion

The safety of all staff members is a priority at Southend YMCA Community School. Lone working can present unique risks, but with proper planning, communication, and precautions, these risks can be mitigated to ensure that staff can perform their duties safely and efficiently.