Lone Working Policy

Aim

This policy outlines how we will protect our staff as far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

Legislation

This policy has been written in conjunction with the Health and Safety at Work Act which sets out a duty of care on employers to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of employees whilst at work.

Other legislation that needs to be considered whilst Lone Working:

- EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers which states that providers must ensure that they take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks and must be able to demonstrate how they are managing risks (paragraph 3.93. page 42.

Lone Working

A lone worker can be defined as someone who works by themselves without direct supervision.

Only one staff member on duty at any time with children is not permitted and there must be at least two staff members on the premises when children are present.

With this in mind, we aim to ensure that no staff member is left alone working in a room or area of the building at any time. However, there may be occasions when this is not always possible, due to:

- Staff toilet and lunch breaks.
- Children's nappy changes (e.g. two staff members support children's nappy changes leaving one staff member lone working).
- Comforting a child that may be unwell in a quiet area.
- Staff members who are left alone in a situation of an emergency for example, administering first aid or accompanying a child to Hospital in an ambulance.
- Following a child's interest, this may lead staff away with a child to explore an area.
- Supporting children in the toilet area (children should be encouraged to undertake personal care and hygiene practices for themselves where possible, in line with their development).
- Helping children get to sleep and carrying out sleep checks.
- Small group work.

- The duties of some staff may necessitate lone building/premises working when children aren't present, e.g. when opening or closing the setting or carrying out cleaning or maintenance.

In such situations, whilst it is best practice for there to be at least two staff members present when working with children and young people, lone working may take place if necessary and for as short a time as possible.

Lone Workers

No member of staff should work in a one-to-one situation with a child until they have been approved by the settings manager/DSL as having sufficient prior training/experience. In addition, any staff members left on their own must be 17 years of age or over and meet the following criteria:

- Be a paid staff member and not a volunteer or student
- Have a current enhanced DBS check and children's barred list check
- Have 2 references
- Have a valid paediatric first aid qualification
- Have a valid safeguarding qualification
- Be trained in lone working practices
- Be medically fit and able and not have a medical condition that may inhibit their ability to lone work

Manager/DSL Responsibilities

- To carry out and share a risk assessment covering all aspects of lone working.
- To ensure any staff who are working alone are competent and confident to do so and meet the criteria laid out in this policy for being able to lone work.
- To be aware of when lone working is taking place and to ensure all safeguards (as per the risk assessment) are in place.
- To follow the setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection/Low-Level Concerns Procedures in the event of an allegation being made whilst a member of staff was lone working.
- To follow up on any concerns with staff who do not work in line with this policy and implement disciplinary procedures as necessary.

Staff Members Responsibilities

- Making sure a member of the management and leadership team is aware of when they are lone working.

- Be aware of how to call for help in the event of an accident or emergency (e.g. using a telephone or walkie talkie).
- If opening or closing the setting, ensuring that the building is locked so that no-one can walk in unidentified.
- Avoiding any hazardous activities.
- Reporting any concerns to the manager as soon as is practically possible.
- Be aware of the setting's Code of Conduct and safer working practice guidelines and always follow these - 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for professionals working in education settings' 2022'.

Recording Information

A record will be kept of all lone working with children. This will include:

- The date, time and place.
- The reason for the lone working.
- A summary of the activity/discussion.

Lone Working Risk Assessment

Any potential hazards associated with lone working will be minimised through the settings lone working risk assessment. The lone working risk assessment will consider all aspects of lone working and will be regularly reviewed and updated as required. It is the responsibility of the manager to coordinate and review the risk assessment for lone workers.

The lone working risk assessment will consider the safe working measures, controls, training and supervision requirements necessary to ensure the safety of staff working alone both with or without a child/children.

The settings lone working risk assessment will consider the following safeguards and control measures to minimise the hazards associated with lone working:

- What to do in the event of an accident or emergency.
- How ratios will be managed to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Children must always be adequately supervised.
- How the rooms/areas where lone working might take place will be equipped with the necessary safety equipment such as a full first aid kit and any medicines that children might need (all medicines must be securely stored and out of reach of children, at all times).
- How and when checks on lone working staff will be carried out and if any other control measures are needed such as staff being within hearing and/or sight of other staff and doors left open where possible (ensure that fire doors have automatic closers and aren't propped open).

- What system is in place to allow for effective communication e.g., through the use of a walkie talkie.
- Identify if the lone worker could be at risk from a child or may be vulnerable when working in a one-to-one situation, for example, due to the risk of violence.
- How the lone worker will let other staff know when they are/have been lone working and to always report any concerns to the Manager/DSL.
- How the member of staff can contact the manager or another member of the team, even if their lone working is outside of normal hours.

Monitoring

If the member of staff has any concerns about their own safety, or the safety of the child or others, they must draw this to the immediate attention of the manager or DSL who will consider the need for an urgent review of the risk assessment.

The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored through the staff supervision and team meetings.