



READING COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE

Lone Worker Policy

Health and safety at Work etc Act 1974

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

This policy should be read in conjunction with RCLC's Health and Safety Policy

Signed _____ *(Company Secretary)* *Date: June 2014* _____

Review Date: March 2017

1. Introduction

Reading Community Learning Centre (RCLC) recognises that some staff may be required to work by themselves without close or direct supervision, sometimes alone in the office, working from home, undertaking visits, or undertaking outreach in the community.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, RCLC has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.

2. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of RCLC staff, volunteers and trustees. It is expected that such situations will only arise at the main RCLC premises and that if the member of staff is with a vulnerable adult or child on a 1:1 basis that there will be other members of staff in another part of the office.

'Lone workers' include:

Those working at their main place of work where:

- Only one person is working on the premises
- People work separately from each other, e.g. in different locations
- People work outside normal office hours, e.g. tutors, cleaners

Those working away from their fixed base where:

- A worker is visiting another agency's premises or meeting venue
- A worker is undertaking outreach work in the community
- A worker is making a home visit to an individual - such a situation requires the approval of the majority of the trustees.
- A worker is working from their own home.

3. Aims of the Policy

The aim of the policy is to: -

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable;

- Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff to equip them to recognise risk and provide practical advice on safety when working alone;
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working;
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

4. Responsibilities

The Centre Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice;
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy;
- Taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees;
- Identifying situations where people work alone and deciding whether systems can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own;
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly
- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;
- Ensuring that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updating and refreshing this training as necessary;
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents;
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident

Employees and volunteers are responsible for: -

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working;
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate;
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy; and
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

5. **Guidance for Risk Assessments of Lone Working**

- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- Are there adequate channels of communication in an emergency?
- Does the workplace or task present a special risk to the lone worker?

- Is there a risk of violence?
- Is any known risk attached to a client(s)?
- Has an alternative to a home visit been considered?
- Has safe travelling between appointments been arranged?
- Have reporting and recording arrangements been made where appropriate?
- Can the whereabouts of the lone worker be traced?

Written evidence of such an assessment is to be maintained within the staff member's personnel files.

6. Good Practice for Lone Workers

- During their working hours, all staff leaving the workplace (or home) should leave written details of where they are going, contact details and their estimated time of arrival back at base. Staff, volunteers and visitors should record their arrival and leaving time in the signing in book.
- If, in the course of a trip away from the office, plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the office.
- The trustees have requested that no visit is made to a child or vulnerable adult on a 1:1 basis outside the main premises unless approval has been obtained from a majority of the trustees.
- If a visit is assessed as having an unusually high level of risk, details of the planned visit must be discussed with the line manager and plans recorded on a new Risk Assessment record. No-one should put herself in undue danger and a visit should be cancelled or conducted by two people if there is a higher level of risk than normal. The lone worker should report their safe return by a given time. If contact has not been made and the lone worker cannot be contacted, appropriate steps should be taken to check on their safety as agreed in the Risk Assessment.
- Telephone contact between the lone worker and a colleague may also be advisable.
- Staff should use their discretion when setting up meetings alone with a learner or visitor. In any situation where a staff member or volunteer feels uncomfortable, they should request support from a colleague or terminate the interview.
- Lone workers should have access to adequate first-aid facilities and mobile workers should carry a first-aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.

Children and Vulnerable Adults - Please refer to the relevant Policies

- In general, staff should **never** work alone with a child or vulnerable adult.
- Staff should never transport a child on their own and should assess any risk before transporting a vulnerable adult alone.

7. Monitoring safety issues

- Lone workers must report incidents such as accidents and near misses, including all incidents where they feel threatened, in the accident book. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.
- During supervision, managers will ask people working on their own whether there are any safety concerns that aren't being addressed. Lone workers are encouraged to seek help and advice if any safety concerns arise.

Appendix

Useful tips on personal safety are available through the Suzy Lamplugh Trust which can be downloaded from: www.suzylamplugh.org.uk under Campaigns & Community.