

Time 4 Children Lone Working Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline key lone working hazards and the processes services and offices should use to lower potential risks relating to lone working. This policy should be read alongside all other policies and in particular: Allegations Procedure; Appropriate Conduct when working 1-2-1 With Children and Young People Policy; Code of Behaviour Policy; Risk Analysis

Scope

This document applies to all members of staff, volunteers, people who undertake activities on behalf of Time 4 Children and people who use Time 4 Children.

Rationale

The document is necessary to comply with health and safety legislation.

Procedure

It is the policy of Time 4 Children to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which requires Time 4 Children to provide a safe environment, safe equipment and safe systems of work for its employees and those working on its premises. These requirements are applicable to all work situations, including where staff are working alone or working outside normal working hours.

Working alone can introduce new hazards, e.g. lack of assistance if needed, first aid cover, emergency situations and violent attack. Time 4 Children acknowledges that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of its staff and volunteers when working alone.

Definition

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. Most staff at Time 4 Children lone work at some point: Home visits. Volunteer Practitioners work alone with children in various school locations. Trustees may also work alone as part of their day to day activities.

All lone workers should ensure they follow this procedure to protect themselves and reduce potential risks related to lone working.

1.0 Responsibilities

1.1 Staff and Volunteers will be responsible for:

- Confirming with their manager that they are authorised to lone work.
- Following the requirements of the local operating procedure in place for lone working, and using controls provided to lower risks related to lone working.
- Ensure the schools in which we work maintain and store their safety kit including first aid kits and report any loss or damage.
- Signing arrival and departure at school office, after each appointment.
- Contacting the DSO in the event of an incident to provide support.

1.2 The Manager or central team equivalent will:

- Identify lone workers and carry out a lone working risk assessment. Reasonable action should be taken to minimise risks.

- Provide relevant information, training and supervision to lone workers.
- Document the whereabouts of lone workers.
- Report to the Manager/Senior Practitioner control measures they cannot implement.
- Review all risk assessments every 12 months or earlier if there are changes to the activity / equipment / environment.
- Undertake post accident/incident risk assessments if an incident occurs which is related to lone working.
- Ensure that if they delegate the assessment to a nominated person they are trained and have experience of that activity.

1.3 The Manager will:

- Ensure that suitable and sufficient lone working risk assessments are conducted.
- Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for any identified lone working.
- Monitor the standard of risk assessments and checklists to ensure that they are suitable and sufficient.
- Support with the implementation of any outstanding actions.
- Ensure an effective local operating procedure is in place.
- Report high risk matters and outstanding actions to the Trustees

2.0 Risk Assessments

2.1 Where work activities are undertaken by a lone worker, the factors listed below should be considered in the assessment. Particular consideration shall be given to:

- Remoteness or isolation of the location
- Any problems with communication
- The possibility of violence or abuse whether verbal or physical
- Emergency egress (e.g. are fire exits, is there a safe route to escape in the event of danger)

2.3 To address additional risks (if any) identified in relation to a lone working situation, Service Manager shall introduce appropriate control measures to eliminate or minimise the risks.

Such control measures may include:

- Information and training - identifying and assessing risk, and dealing with aggression. The Time 4 Children Personal Safety Guidance will also regularly be discussed. Training will be provided where identified in the risk assessment process.
- Additional supervision.
- Matching volunteers to the appropriate children who use our service.
- Managers to ensure, that up-to-date referral and person centred risk assessment information is received and all relevant information is communicated to lone workers.
- It is essential that potential risks before any activity or visit can be reduced wherever possible. If a visit or activity is assessed as a high risk, Time 4 Children has the right to refuse activity/visit.

2.5 On going communication between managers and lone workers is essential, and must take place regularly. It is important that any new information or change of circumstances is communicated between managers and lone workers as soon as possible. All staff, volunteers and

managers need to be aware of the importance and responsibility for good communication to ensure safe working practice.

2.6 Time 4 Children, will ensure that lone working staff receive regular supervision. Communicating if there are any changes in need or circumstance is essential. Accurate and up-to-date records must be maintained in line with the recording practices of Time 4 Children.

2.7 In the case of an incident, the Time 4 Children Incident & Accident Reporting & Management Policy must be followed, and line managers informed. It is important for managers and lone workers to highlight any concerns.

2.8 All lone working staff should be aware of the increase in risk involved in disclosure of certain personal information. It is strongly advised that this is discussed prior to disclosure in supervision. No staff should divulge information concerning another member of staff or person who uses our service without prior consent. Lone working staff need to be aware of any written personal information carried with them (e.g. in bags or in cars).

2.9 If the lone worker feels that they are visiting someone in circumstances where they feel vulnerable, threatened or uncomfortable for whatever reason they should inform their manager.

2.10 Training requirements for lone working staff, volunteers and managers will be identified through supervision, appraisal and the risk assessment process. These can include lone working, management of aggression and violence, breakaway techniques, understanding mental health and boundaries/relationships.

3.0 Lone Working with People Who Use Our Services

3.1 Prior to lone working, a risk assessment must be carried out. This will include assessing the referral form and an assessment after a home visit.

3.2 Staff and volunteers must ensure that they have sufficient and appropriate knowledge of the person they are lone working with. Managers must ensure that lone workers have appropriate and up to date telephone numbers for emergency contacts.

Lone working visits should be conducted during normal office hours, when help can be more easily summoned. A timetable of who you are seeing, on what day, at what time and where must be given to your manager on a weekly/monthly basis.

3.4 Staff and volunteers must inform their manager of any changes to the time/day/venue.

3.5 The Managers Lone Working Good Practice Guide identifies 7 areas requiring action from Time 4 Children managers:

- Risk Assessment
- Local Operating Procedures
- Training & Communicating the Safety Message
- Control Measures
- Contingency Planning & Emergency Procedures
- Incident and Accident Reporting and Management
- Monitoring and Review

3.6 Any unacceptable behaviour from a person who uses our services must be reported. Lone working must not be carried out if the assessment controls are insufficient for lowering the risk.

4.0 Communication

4.1 Lone workers must have a method for communicating to other persons in the event of an emergency.

5.0 Monitoring

5.1 Time 4 Children shall ensure that lone workers are monitored. Managers will carry this out. Regular contact must be made between lone worker and Managers.