

Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd

LONE WORKING POLICY

Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd recognises that some staff will be required to work by themselves, without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas and occasionally out of office hours.

1. Introduction

- Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999), an employer has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they are required to work alone. However, employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.
- Lone working is not inherently unsafe and proper precautions can minimise the risks associated with working alone.
- This policy applies to all contractors working for Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd. As their roles can and do differ, some lone working arrangements may be more suitable than others for different individuals and in different circumstances.

2. Scope of the Policy

- This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of all staff. It should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as those 'who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. 'Lone workers' includes (but is not limited to) the following:
 1. Only one person is working on the premises.
 2. People work separately from each other, eg in different locations.
 3. People working outside normal hours, eg home visits. (Not applicable to LAFS).
 4. Those working away from their usual base where one worker is visiting another site.

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, that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone.
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.
- Minimise the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

4. Responsibilities

The Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risks associated with lone working.
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice.
- Ensuring that there are protocols in place for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of the 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.
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and regularly reviewed.
- Putting procedures and safe systems of working into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone.
- Ensuring that staff are given appropriate information, instruction and training (including training on induction) and updating this training as necessary.
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through a robust system of reporting, investigating and recording any incidents.

All staff members are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others effected by their actions.
- Following guidance and protocols designed for safe working.
- Reporting all incidents that may affect their own health and safety or that of others, and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify, or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.
- Participation in all training offered

5. Guidance for Risk Assessments of Lone Working

- Is the staff member 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?
- Have reporting and recording arrangements been made where appropriate?
- Can the whereabouts of the lone worker be traced?

6. Good Practice for Lone Workers with LAFS

- During working hours, all staff should make their colleagues aware of when they arrive and leave the site along with regular check ins with senior management, letting colleagues know where this is not possible. For LAFS staff this means messaging Meryl at hourly intervals to prove health.
- If plans change significantly, communicate this to colleagues.
- Ensure that mobile telephones are charged, switched on and at a loud volume at all times during working hours.
- All LAFS staff are Outdoor and Paediatric First Aid trained and have an up to date and correctly stocked First Aid kit in their Happy bag on site at all times.

7. Monitoring Safety Issues

- Lone workers must report incidents such as accidents and near misses, including all incidents where they feel threatened, to the Director.
- Staff working on their own can at any time raise, and seek advice upon, any safety concerns that they feel are not being addressed.

This Policy will be reviewed annually unless an accident occurs or the circumstance of lone workers for LAFS changes.

Reviewed 15 February 2026 – Dave Churchward, Director, Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd.