

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of both staff and children at Outside the Box when staff are working alone with children. This policy outlines the procedures and measures to minimize risks associated with lone working in such situations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and contractors working for Outside the Box in any capacity where they may be working alone with children, whether in a fixed location or while performing duties off-site.

3. Definition of Lone Working with Children

Lone working with children refers to situations where staff members or volunteers are working by themselves without close or direct supervision while responsible for the care, instruction, or supervision of one or more children. This can occur in various settings including:

- In the office or work base
- At off-site locations such as clients' homes or external venues
- During transportation of children between locations

4. Risk Assessment

A thorough risk assessment must be conducted for all lone working activities involving children to identify potential hazards and implement appropriate control measures. The assessment should consider:

- The nature of the work being carried out
- The environment in which the work takes place
- The number and specific needs of the children
- The time and duration of the work
- The individual's training, experience, and medical history

5. Responsibilities Management:

- Ensure that risk assessments are conducted and reviewed regularly
- Provide training and resources necessary for safe lone working with children
- Develop and maintain communication protocols for lone workers
- Ensure all incidents involving lone workers are reported and investigated

Lone Workers:

- Follow all safety procedures and guidelines outlined in this policy
- Report any safety concerns or incidents to their supervisor immediately
- Maintain regular communication with their supervisor or designated contact person
- Ensure they have access to a fully charged mobile phone at all times
- Never be alone with a child without prior consent from a supervisor and the child's parent/guardian
- Obtain written consent from the child's parent/guardian for lone working situations

During Lone Working:

- Maintain regular check-ins with your supervisor or designated contact person
- Be aware of your surroundings and take steps to minimize risks
- Avoid high-risk activities that should not be performed alone
- Follow safeguarding policies and procedures to protect both yourself and the child

Emergency Procedures:

- In case of an emergency, contact emergency services immediately (dial 999)
- Inform your supervisor or designated contact person as soon as it is safe to do so
- Follow any specific emergency procedures relevant to the location or nature of the work

7. Communication

- Lone workers must maintain regular contact with their supervisor or designated contact person using an agreed method (e.g., phone calls, text messages, or check-in apps)
- A buddy system can be implemented where lone workers pair up and check in on each other regularly

8. Training

- All employees and volunteers will receive training on lone working procedures, safeguarding, and emergency protocols
- Training will be refreshed annually or as needed based on changes in procedures or risk assessments

9. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or following any incidents to ensure its effectiveness and relevance
- Feedback from employees and volunteers will be sought to improve lone working practices

10. Incident Reporting

- All incidents or near misses involving lone workers must be reported using the Incident Report Form
- An investigation will be conducted to identify root causes and implement corrective actions

This policy ensures that "Outside the Box" takes proactive steps to protect the safety and well-being of both staff and children in lone working situations.