

# PORTISHEAD YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE

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## Lone Working Policy

### **Rationale**

Lone working is not covered by any specific legislation but the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management and Safety at Work regulations 1999 apply, together with any subsequent or amended legislation or regulations.

Employers and employees have duty to themselves and others with regard to safety and there is an increased risk to the health and safety of employees when they work remotely from other colleagues or other persons and/or outside normal working hours.

Our definition of lone workers is *'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision and are found in a wide range of situations.'*

### **Purpose**

This policy sets out the approach to be adopted by Portishead Youth and Community Centre Ltd and by individuals who work alone, either through requirement or choice.

### **Guidelines**

- 'Lone working' covers a wide range of activities, including being left alone with children, young people or other Centre users, making home visits alone, visiting the bank and driving to meetings off site during working hours. This list is not exhaustive.
- Hazards facing lone workers may include, for example:
  - a potential for violence or threatening behaviour towards an individual
  - the use of machinery, equipment or chemicals
  - working in remote areas, particularly after dark and outside normal working hours
  - encountering intruders
  - working at heights
  - the increased risk associated with individuals who have complex medical, behavioural and/or mobility needs.

Again, this list is not exhaustive.

- Employees who work alone through choice must discuss and agree with their Line Manager the need to do so.
- Employees who are working alone should: know their location and have access to a phone; know the escape route/nearest fire exit and check they are open; know the location of light switches; be aware of the security of their location; should not work at height.
- Staff working outside core Centre opening hours must ensure that a partner/housemate/ child\*\* living at home/friend is aware of their expected time home and can make contact with them if they have any concerns for their safety. Any staff member working alone during core Centre opening hours (e.g. off site on a 1 : 1 mentoring session) must inform their Line Manager or other senior colleague when they have ended their session.

\*\* The child must be capable of being home alone and can be relied upon to alert a responsible adult about an issue.

- Risks to lone workers' health and safety must be identified by suitable risk assessments of the work activities, and where appropriate control measures must be introduced to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. In assessing the risk consideration should be given to:
  - the lone worker
  - the task
  - the working environment
  - supervision
  - information, instruction and training
  - communication
  - first aid
  - suitability of equipment
  - accidents and emergencies
  - personal protective equipment
- Specifically, a risk assessment must be carried out for employees who carry out lone home visits, and if the conclusion is that the risk is High or Very High, the visit must not take place. Under such circumstances alternative arrangements should be made. Where no previous significant contact has been made with a family, no lone home visit should be made.
- When working alone, all staff must:
  - not undertake work for which they are not trained/qualified
  - take reasonable care of their own health and safety
  - not do anything to put themselves in danger
  - know and follow relevant safe working procedures and guidelines including operating machinery and using hazardous substances
  - never cut corners or rush work
  - always follow reasonable targets
  - stop for regular breaks and, if possible, change activity
  - inform their line Manager of any relevant medical condition
  - inform their line Manager of any hazards or accidents encountered.

- Care should be taken by all staff to avoid potentially compromising situations with children/young people or other Centre users. Staff should never travel alone with a young person except in a case of real emergency or following explicit authorization from their Line Manager and the child/young person's parent/guardian. In one-to-one situations in Portishead Youth and Community Centre, careful consideration must be given to the location of meetings in rooms or areas that are isolated, and these should be avoided. Where possible only rooms that have viewing screens in doors should be used; where this is not possible the door should be left open. Viewing screens and windows should not be covered by posters, etc.
- Staff and volunteers for whom a DBS check is awaited are not allowed to work with children/young people without direct supervision.
- Staff and volunteers who have not developed an appropriate relationship with the young person concerned are not allowed to work with that person without direct supervision.

WHERE POSSIBLE STAFF SHOULD AVOID WORKING ALONE

Reviewed December 2023

 Recoverable Signature

X J Power

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Chair of Trustees  
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