



The WASP Centre

Lone Working Policy

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General Statement

The purpose of this document is to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. It should be read in conjunction with Children and Young People's Service Health and Safety documents and should take account of guidance from health colleagues. All staff should have a copy of the Suzy Lamplugh leaflet 'Keeping Safe – Working Alone'.

Principles

Staff should not put themselves at personal or professional risk as a result of doing their job. However, staff will, from time to time, need to make professional judgements about the wisdom of particular situations and it is important that they feel able to do this taking into account the health context in which we work. However, the guidelines below should be followed. Staff should feel confident that professional behaviour would have the support of the management of HOE and Children and Young People's Service. If in doubt it is important to seek the advice of colleagues.

Professional Boundaries

Confidentiality

No information about the pupil or family should be disclosed to anyone without the parents consent, except in cases of child protection. The parents will be asked to sign a consent form to give permission for professionals to liaise with one another.

Assessment and Identification of Hazards

- Travelling
- Individual teaching and support in pupil's home or other outreach location
- Working alone in bases
- External visits with pupils
- Incidents and Accidents

Travelling and Individual Outreach Teaching

All staff who transport pupils using their own vehicles, whether permanent WASP staff or outreach teachers should have the appropriate business insurance cover on their motor vehicle insurance certificate. It is recommended that staff be covered by membership of an emergency breakdown and repair service.

- Staff should ring in to the WASP Centre to let your line manager or colleagues know where you are, where you are going and what time you will be back.
- If working as an outreach teacher the Headteacher should have a weekly timetable of planned teaching sessions
- If your travel plans change, pass on your new plans to colleagues.
- If you have a mobile phone always keep it on so that you can be contacted (turn it off during meetings though!)
- If you feel uncomfortable about making a home visit take a colleague with you. Do not make a visit unaccompanied if you feel uncertain about the situation.

- Always make the initial home visit with another colleague, who could be a professional from another Children and Young People's Service team or agency (EWO, Social Worker, Community Nurse or SENCO). Find out background information from colleagues before you visit.
- Make sure you have planned your route and the time needed.
- Try to park your car as close as possible to the venue. If you cannot park close by be aware of the risks involved in walking (handbag, phone etc.) and practise protective behaviours. Do not carry a lot of cash or valuable items
- Ensure you leave nothing visible in your car. Lock up all valuables in the boot, including children's notes.
- If an accident should occur when you are driving alone or carrying a passenger or student you are advised to complete an 'Incident Recording Sheet' at the time of the incident.

Identifying Unsafe Settings

- If you feel the home or setting is not appropriate for teaching in, complete the risk assessment form and let your line manager know, as teaching should, in these instances, take place elsewhere.
- Only enter a house on invitation from a parent and show your identification.
- Do not enter a house unless another known adult is present. This is preferably and usually the parent, but could sometimes be another member of the family known to you. You should not teach in a pupil's home when there is no other adult present. Alternative teaching arrangements should be made in these cases. Inform the Headteacher.
- Never enter a house where a parent or another adult is not fully dressed.
- It is inadvisable to go upstairs or into a bedroom.
- Parents should be made aware that they have prime responsibility for the safety of their child.

In order to protect the teacher it is WASP policy that outreach education should not be undertaken in the teacher's own home. As soon as the pupil is ready for reintegration sessions should be undertaken at the pupil's school as part of an integration programme. The longer the pupil is away from school the harder it is to go back and the aim of WASP is to integrate the pupil back to school as soon as possible before anxiety causes further difficulties.

Lone Working at the WASP Centre

- If you are working alone shut outside doors securely but ensure you are able to exit easily.
- Discuss emergency exits with colleagues and arrange furniture so that exits, especially fire exits are clear at all times.
- If you are working in a base during the school holidays please ensure that either a professional colleague is aware that you are there or you have left clear details with a member of your family and they know how to contact the Headteacher.
- Continue to carry out all of the usual agreed safety considerations.
- Read and review the Health and Safety Policy in a team meeting once a year.
- If it is dark when you leave, keep to well-lit routes to reach your car.
- Report any health hazards, aggressive behaviour or difficult to manage incidents immediately to the Headteacher and document in case you need evidence later.
- If you work late let a colleague know you are in the building and tell them when you leave.

- Timetabling should have regard to the availability of another adult (not necessarily the education team, but with other professionals if in need)
- Consider the age and sex of the pupil when working alone with a pupil.
- Consider visibility and consider leaving the door open.
- Never leave colleagues working alone unless they know where you are and can contact you.

External Visits with Pupils

Staff within the WASP Centre will always follow the Policy for External Visits and make risk assessments. Through outreach, teaching staff are able to address National Curriculum Learning Objectives across a range of subjects and in real community settings. Teachers are able to maximize resources and opportunities if they use the museum service, the library, shops, services and local industry. Assessments can be made in these settings and contact can be made with other adults and young people. This is often a target in the pupil's reintegration programme.

However, it must be borne in mind that there are risks in taking pupils out and about. The WASP Health and Safety Policy must be adhered to at all times and all staff should be aware of risk assessments which should be made with the parents, carers, a senior member of staff from WASP or the pupil's home school. Assessments and arrangements should be recorded and kept as part of record keeping.

When making educational visits always:

- complete a Journey Checklist before making a journey with a child or young person in the car and leave a copy in your base with another member of staff. If you have doubts as a result of this do not make the journey or seek advice on how to address the concerns and raise the safety level.
- ensure that any young person under 12 years of age or less than a height of 4 feet 11inches (150 cms.) must be seated in the back of the car with a seat belt on.
- It is recommended that all children and young people sit in the back of the car using car restraints.
- give the parent a mobile phone number if you have one and take the pupil's home telephone number or other contact number with you.
- let the parent know the departure time and the time expected back, the destination and the car registration number
- make a risk assessment to decide if a second adult is needed to supervise the child
- check if the pupil is taking any medication and what time the next dose is due
- ensure that road safety rules are taught and followed
- park as near to the destination as possible
- If at any time a member of staff should feel uncomfortable about transporting a pupil take him/her straight home or back to the ward/school and do not take him/her out again. Write up your reasons as a record on an incident form on Schoolpod and talk this through with a line manager from WASP as soon as possible. Other arrangements should be made for transporting the pupil if necessary.

Incidents and Accidents

Following the Children Act (1989) there was an increase in young people, particularly those who are distressed or emotionally disturbed, making false accusations against professional staff, usually abuse. It could also happen that parents, distressed, angry, frustrated or emotionally fragile could make an accusation or complaint. It is essential to minimise the chance of such accusations. The advice in the Suzy Lamplugh leaflet is helpful and all staff should be aware of how they communicate with pupils and adults and practise effective listening skills. If there has been a difficult situation or uncomfortable incident or accident staff should contact their line manager and record this appropriately.

Staff should ensure that they always write notes after any incident, accident or near miss on an Incident Recording Sheet. As well as being part of the required teaching and learning records these will serve as evidence if necessary and are helpful for good reflective practice. You will need to give your records to the SENCO of the school ready for the pupil's review and may need them for performance management. For outreach teachers there are forms in the Procedures for Outreach Teaching pack available from HOE. All incidents, accidents or near misses should be reported by the line manager to the Health and Safety team.

Conclusion

It is very important to be cautious, sensible, and professional while being mindful of the sensitive nature of the clients with whom we work. It is possible to worsen the situation by over dramatising or becoming too formal. Stay relaxed, low key with a positive attitude about education and stay outside the dynamics of the family, which can be extremely complex. These guidelines should serve to minimise the risks inherent in the work we do.