

# St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School



## Lone Working Policy

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Approved: October 2025

Next Review Date: October 2028

## Section 1 – Policy Statement

Lone working activities are a normal part of school operations.

St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School recognises its health and safety responsibilities towards employees who may work alone and others who may be affected by these activities. Lone workers should not be put at more risk than other staff, and specific control measures may be necessary to ensure their safety.

This policy sets out a risk-based approach to lone working. Safe lone working is achieved by ensuring that safe systems of work are in place, followed by all employees, and regularly reviewed.

All incidents linked to lone working must be reported so that risks can be managed effectively.

## Section 2 – Defining Lone Working

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as those “who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.”

In a school context, lone working may include:

- Staff working on-site outside normal school hours (teachers preparing lessons, cleaners, caretakers).
- Staff working separately from others within the school (e.g., isolated classrooms or offices).
- Caretakers or contractors carrying out maintenance duties alone.
- Staff attending off-site training or meetings without colleagues.
- Staff responding to school alarm callouts out of hours.

## Section 3 – Lone Working Risk Assessment

There is no legal prohibition on lone working, but risk assessments must be completed.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring risk assessments are carried out. Assessments should cover:

- The potential for violence or aggression.
- Environmental hazards (e.g., poor lighting, isolated areas).
- Emergency arrangements (e.g., accidents, illness, equipment failure).

A Lone Working Risk Assessment template is available at the end of this policy.

## Section 4 – Hazards

- **Violence or Aggression:** e.g., from intruders or when dealing with members of the public.
- **Physical Hazards:** slips, trips, falls, working at height, electrical issues.
- **Medical Emergencies:** illness or accidents while working alone.
- **Environment:** inadequate lighting, isolated areas of the school, or poor mobile phone reception.

## Section 5 – Who is at Risk?

- Staff working alone on-site (teachers, cleaners, caretakers, admin staff).
- Contractors unfamiliar with the school site.
- New staff, trainees, or volunteers.
- Staff with medical conditions that may make lone working unsafe.

## Section 6 – Controlling the Risk

The school will ensure that:

- Lone workers are competent and confident in managing foreseeable risks.
- Staff are clear about when lone working is not appropriate (e.g., certain maintenance tasks).
- Lone workers have access to means of communication (e.g., school mobile numbers).
- Procedures are in place for monitoring staff working alone.

### Key Procedures:

- Staff working late must inform a colleague or sign in/out.
- Staff must not put themselves at risk (e.g., by confronting intruders).
- Caretakers and staff responding to alarm callouts should not attend alone if risks are identified.
- High-risk tasks (working at height, heavy manual handling) must not be done alone.

## Section 7 – Emergency Arrangements

- Lone workers must know how to raise the alarm in case of emergency.
- Emergency contacts should be shared before working alone.
- First aid arrangements must be considered.
- Staff should withdraw immediately from any situation that threatens their safety.

## Section 8 – Recording and Reviewing Risk Assessments

- Lone working must be included in relevant risk assessments.
- Standalone assessments must be completed if necessary.
- Risk assessments must be reviewed annually or sooner if incidents occur.

## Section 9 – Responsibilities

- **Headteacher:** overall responsibility for implementation and review of this policy.
- **Line Managers/Site Manager:** ensure risk assessments are completed and safe systems of work are in place.
- **Staff:** comply with procedures, report incidents, and avoid taking unnecessary risks.
- **Governing Body:** approve the policy and monitor its effectiveness.

Signatures

\_\_\_\_ Headteacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Lone Working Risk Assessment

St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School

## Assessment Details

Assessment Date:	___ / ___ / ___
Assessor Name:	_____
Location:	Whole School premises / [Specify area(s)]
Task(s) / Activity(ies):	Examples: after-school work, cleaning, maintenance, alarm callouts, off-site meetings

## 1. Identified Hazards, Risk & Severity

Hazard	Persons at Risk	Risk Level	Potential Consequences
Slips, trips, falls	Staff, contractors, cleaners	Medium	Injury, fracture, being unable to call for help
Working at height	Caretaker, maintenance staff	Medium-High	Falls, serious injury
Electrical hazards	Staff using equipment	Medium	Shock, burns, fire risk
Entrapment/lock-in	Staff, caretakers	Low-Medium	Being locked in, unable to exit
Fire/emergency	Any lone worker	Medium	Smoke inhalation, burns, delayed rescue
Medical emergency	Staff with conditions	Medium	Collapse, ill health
Violence/aggression/intruders	Staff, especially after hours	Medium-High	Physical harm, trauma
Poor communication/signal	Any lone worker	Medium	Unable to summon help
Fatigue/stress	Staff working long hours	Low-Medium	Mistakes, health issues
Weather/environmental risks	Staff outside	Medium	Slips, being stranded

## 2. Existing Control Measures

- School locked when not in use; keyholders trained on security systems.
- Lighting and maintenance checks in corridors, stairways, external paths.
- Portable/mobile phones available for lone workers.
- First aid kits accessible; trained staff available.
- Sign in/out procedure when working outside hours.
- Contractors provide risk assessments; liaise with school staff.
- High-risk tasks not to be carried out alone (e.g., working at height).
- Emergency procedures for fire, medical, intruders in place.
- Regular checks of alarm systems.

## 3. Further Control Measures / Action Plan

Action	Responsible Person(s)	Deadline	Notes / Resources Needed
Communicate lone working policy to all staff and include in induction.	Headteacher / HR / Site Manager	October 2025	Staff briefing, induction pack

Introduce buddy/check-in system for staff working late.	Line Managers	October 2025	Procedure agreed, contact list
Inspect external lighting monthly and repair faults promptly.	Site Manager	Ongoing	Maintenance log
Risk assess after-hours alarm response.	Headteacher / Site Manager	—	Documented procedure, buddy system
Check contractors' insurance and risk assessments before work.	Site Manager / Business Manager	Before work	Compliance checks
Ensure all lone workers have emergency contacts and evacuation info.	Line Managers / Headteacher	Ongoing	Updated contact lists

## 4. Emergency Arrangements

- Lone workers must have access to emergency contact numbers.
- First aid kits and list of trained staff available.
- Fire alarm points, escape routes, and plans displayed.
- Call 999 in serious emergencies, then inform school management.
- Withdraw to a safe area in case of intruder or threat.

## 5. Monitoring & Review

- Review annually or after any lone working incident/near miss.
- Update risk assessments if tasks, staff, or building use changes.
- Record and investigate all incidents.
- Encourage staff to report hazards or concerns.