



# Harvard Park Policies and Procedures:

## **Lone Working**

## **29. Lone Working**

### **Policy Statement**

Harvard Park is committed to ensuring staff and contractors enjoy a safe working environment. Lone working is actively discouraged and alternatives to lone working considered. However, it is recognised that there are occasions when staff may be required to work alone or in isolated situations. This method of working may introduce risks into a normally non-hazardous work activity. It is essential to state that any unqualified students, volunteers under the age of 17 are not left alone at any point during their working hours.

### **Lone working in rooms**

We aim to ensure that no member of the team is left alone working in a room at any time. However, there may be occasions when this is not possible due to:

- Toilet breaks
- Lunch cover
- Nappy changes
- Comforting a child that may be unwell in a quiet area
- Following a child's interest, as this may lead staff away with a a child to explore a area
- Supporting children in toilets
- A staff member with a pre-existing medical condition such as epilepsy, becoming unwell

We consider how lone workers manage with a variety of tasks such as talking to parents/carers and supervising activities whilst maintaining the safety and welfare of children.

### **Training**

All early years educators have the training and/or skills for the role including:

- Paediatric first aid training (PFA)
- Safeguarding/child protection training
- A level 2 Early Years qualification or high, or working towards the qualification

In addition to the above, all staff are aware of and regularly tested on the settings:

- Emergency evacuation procedures (fire drills and lock down drills are regularly held)
- The health and safety policy and its requirements
- The managing children who are sick and/or infectious policy which includes how to administer first aid and medications
- The Reporting and recording of accidents and incidents policy

### **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of both staff and the room leaders/deputy manager/manager to identify the hazards and minimise the risks of working alone in rooms. Risk assessments are completed when required.

Staff responsibilities when left in a room alone include ensuring:

- A risk assessment is completed for staff working alone.
- Ratios are maintained.
- There is someone on call in an emergency if required.
- The member of staff and children are always safeguarded.
- There are procedures in place to check in on the staff member and cover for breaks

### **Staff Ratio's**

We provide staffing ratios in line with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the EYFS to ensure:

- Children are adequately supervised and their needs are met
- Children have sufficient individual attention that provides high quality educational and care.
- Children are always within sight or hearing of staff.

To meet this requirement we use the following ratios of staff to children:

#### **Children under two years of age: 1 adult: 3 children:**

- at least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification and is suitably experienced in working with children under two.
- at least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification.
- at least half of all staff have received training that specifically addresses the care of babies; and
- where there is an under two-year-olds' room, the member of staff in charge of that room has suitable experience of working with under twos.

#### **Children aged two years: 1 adult: 5 children:**

- at least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification; and
- at least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification.

#### **Children aged three years and over: 1 adult: 8 children:**

- at least one member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification; and
- at least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification.
  
- The above ratios apply to the total number of staff available to work directly with the children. We aim to provide a higher staff: child ratio to ensure the safety and welfare of the children.
- A minimum of 2 staff are on duty at any one time.

- Staff do not usually supervise children on their own.
- Children are supervised by adults at all times.
- Students or volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices (aged 17 or over) may be included in staff ratio's if the setting manager is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.
- The setting manager and deputy hold, at a minimum, a level 3 qualification and have at least 2 years' experience of working in an early years setting.

### **Lone working in the building**

It is our policy that 1 member of staff is never left alone in the building with children.

The duties of some team members necessitate lone working, for example management, staff opening and closing the setting and those carrying out cleaning and maintenance. A risk assessment is in place for cleaning staff who are employed directly by Harvard Park and who work alone. Where required, risk assessments will be completed for contractors who work alone.

### **Responsibilities**

Staff responsible when left in the building alone include:

- Making a member of the management team aware of when they are working and make plans to check in at their expected time of completion of the work.
- Ensuring they have access to a telephone at all times in order to call for help if they need it, or for management to check their safety if they are concerned.
- Ensuring that the building remains locked so no-one can walk in uninvited.
- Reporting any concerns for working alone to the manager as soon as is practicably possible.

The manager's responsibilities when staff are left in the building alone include:

- Ensuring staff working alone are competent and confident to carry out any safety procedures, for example, fire evacuations.
- Ensuring that the member of staff has the ability to contact the manager or other members of the team, even if their lone working is outside normal office hours, for example access to a phone and contact numbers to call.
- Checking that the member of staff knows how to contact the emergency services and the numbers to call.
- Contacting the member of staff if reporting in arrangements have not been followed.

### **Lone working with pre-existing medical conditions**

In line with our duty of care and health and safety obligations, Harvard Park recognises that staff with pre-existing medical conditions may require additional consideration when undertaking lone working duties. All staff are required to disclose any relevant medical conditions to the manager or designated senior person in confidence, so that an individual risk assessment can be completed.

This assessment will consider the nature of the medical condition, potential risks associated with lone working, and appropriate control measures to ensure the member of staff's safety and wellbeing.

Where necessary, reasonable adjustments will be implemented, which may include restricting lone working duties, modifying tasks, ensuring access to a telephone or communication device at all times, and establishing agreed check-in procedures. Staff must ensure that any prescribed medication is readily accessible during working hours and that emergency contact details and relevant medical information are accurate and up to date. In some cases, a personal emergency plan may be developed in consultation with the staff member.

Lone working will only be permitted where the risk assessment confirms it is safe to do so. Managers will review arrangements regularly and immediately following any change in the staff member's health or working conditions. All information relating to medical conditions will be handled sensitively and in accordance with data protection and confidentiality requirements. Staff are expected to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and to report any concerns or changes in their condition without delay.

This Policies and Procedures pack was adjusted by Harvard Park.

Date meeting was held on 30/04/2026

Signed on behalf of the Directors and Proprietors

**Nicki Saunders and Tracey Milstead**