Garlinge Primary School and Nursery

Lone Working Policy

&

Procedure

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Policy Statement

Garlinge Primary School and Nursery recognises its health and safety responsibilities towards employees who are involved in lone working processes and others who may be affected by these activities. Lone workers should not be put at more risk than any other employees and specific control measures may be necessary in order to achieve this.

This document outlines a sensible risk based approach towards lone working. Safe lone working can be achieved by ensuring that safe systems of work are made available through management processes and used by all employees.

All employees are expected to report all incidents that occur in relation to lone working in order to ensure that the organisation can prevent future incidents by risk assessing appropriately in each case.

Definition of Lone Working

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision". Lone workers can be found in a range of situations:

People in fixed establishments where:

- Only one person works at the premises.
- People working separately from others, e.g. in isolated areas of the school
- People who work outside core operational hours e.g. maintenance employees

Mobile, or peripatetic workers operating away from their normal base:

- On areas where construction is taking place, inspections and maintenance activities.
- Service workers for example, employees who attend home visits, drivers of school vehicles and those attending out of hours call outs.

There is no legal prohibition on lone working, however the employer must identify the hazards, assess the risks involved, and put measures in place to avoid or control the risks. If the risk assessment identifies that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, then other arrangements need to be put in place.

Classification of Lone Workers

- Category 1 **Lower Risk** situations include:
    - Staff working outside normal school office hours e.g. cleaners, caretakers, contractors and staff working late or through holidays.
    - Staff who travel alone for significant periods or in circumstances that may give rise to additional risks e.g. home visits.
- Category 2 **Medium Risk** situations include:
    - Use of receptions, inclusion rooms or similar where risk of violence and aggression or dangerous situation is reasonably foreseeable and where colleagues cannot readily called on by lone worker in the advent of an adverse situation.

- Category 3 **High risk** situations include:

    - Working out of hours (not in a school-controlled facility).
    - Working alone with hazardous plant, tools, equipment or chemicals.
    - Where serious injury may be incurred by the type of work being carried out.

This is a guide only and the Headteacher is required to complete a risk assessment to determine the level of risk and control measures required.

Young or inexperienced employees who require direct supervision due to the nature of the task should not be permitted to work alone.

Headteacher Responsibilities

The school is responsible for implementing arrangements to ensure lone working is effectively managed and that staff are made aware of the school's policy on lone working and any relevant risk assessments.

Lone working should carry no more risk than normal working however the Headteacher must recognise that the risk to one worker is greater because there is a reduced level of immediate support available. By following normal risk assessment methods the Headteacher should be able to eliminate, or reduce to an acceptable level, the risks associated with lone working.

Key responsibilities of the Headteacher are:

- To identify lone workers and hazards in conjunction with departmental leaders or managers.
- To carry out lone working risk assessments for staff or departments.
- To implement suitable control measures as identified in risk assessment.
- To distribute and monitor lone working device usage where necessary e.g. walkie-talkies, mobiles or buddy arrangement.
- Ensure that any accident, incident or violence / threatening behaviour are reported and any additional control measures that are identified are implemented in accordance with the schools accident, incident and near misses' procedures and the schools violence and aggression procedures.
- Ensure identified lone working staff have received the relevant training.
- Ensure agency, voluntary workers and casual staff and staff in their induction period, have additional controls in place.
- To ensure procedures are in place in an emergency.

Employee Responsibilities

Key responsibilities of all employees are:

- To take reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions.
- To assist the Headteacher in compiling a lone working risk assessment.
- Follow guidelines and procedures designed for safe working methods.
- Report all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others.
- Take part in training designed to meet the requirements of this policy.
- Report any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in regards to working alone.

Training and Information

Lone workers need to be sufficiently experienced to fully understand the risks and precautions that must be taken. Governors and the Headteacher need to set limits on what can and cannot be done when working alone. Staff must be competent to deal with circumstances should they arise.Training to ensure competency is particularly important where assistance is limited, and may be critical to avoid panic reactions in unusual situations.

Training in respect of lone working should cover the following:

- Advice and guidance not to go into a situation if they feel at risk.
- The use of conflict resolution or diffusion techniques. These should include being aware of non-verbal communication; how to behave in a non-confrontational manner; the importance of empathy; being polite and listening.
- To be aware of their surroundings, your own actions and how others may perceive you.
- Competent in completing a dynamic risk assessment and identifying associated risks for the task.

Accident / Incident and Near Miss Reporting

Any accident / incident or near miss and this includes threat of violence or aggression whilst lone working should be reported to the Headteacher and recorded on the assessment. An accident / incident form should be completed in line with the school's accident / incident reporting procedures.

Risk Assessment Procedure

Risk assessment is an integral management tool that should be completed to ensure that staff are safe in their work. Normal school risk assessments should be completed in accordance with risk assessment guidance.

When assessing the risks involved for a lone working scenario, employees involved in the task must have access to all available relevant information in order to make a reasoned judgement of any potential risk.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to assess the risks presented by the location of any meeting, access, layout, furnishings, lighting and temperature control, and to take appropriate action.

If pupils are being accompanied on transport or in public, or visited at home, there must be an appropriate assessment of the risks that might be present.

The following should be considered, as to its relevance to the task and risks:

- The environment
    - Location, security and access arrangements.
- The context
    - Nature of an external visit or special circumstances.
    - Consider the likely outcomes.
    - Why do you need to carry out this work or task?

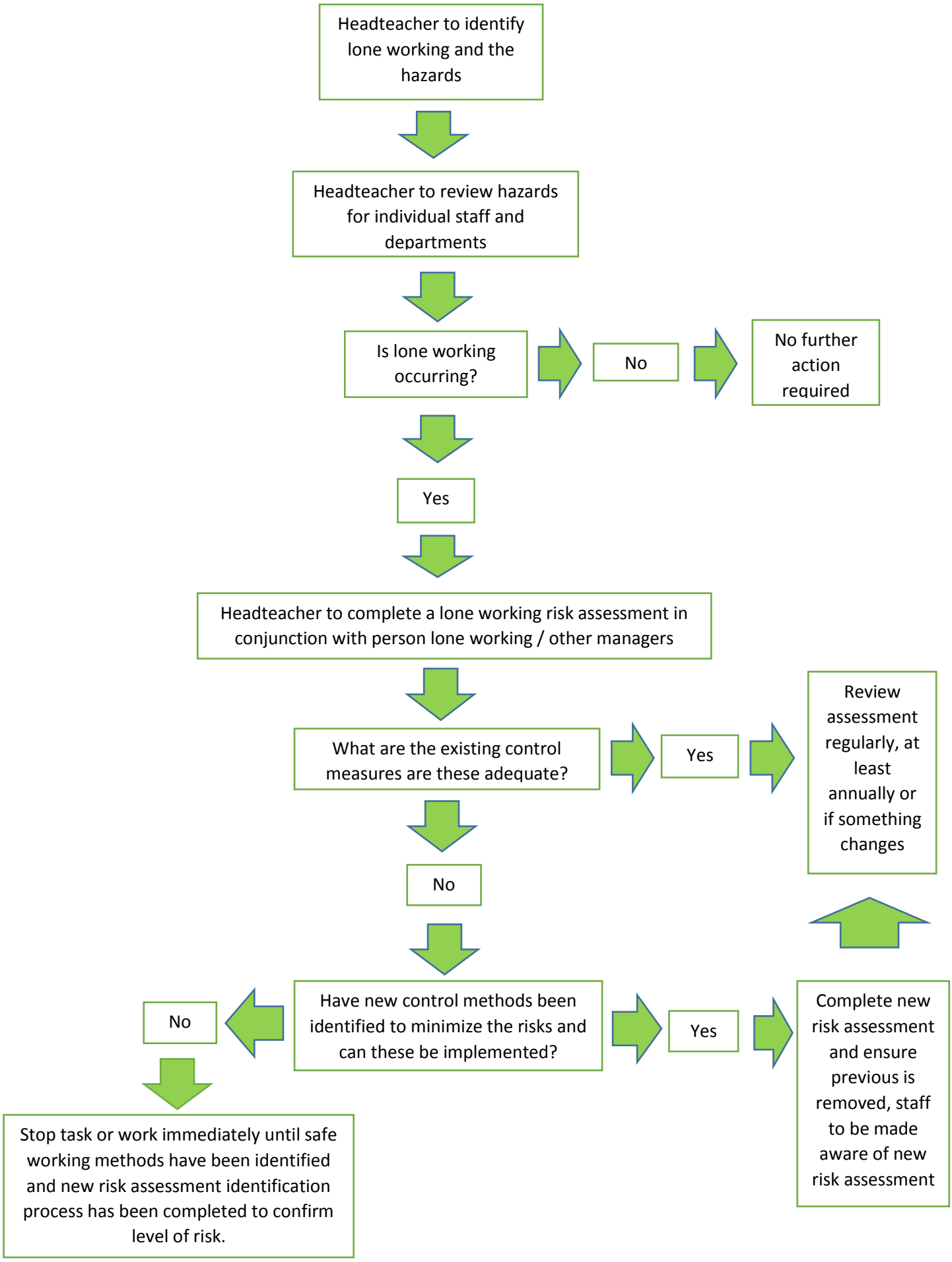
- The individuals concerned

    - Indicators of potential or actual risk.
    - Who is carry out the task, do they have the relevant understanding or skills.
    - Any history of previous challenging behaviour, known triggers should be recorded.
    - Staff to avoid provocation and be aware of their verbal and non-verbal communication.

- Any other circumstances

    - Is this a new method or unusual work request

Appendix A: Lone Worker Identification and Risk Assessment F**lowchart**



Appendix B: Lone Working Risk Assessment

Step 1 What are the hazards?	Step 2 Who might be harmed and how?	Step 3 What are you already	Risk	Step 4 Is anything further needed?	Step 5 Action & Review
Spot hazards by: ▪ walking around your workplace ▪ asking those doing the task what they think ▪ checking manufacturers' instructions ▪ considering health hazards	Identify groups of people, consider: ▪ employees ▪ temporary / agency staff ▪ contractors ▪ volunteers ▪ members of the public ▪ children (including work experience) ▪ lone workers ▪ pupils ▪ service users	List what is already in place to reduce the likelihood of harm or make any harm less serious, examples include: ▪ guarding ▪ training ▪ procedures, safe systems of work ▪ personal protective equipment (PPE)	Trivial, low, medium, high or stop (please see matrix below)	You need to make sure that you have reduced risks 'so far as is reasonably practicable'. An easy way of doing this is to compare what you are already doing with good practice. If there is a difference, list what needs to be done.	Remember to prioritise. Deal with those hazards that are high-risk and have serious consequences first. List: ▪ actions required ▪ who needs to do them ▪ by when ▪ Check actions completed

Risk rating

	Slightly harmful	Harmful	Extremely harmful
Highly unlikely	**Trivial risk**	**Low risk**	**Medium risk**
Unlikely	**Low risk**	**Medium risk**	**High risk**
Likely	**Medium risk**	**High risk**	**STOP**

Risk level	Action and Timescale
Trivial	**No action required and no documentary record needs to be kept.**
Low	**No additional physical control measures are required, however monitoring is necessary to ensure that the controls are maintained.**
Medium	**Efforts should be made to reduce the risk and the reduction measures should be implemented within a defined period. Where the medium risk is associated with extremely harmful consequences, further assessment may be necessary to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the need for improved control measures.**
High	**Work should not be started until the risk has been reduced to an acceptable level. Considerable resources may be allocated to reduce the risk. Where the risk involves work in progress, urgent action should be taken.**
Stop	**Work should not be started or continued until the risk has been reduced. If it is not possible to reduce risk even with unlimited resources, work has to remain prohibited.**

Activity / Operation/ Event:					Assessment Date:		
Step 1 **Identify the hazards**	**Step 2** **Who might be harmed & how?**	**Step 3** **What are you already doing?**	**Risk Rating** **Trivial/ Low / Medium / High / Stop**	**Step 4** **Is anything further needed?**	**Step 5** **Action & Review**		
					Action required	**Responsible person**	**Date completed**
Assessor Name(s):				**Job Title:**			
Signature:				**Review Date:**			