



Lone Worker and Home Visiting Policy

Rationale

Clarendon Children's Centre places the safety of staff working for the Centre as its highest priority and will follow best practise systems and procedures for conducting lone working, home visiting and outreach services within the community, to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

Aims

- *To ensure staff understand the Centre's systems and procedures for lone working and home visiting.*
- *To fulfill the Centre's legal responsibility to provide safe working practice for all members of staff.*
- *To share the policy and procedures with staff during the induction process and at regular intervals thereafter.*

Implementation of Policy

Responsibilities of Outreach Workers and Centre Manager

- The Outreach Workers are responsible for ensuring that a thorough risk assessment has been carried out prior to the lone working or home visit.
- The Outreach Worker will ensure that information has been gathered from relevant agencies and professionals to ascertain any potential hazards and risks to the member of staff. This information will be collated and shared with the relevant members of staff and brought to the attention of the centre manager if it is felt additional control methods need to be in place.
- The Outreach Worker will ensure that the families have been informed of the purpose of the visit and given any information which is appropriate. They will also ensure all parties are fully informed about the content and plan of the visit.
- The Outreach Worker must follow the Outreach Referral Procedures which are set by the Children's Centre.

- The Centre Manager will ensure that staff members undertaking lone working and home visiting have received training on how to prevent and handle difficult situations, personal safety and violence at work.
- Staff members training will include encouraging staff to reflect on their own behavior and how they may trigger aggression in others. The training will also develop skills on how to keep themselves safe and constantly reassess risks as they go about their work.
- Prior to lone working or home visits the Centre Manager must confirm with the member of staff that they have read and understood the information and risk assessments and are happy with the safety measures in place. The member of staff must confirm to the Manager that they are happy to undertake the task.
- After each home visit or lone working task the Outreach Worker will arrange to meet with the centre manager to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the service and any issues which arose. The Outreach Worker is responsible for alerting the CPLO (Child Protection Liaison Officer) of any safeguarding concerns.
- Where possible home visiting is carried out with the minimal possibility of risk by only allowing visits in daylight hours.

Responsibilities – Individual Members of Staff

Members of staff must never enter any building, premises or location where they feel unsafe or fear potential danger or harm.

Prior to the visit the member of staff must obtain and read through all information provided by the Centre and other agencies about the situation including background family information and Risk Assessment.

Members of staff must ensure they have a working mobile phone prior to lone working or home visiting.

Procedure for Home Visit

1. *The Centre will contact the family or person by telephone to book an appointment and explain the purpose of the visit.*
2. *The member of staff must obtain the address, contact number and expected arrival and departure time of the visit. A copy of this information must be given to the Centre Manager and retained in Centre records. If the member of staff is more than **20 minutes** late, and fails to make contact, the Centre Manager will inform the relevant emergency services and partner agencies immediately.*
3. *The Member of Staff must provide the family with a contact telephone number to use if they are unable to keep the appointment. This should be the centre's telephone number.*

4. *If the lone worker or staff member responsible for home visiting are not able to make the appointment they must inform the family at the earliest opportunity offering an apology and an alternative date and time.*
5. *If the member of staff required to lone work or home visit feels uncomfortable with the situation the Centre will provide a support member of staff to accompany the visit.*
6. *The member of staff must be sensitive to the cultural and religious beliefs of the family and dress appropriately if required.*
7. *Member of staff are advised not to take expensive personal items with them whilst lone working to reduce the potential risks.*
8. *Staff travelling in vehicles must ensure that they have the necessary insurance cover and that their vehicle is safe, secure and has sufficient fuel.*

Public Transport

1. *Members of staff using public transport must plan their journey in advance to ensure that they have allowed adequate time to arrive and depart safely.*
2. *If lone workers are not familiar with the locality they will be travelling in they must identify key points of safety along their route.*

Procedures in Homes and Premises Visited

1. The worker must assess each individual situation and if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable they must abandon the visit and not enter the home.
2. Lone workers must always introduce themselves to the family members and show Surrey County Council identification badges to the family or person.
3. Lone workers must always be respectful of the families' property, demonstrate courtesy and be non judgmental to the family at all times.
4. If the family is not at home the member of staff must leave a Centre slip informing the family of their visit and the time they left the property.
5. Lone workers must never enter a house first; they must wait for the occupant to enter the house and follow them inside.
6. Lone workers must request the removal of animals which may pose a potential risk or allergic reaction. If the occupant refuses the request the member of staff may terminate the visit.

Procedures Following Home Visit

1. At the end of the visit the member of staff must complete a brief evaluation of the visit with the family. The member of staff must ascertain if the family is satisfied with the visit, any actions and

commitments made by the family or staff, and the date and time of any future visits or follow up work.

2. The Outreach Worker must write up the key action points of the visit together with an action plan for next steps.
3. The lone worker must contact the Centre to inform them that the visit has finished and that they are returning back to the Centre or home if appropriate.
4. Any Safeguarding incidents must be reported on the day of the visit and Centre Manager or CPLO informed.

Incidents

1. If an incident occurs whereby a member of staff feels unsafe or at risk of harm they must always protect their own safety first and leave the location immediately. The Centre will evaluate the situation and provide alternative methods of support and services if appropriate.
2. Members of staff must constantly assess the situation to ascertain if any aggression is aimed at them or merely the person 'letting off steam'. The member of staff must use their skills and training to try and calm the situation down and alleviate the pressure.
3. If the aggression is aimed at the worker they must try to leave the premises immediately and inform the emergency services and Centre Manager of the incident.
4. If at any point the member of staff fears for their personal safety they must contact the emergency police service dialling **999** and request immediate support.
5. The Centre Manager will carry out a full investigation into any incident and the member of staff will be expected to be involved in an analysis and debrief. The Centre will provide practical support and advice to the member of staff.
6. The member of staff must complete an Incident Form in their return to the Centre which must be handed to the Centre Manager.
7. The Centre Manager will evaluate the incident and action taken and amend policies and procedures as a result of any weaknesses identified.

Any questions or concerns regarding this policy should be made to the Centre Manager Sue Burgess