TEESDALE DAY CLUBS
Policy and Procedure Document
Number 15 Issue 02

Lone Working Policy and Procedure

It is the policy of Teesdale Day Clubs (hereafter referred to as the charity) to ensure that all employees working alone to provide a service to our service-users are as safe as possible. It is accepted that not all risks can be avoided and that accidents may happen when people are working on their own. Employees have a personal responsibility to work within this policy to minimise the risks to themselves and others.

Where available, the shared google or other office-based calendar must be used to record the whereabouts of all staff.

Lone working situations

There are six main categories of lone working that arise:

- Working alone in the office
- Driving to and from meetings or home visits
- Working alone to make home or doorstep visits,
- Arranging and delivering activities with volunteers for service-users
- Working from home
- Exceptional circumstances

Office work

The office team is small and part-time and so it is frequently the case that someone is working alone in the office.
Most of the time, there are other people in the building, but the building is large and activities in different parts of the building are not visible to everyone.
The door to the building is often left open to the public during office hours and it is possible for the public to enter the building without anyone knowing.
There are also times when an employee may work early or late and the building will be empty, although locked to the public.
There may be times when an employee has a visitor in the office when they are alone.
Our policy is to advise all office-based employees to keep doors locked when working alone and to only see visitors by prior arrangement. If a visitor arrives unannounced, there is no obligation to see them.

When working alone in the office during office hours all employees should:

- Stay alert to any members of the public arriving in the upper part of the building.

- Ensure that their personal belongings are not left unattended in the office without locking the door.
- Keep the office door locked if the building is open to the public and they are alone.
- Ensure that the building is securely locked if they are alone in the building.
- NOT feel obliged to see an unannounced visitor or to see visitors at all when the building is empty.
- When seeing visitors alone and the content of the conversation is not confidential, consider leaving the office door open.

Driving for work-related journeys

- It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that they hold a valid driving license, and they must notify their line manager to any changes to their license or ability to drive.
- Employees must ensure that they hold valid insurance and that their vehicle is safe to drive when using it for activities on behalf of the charity. Proof of valid insurance and business use will be required.
- Employees must comply with all road laws and any fines and legal costs associated with breaking the law will be their own responsibility.
- It is also the employee's own responsibility to ensure that they are healthy, not tired and are fit to drive before making a journey. They should alert their line manager if they are unwell and unable to drive.
- An employee must not drink alcohol or take any illegal substances when at work.
- Any journey should be planned, and your line manager should be informed of your plans.
- It is important that you tell someone when you are expected to return home after making a work-related visit and that they know how to inform the charity if you do not return from work on time.
- When possible, always carry a mobile phone so that you can phone for help in the case of breakdown or emergency.
- All accidents when at work, however trivial, must be reported to the office as soon as possible and recorded in the accident book.

Home visits and doorstep (outreach services) visits

Our community service delivers home visits and one-to-one support to our service-users for the purpose of alleviating loneliness or isolation, providing practical support, helping with the completion of paperwork, or providing transport to an appointment.

Volunteers may be visited at their own home or at another public venue.

All employees are strongly advised to let their manager know where they are – or where more practical a family member or friend - and a record of where they are provided or made available in advance of leaving.

There are some basic principles that everyone should follow when working alone.

- Employees must make themselves familiar with any risk assessment or safety guidelines for a specific project, venue or activity and abide by the actions relating to their visit/role.
- Employees making visits to people's homes should only do so with their line managers knowledge and all visits should be planned.
- When possible, a service-user or volunteer should always be informed prior to a visit being made.
- First time going somewhere need for more vigilance and attention to risks and potential dangers.
- Club staff making visits as part of specific project activity will only visit existing service-users. All visits to new or potential new members will only be made by the Community Worker, or the project lead for any specific project.
- Employees will immediately withdraw from a situation that becomes uncomfortable or dangerous for them. Discomfort is a personal response, and an employee should trust their own judgement and leave a visit immediately if they feel at all uneasy and inform their line manager as soon as possible.
- Employees should be assertive about any personal safety issues that arise when making a home, doorstep, or visit other than at the office, and read warning signs of things not being OK as early as possible.
- Employees are encouraged to always take a common-sense approach to a situation that arises and pay attention to their own gut reaction; they will not be criticised for doing so.
- Visits should be confined to daylight hours wherever possible.
- Employees will be fully supported with any personal safety concerns.
- Lone working training will be made available where necessary to ensure that employees feel confident and equipped to make visits to service-users or volunteers if this is required as part of their role.
- Specific project work may require an employee to work alone when arranging or delivering specific activity.
- They should always follow the guidelines for home visits as appropriate.

- A risk assessment should be made before going for the first time to any house or venue, or where any extensive service delivery is planned.
- Line manager's must be informed of any planned activities and be asked to arrange a 'buddy' call-in system if an activity starts or finishes out of hours (when the office is closed or in the evenings), i.e., a text message can be sent to your manager once work is completed.

Working from home

- Informing your manager when you will be working from home and will be on your own.
- There would not normally be any additional risk associated with you working from home in terms of normal working duties.
- You should not invite any person to your own home for work purposes that you do not know or are unsure about
- Take all reasonable precautions if you are on your own during your working hours e.g., keeping the door locked, telling someone where you are.

Exceptional Circumstances

During specific circumstances, staff or volunteers may be required to provide a temporary outreach service to service-users, such as 'doorstep' visits to alleviate loneliness or isolation, run an errand such as picking up and dropping off medications, or doing small amounts of shopping.

In these circumstances, staff and volunteers must ensure that someone (a manager/supervisor, a relative or friend) knows where they are going and what time they are expected home/back to the office.

When meeting someone for the first time in these circumstances, as much information as possible about the person being visited should be provided, and with strict adherence to the Confidentiality and Data Protection policy.
Volunteers taking part in such a temporary service should:

- always adhere to the expectations outlined below and elsewhere in this policy in terms of ensuring their own personal safety always,
- always raise issues with their volunteer supervisor
- never agree to undertake any task that they are uncomfortable with.

As part of this policy, it is expected that everyone will:

- Adhere to the charity's other related health, safety, data protection, confidentiality, and safeguarding policies always, raising concerns immediately with their line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Person/Manager as appropriate.
- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their own acts of omission.
- Not endanger themselves or others and avoid using provocative language or gestures towards anyone they encounter as part of their work.
- Not put at risk their own safety, or the safety of others, whilst attempting to help in the event of an accident or intervene in an act of violence.
- Always contact the emergency services immediately when appropriate.
- Always inform their line manager/supervisor and make a formal report as soon as possible of any acts of violence, verbal abuse or threats made against them when they are at work.

Reviewed and approved by the Board of trustees and signed on their behalf by Chair:

Date: 3rd November 2023