



**iWYYS**  
It's What You Say

**CREATIVE** Education Provision

**I.W.Y.S.**

**It's What You Say**

**C.I.C**

**Lone Working Policy**

## Home Visiting/Lone Working Policy

|                  |                             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Reviewed by:     | Title                       |
| Charmaine Baines | Director                    |
| Joy Baines       | Director                    |
| Date             | 14 <sup>th</sup> April 2021 |

### Distribution List

|                  |                              |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Name</b>      | <b>Title</b>                 |
| Charmaine Baines | Director                     |
| Joy Baines       | Director                     |
|                  |                              |
| Next Review      | 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2022 |

## Home Visit/Lone Working Control Checklist

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | √ |
| Risk assessment checks prior to visiting family home   |   |
| Diary updated  |   |
| Signing in /signing out  |   |
| Teacher/staff member to inform expected time of arrival by phone or text message   |   |
| In case of working in evening, Teacher/Practitioner's team member to be on call. Only to be used in emergency situations, IWYS Director to contact Teacher/Practitioners NOK to be contacted, ensuring security of personal information is maintained. (Line Manager personal contact info to be issued). Changes in details to be notified immediately to ensure safety of Teacher/Practitioners on home visits.  |   |
| Buddying System for workers in outreach visits/collections. IWYS Director/Admin is the nominated person at base as the contact point for the Practitioner in lone working. She/he will be aware of the Practitioner's daily movements and all expected completion times. If for any reason nominated Director/Admin is not available he/she will ensure another member of staff is nominated as on call. A text message to say when arrived at appointment and on leaving.   |   |
| Practitioner will inform IWYS Director of any known high risk contacts being made. In any situation deemed high risk, the Practitioner will be accompanied by another person. All high risk visits must be undertaken in a controlled, secure environment. Practitioner must always take their mobile phone and check signal and battery charge immediately before embarking on any visit. If there is no signal, the visit may need to be abandoned. Again the Practitioner must report their safe return either by call or text message to nominated person. |   |
| Practitioner must report any incidents they have been involved in and any injuries they have sustained e.g. these could be physical or verbal aggression. IWYS Director(s) will take action to prevent similar incidents happening again if at all possible e.g. additional training. Use incident reporting form and follow relevant procedure.   |   |
| Monitor and review of safe systems of working to ensure effectiveness.   |   |

## **Home Visiting / Lone Working - Good Practice**

What is lone working?

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone working as “those who work by themselves without close of direct supervision.”

Lone working falls into three separate categories:

- Those who work alone on site
- Those who work away from base
- Homeworkers

For staff at IWYS, lone working is most likely to fall into the first two categories. Below will outline advice and guidance and can apply to all lone working situations.

There are workers for whom home visits are an integral part of their work; this has mainly changed due to COVID-19. In these circumstances it is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place to safeguard the young people and the adults who work with them. Currently these visits are performed with staff wearing PPE and socially distanced, following IWYS COVID-19 procedures/recovery plan.

A risk assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the child/young person, parents/carers and others living in the household. Risk factors such as hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances can make adults more vulnerable to an allegation.

Specific consideration should be given to visits outside of ‘office hours’ or in remote or secluded locations. Following an assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be in place before visits are agreed. Where little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

There will be occasions where risk assessments are not possible or not available, e.g. when emergency services are used. In these circumstances, a record must always be made of the circumstances and outcome of the home visit. Such records must always be available for scrutiny.

Under no circumstances should an adult visit a child in their home outside agreed work arrangements or invite a child to their own home or that of a family member, colleague or friend. If in an emergency, such a one-off arrangement is required, the adult must have a prior discussion with an IWYS Director and the parents or carers and a clear justification for such arrangement is agreed and recorded.

These mean that adults should:

- Agree the purpose for any home visit with IWYS Director(s), unless this is an acknowledged and integral part of their role, e.g. Key Worker etc.
- Adhere to agreed risk assessment and procedures.
- Always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure and work undertaken. This usually is shared via email and incident(s) recorded as required.

- Ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with an IWYS Director and, where appropriate action is taken.

This means that employers should:

- Ensure that they have home visit and lone-working policies of which all staff are made aware. These should include arrangements for risk assessment and required procedures.
- Ensure that all visits are justified and recorded.
- Ensure that adults are not exposed to unacceptable risk.
- Ensure that adults have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact person.

### **Working alone on site**

For all staff at IWYS, working alone on site forms an integral part of day to day duties at work. Some scenarios could include, but are not limited to:

- 1:1 mentoring/teaching delivery
- Working alone with a small group away from the classroom, or being on their own while supervising
- Being responsible for whole class supervision/delivery
- Provide personal care for students, such as administering first aid (if trained) or medication
- Put up displays on your own

It is imperative that a mobile phone is kept with staff at all times for other staff to contact them whilst on site, in case of an incident occurring on another part of the site. Please have relevant contacts on speed dial.

### **Preparation**

- Carry out a full risk assessment (where required for regular integral HV), which should be regularly reviewed.
- Gather all information about the young person/parent/carer.
- Remember it may take some time to get records through on new referrals
- Check with colleagues and other agencies.
- Wherever possible make appointments, is the time of day or day of the week significant.
- Inform the young person/parent/carer about your role and the planned appointment so they know what to expect.

### **Venue**

- Do you have to visit the home?
- Can you use another venue e.g. school, local café, outdoor public space?
- Check the address
- Consider the geographic area
- Know exactly where you're going

## **Before setting off**

- Be able to recognise aggression and poor behaviour and able to perform de-escalation techniques?
- Remember to update and notify colleagues of any changes to appointment time either by call or text message
- Ensure you are aware of the procedure for requesting assistance or other staff to accompany you on the visit
- Brief anyone covering your visits
- Dress appropriately; do not wear expensive looking jewellery
- Check equipment e.g. mobile phone
- Have some change available (parking, drink – taken from IWYS petty cash)

## **Travelling by car**

- Plan your route in and out
- Consider time of day
- Don't run out of petrol
- Ensure you have correct PPE available and cleaning products in your care (mask, gloves, wipes)
- Lock your car while travelling, if possible
- Don't leave any items on view in your car
- Keep equipment in the boot and plan it for easy access
- Consider places of safety on the route, e.g. garages, shops, police stations
- In cases of road rage do not make eye contact or gestures and drive to a place of safety
- Beware of faked 'accident' and other ploys to get you to stop

## **Travelling by public transport**

- Plan your route in and out
- Don't carry too much
- On buses, practise social distancing and sit 2 metres apart whenever possible
- In a taxi sit in the back of the car with face covering/mask on and window open
- Have change for your fare ready and accessible

## **Walking**

- Don't carry too much
- Plan your route, avoid waste ground or places where people loiter
- Keep to well-lit routes and paths
- Be alert and look confident don't switch off to the world by wearing a personal stereo/i pod/walking and texting
- Wear shoes and clothes that don't restrict movement
- Know where you're going
- Consider places of safety on your route, e.g. garages, shops, pubs
- Walk facing oncoming traffic

- Keep to the outside of the pavement
- Never accept lifts from strangers
- Keep at least one hand free
- If you must carry a handbag make sure it is small, holds little of value and can be worn diagonally across the shoulder
- Keep your car and house keys and a small amount of money separate from your bag
- Don't walk with your hands in your pockets
- Continually assess the situation if in doubt be prepared to abandon or postpone the visit

## **Parking**

- Well lit, when parking in daylight consider what the area will be like in the dark
- Observable/busy road
- Lock your car
- Close all windows
- Don't leave anything on view
- Reverse park so you can drive straight out
- Never leave car registration documents in your car
- Have your keys ready when returning to your car
- Check the interior of your car before you get in
- Be particularly careful and vigilant when getting equipment into and out of the boot

## **Equipment**

- Ensure that your mobile phone is charged and that you know how to use it
- Mobile phones should be programmed for the local police number and your nominated contacts
- Remember the limitations of mobile phones, they are unlikely to work properly in basements, lifts and high rise buildings
- Keep a list of emergency contact numbers, including those for out of hours
- Don't carry too much, if necessary make two journeys
- Be prepared to give up equipment/bags "without a fight", things can be replaced, you can't
- Always carry some loose change separate from your bag or purse/wallet

## **High Rise Flats**

- Always use the door entry system so that the client you visit knows you are on your way up
- Be confident and know what floor you want before you get in the lift
- Do not get into a lift if you feel unsure about its conditions, e.g. doors not closing properly or the lift of lights aren't working correctly
- Trust your instincts do not get into a lift with a person you feel unsure about
- If someone gets into a lift and you do not feel safe get out even if it's the wrong floor

- Always try to stand near the doors close to the control panel/alarm button (or intercom) in the lift

### **The visit**

- Remember you have a choice – visit or withdraw, if in doubt don't go in
- Remember your own behaviour can trigger or prevent aggression, treat clients courteously and allow them to retain optimum control and dignity, you are a guest in their home
- Do any of the family members (or cohabiters) give cause for concern
- Remember the dynamics of the visit can change, e.g. if someone else comes into the house or room
- Consider the need for peer support, return with a colleague if necessary
- Who knows where you are and when you're due back, leave an itinerary at your base
- Follow the client, in noting locks and access
- Try to dissuade clients from locking you in
- Note the layout of the house, in particular the way out
- Always try to sit between the client and the exit
- If violence is threatened, leave immediately unless medical requirements make this impossible
- Ask for pets to be removed from the room during the visit
- Show your identity card/badge (but don't wear it when travelling)
- Ensure all parties are satisfied with the treatment or interaction that has occurred, if there are problems be able to explain the complaints procedure
- Leave when you are finished, it's not a social call
- Whenever possible return to base or phone in when you are expected to notify and changes in plans or delays
- Recognise the limits of your own ability to deal with a situation and the time when it becomes prudent to leave

### **Action following an incident**

- Allow yourself time to recover, seek practical support from your colleagues and IWYS Director(s)
- Contact IWYS Director(s)
- Return to base
- Contact the police, if appropriate
- Seek proper medical attention for any physical injuries
- Share information with others who work in the area or visit the particular address or young person/family and record incident supported by IWYS Director(s), add report to appropriate file
- Report all incidents through the formal reporting procedures
- Be prepared for natural post trauma reactions. Even after very minor incidents, feelings may be difficult to control and may affect your ability to deal with any further problems that arise. This is a perfectly natural reaction – if in doubt – take time out. Speak with IWYS Directors.
- Ask for debriefing and further counselling if post trauma reactions persist



- Try to identify where control was lost and how, so that practice and training can be improved accordingly

**Please visit [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) for further information re'  
lone working.**