

Policy document control box	
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Date signed	
Signed by Chair of Trustees	
Date signed	

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## Purpose

This policy sets out working practice for members of staff who are working alone, whether this is with students or without. As a general rule for in-centre staff 'lone working' should be avoided. However it may be necessary in an emergency situation or to facilitate contact with a student. Given the nature of the work of RBAir staff, they will often need to work alone with students. This may occur when:

- accompanying a student to a work placement or interview;
- providing transport;
- supervising a student on a trip or outing;
- providing teaching or mentoring at a venue other than at a centre;
- meeting a student at home for mentoring or tuition.

NB When meeting at home staff will always ensure that a parent or carer is in the house and within 'contactable distance'.

## Scope:

This policy applies to all members of staff of RBAir.

## Policy Statement:

Red Balloon of the Air seeks to ensure that staff and students are safe (physically and mentally) at all times. As stated above it will be necessary for staff to work alone with a student or students: the intention of this policy is to ensure that any potential risks to either party that arise from 'lone working' are identified and ameliorated. Thus general and specific risk assessments must be carried out to inform practice.

## Risk Assessment:

It is the responsibility of RBAir managers to ensure that generic and specific 'lone working' risk assessments are generated and updated at least annually. Likely factors to be considered are:

- The environment – is it safe, what other people have access, are there good health and safety and CP procedures in place?
- The purpose of the meeting – what activities will be undertaken etc?

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- The individuals involved – are there risk factors specific to the student (eg health or history of aggression or ‘allegation making’) or to the member of staff?
- A review of previous similar situations – have ‘issues’ ever arisen?

As with any risk assessment, risk should be evaluated and, if deemed to be significant, then alternative arrangements (e.g. insistence on parental presence; colleague accompanying staff member) should be implemented.

There is a separate [Working From Home Self-Assessment](#), which all staff who work from home are required to complete.

Ensuring effective communication:

Staff must carry a charged mobile phone with them whenever they are working away from a centre, whether that be ‘lone working’ or not.

Ensuring managers / administrators are provided with all necessary information:

Staff must:

- provide accurate information as to expected timings and locations of any working away from a centre; this should be shown in staff calendars.
- ensure that a manager or administrator has the number of the mobile phone that they are carrying;
- make effective use of the lone worker ‘app’, ensuring through this medium that office staff are notified of arrival and safe departure from visits. Where a visit or meeting takes place outside office hours, staff must ensure that another member of staff is made aware of safe completion. This could be your line manager and/or the DSL.

Managers must ensure that:

- generic and specific risk assessments for lone working are carried out and filed;
- ‘informed’ decisions are reached and recorded as a result of those assessments;
- the effectiveness of practice is regularly evaluated;
- any worker who is to be involved in ‘lone working’ is appropriately trained;

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- all communication systems work adequately;
- lone workers meet regularly with their line manager;
- RBAir's insurance schedule covers lone working.

Staff must:

- take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own and other people's safety;
- engage in risk assessment before 'lone working';
- follow RBAir's policies and procedures;
- engage in lone worker safety training;
- have their RBAir identification badge with them at all times
- ensure that their work calendar contains all necessary information;
- check that administrative staff and / or the appropriate manager is aware of any lone working that is taking place;
- inform the manager or administrator if they deviate from a planned programme of lone worker sessions;
- leave the working environment if there is an imminent danger to their safety;
- carry a mobile phone, having made sure it is charged and working;
- ensure a first aid kit is available in any vehicle used for transporting students;
- wear appropriate clothing for any activity;
- inform their line manager when they have encountered a 'near miss' or have identified risks to their safety that had not previously been identified;
- report (to their line manager) any accidents or incidents in accordance with agreed procedures.

Specific issues related to:

Initial home visits...

- every attempt must have been made to access all relevant / available information pertinent to the student and her/his family;
- if there is a lack of information, then a joint visit should be considered;
- it is important to ascertain who will be in the home during the visit (relatives, family friends, visitors etc);

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- should a member of staff not have notified that the visit has been successfully completed within one hour of the identified time for completion of the visit, the headteacher, or designated other person, must make contact with the staff member who has carried out the visit, to check on her/his safety;
- information from this visit should inform future specific risk assessments;
- should a situation arise that is completely unexpected and / or raises safety concerns, then the visit should be terminated.

#### Further (ongoing) home visits...

- all visits must be logged, procedures followed and assessments updated;
- any deviations from the planned schedule must be relayed to a member of senior staff.

#### Transporting students...

- staff using their own vehicle must have business insurance cover;
- staff must provide copies of vehicle and insurance documentation to an administrator;
- if a hire car is used, the terms of insurance must be 'fit for purpose'.

#### Trips and outings...

- written parental consent must be obtained prior to the trip;
- risk assessments will be completed where off-site visits and activities require them;
- all off-site visits are appropriately staffed;
- staff will take a school mobile phone, a portable first aid kit, information about the specific medical needs of pupils along with the parents' contact details;
- there will always be at least one first aider on school trips and visits.

#### Working in a hired venue...

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- there must be another adult (eg caretaker, administrator, manager) in the building;
- there must be an available emergency contact person;
- staff must familiarise themselves with all fire and other safety procedures pertinent to the venue;
- staff must ensure students are aware of appropriate actions in case of fire;
- there must be a first aid kit available;
- steps must be taken to control access to the work area.

#### Working online from home...

- the staff member should complete the Working From Home Self-Assessment;
- the staff member should be contactable throughout the working day via the online platform, but also through a mobile or landline;
- all e-safety procedures must be followed.

#### Work undertaken outside office (normal work) hours...

- any such work must be agreed in advance with a line manager;
- contact arrangements (usually text or phone) must be agreed between the staff member and line manager;
- the member of staff should confirm that the activity has been safely completed using the PeopleSafe app or other agreed form of communication.

#### Emergency / unforeseen circumstances:

If an emergency occurs (eg accident, medical occurrence), or an unforeseen circumstance (eg student stranded – no pick up after trip) staff must take reasonable, informed decisions. It is impossible for risk assessments to cover every conceivable situation. Provided that the member of staff is able to explain why they took any decision eg to transport a student without business insurance and that explanation is based on consideration of the best interests of the student, then the action will be supported by management.

*The following factors should inform any decision making:*

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- the availability of alternative / 'better' courses of action (eg taxi rather than own car without appropriate insurance / first aid kit);
- the welfare of the student;
- the welfare of the member of staff themselves;
- the welfare of any other staff or students present.

## Centre-based working outside normal hours

Students should not be using our buildings outside working hours, unless by prior agreement with parents and staff and for a specific purpose, and overseen by at least one staff member who is first aid and fire safety trained. This should be agreed in advance with the head of centre.

If a member of staff wants / needs to work alone in an RBAir centre outside core working hours, s/he must seek permission from the head or line manager before doing so. At the end of core working hours (7.30am to 5.30pm) the senior member of staff on duty in the centre will secure the building for the night.

If a member of staff is working in the centre alone and outside core hours, external doors should remain secured and no uninvited 'visitor' allowed to enter. The member of staff is responsible for ensuring that all the locks are engaged and any alarms activated upon leaving the premises.

For their personal safety, it is expected that no lone member of staff will use an RBAir building outside the hours of 7.30am and 5.30pm. Any rare and unforeseen exception to this should be agreed in advance with a line manager and/or the head of centre.

## Legislation / Guidance that informs this policy:

- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
- Working Alone in Safety (Health and Safety Executive)
- [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)

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**Other Red Balloon of the Air (RBAir) policies that should be read in conjunction with this one:**

- Health and Safety
- Code of Conduct
- First Aid
- Safeguarding and Child Protection

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