



Lone Working Policy

Document Owner: Grace Foundation

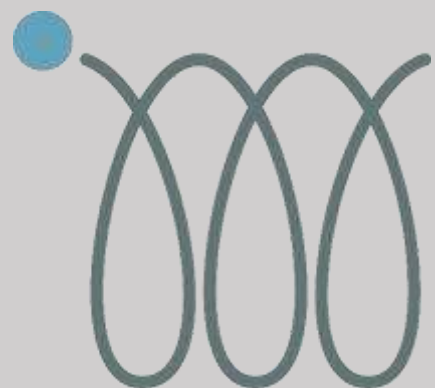
Approved by: Grace Foundation SLT

Date Approved: September 2026.

Next Review Date: September 2027

Version: 1

Security Classification: Internal use only.



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1. Policy Statement

Grace Foundation is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all employees and volunteers. This policy provides clear guidance on lone working, ensuring that associated risks are assessed and managed effectively. It aligns with the Grace Foundation Risk Assessment for Lone Working, Home Visits, and Home Working 2025 and other relevant policies.

Grace Foundation has primary responsibility for assessing and managing the health and safety risks associated with lone working and for putting appropriate measures in place to eliminate or control those risks so far as is reasonably practicable. Employees and volunteers must, however, take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others, follow agreed lone-working procedures and control measures, cooperate with Grace Foundation in meeting its legal obligations, and report any concerns or changes in risk to their Line Manager.

Grace Foundation receives HR, IT, and Financial services from IMG (UK) Holdings Ltd and its subsidiary entities (collectively referred to as IMG). Any mention of IMG in relation to Grace Foundation pertains to these entities.

This policy supports compliance with:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023
- Relevant guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

This policy is entirely non-contractual and does not form part of an employee's contract of employment.

2. Identifying Lone Workers

A lone worker is defined as:

“Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, either employees who work separately from others in an establishment or mobile workers who work away from a fixed base.”

Examples of lone workers include:

- Staff responsible for opening and closing buildings.
- Staff working outside normal working hours.
- School staff working during holiday periods.
- Staff working in isolated areas of the building.
- Family support workers and staff working away from a fixed base.
- Staff conducting home visits.

This list is not exhaustive. This policy applies to both staff and volunteers where applicable.

3. Context

Lone working presents potential risks, which must be considered and mitigated through:

- Commitment to supporting staff with safe working practices.
- Recognising and reducing risks.
- Ensuring staff have access to appropriate support and training.
- Clear understanding of responsibilities.
- Prioritising the safety of individuals.
- Ensuring adequate equipment where the risk assessment deems necessary and is in line with host school policies and also data protection legislation (e.g., mobile phones, personal alarms, security devices)
- Grace Foundation will take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, during lone working activities. Risk assessments will consider risks arising from interactions with colleagues, service users, volunteers, contractors, visitors and other third parties.

Grace Foundation does not tolerate sexual harassment in any form. Lone working can increase vulnerability to such risks, and all employees should be aware of the procedures for reporting incidents. Any concerns

regarding harassment should be reported immediately in line with the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy. Lone working must not be undertaken where a risk assessment identifies that the activity cannot be completed safely by one person.

Where Grace Foundation staff work on the premises of a partner school or other organisation, Grace Foundation will cooperate with the host organisation regarding relevant health and safety arrangements. Staff must familiarise themselves with and follow relevant site procedures, including signing in and out, emergency arrangements, first aid, fire evacuation and safeguarding procedures.

4. Assessing the Risks

Employees should follow the risk assessments provided by Grace Foundation and host schools and carry out a dynamic personal risk assessment to identify any additional risks before lone working. If any concerns arise, they must rely on their senses and professional judgment and err on the side of caution.

Where lone working involves children or young people, staff must also comply with the Grace Foundation Safeguarding Policy, the safeguarding procedures of the relevant school and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Lone working arrangements must consider safeguarding risks to both the child or young person and the member of staff, including professional boundaries and the potential for allegations or low-level concerns. Staff must ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place before undertaking lone working with a child or young person.

One-to-one work with children and young people may take place in school where this is appropriate to the employee's role and suitable safeguarding arrangements are in place. Wherever practicable, another responsible adult should be aware that the session is taking place, its location and expected duration. Staff should use appropriate, observable or interruptible spaces where available, maintain professional boundaries at all times, and follow both Grace Foundation and the host school's safeguarding procedures. Any concerns arising during or following a one-to-one session must be reported in accordance with the relevant safeguarding procedures.

4.1 Access

- Staff must follow the relevant school or site's signing-in, signing-out and access procedures and ensure that their presence on site is known in accordance with local arrangements. This includes when working during school holidays or outside normal working hours.
- Security measures must ensure restricted access to the building.
- Visitors must wear identification and be accompanied by an employee.
- Procedures must be in place for handling intruders or individuals causing a disturbance. In cases of intoxication, aggression, or unauthorised presence, staff should not approach the individual but call the police.

4.2 Isolation

- Employees working alone must inform designated colleagues of their whereabouts.

- Regular check-ins with line managers must be conducted. The frequency and method of contact must be proportionate to the assessed level of risk and agreed in advance where appropriate.
- If staff members work in isolated offices, they must inform a designated colleague.
- Personal safety devices, such as mobile phones, alarms or cameras may be provided where appropriate following a risk assessment. Body-worn cameras or other recording equipment must only be used where specifically authorised by Grace Foundation and the host school and appropriate data protection and safeguarding arrangements are in place.

4.3 Lone Working Without a Fixed Location

- Staff must log their location and expected time of return with their line manager.
- Regular contact must be maintained throughout the day.
- Where a lone worker fails to make an agreed contact, the Line Manager will follow the escalation procedure which may include phone contact, emergency contact notification, welfare checks or contacting emergency services where appropriate.
- Protection devices (e.g., SoloProtect Identicom 877) can be requested for safety. Personal safety devices, such as alarms, may be provided where appropriate following a risk assessment. Body-worn cameras or other recording equipment must only be used where specifically authorised by Grace Foundation and appropriate data protection and safeguarding arrangements are in place.

4.4 Lone Home Visits

- Before undertaking a home visit, staff must consider all available information about potential risks, including any previous incidents, known aggression or violence, safeguarding concerns, substance misuse, animals, other household members and any other relevant information that may affect their safety. Where identified risks indicate that a lone visit would not be appropriate, the visit must be undertaken with another member of staff or alternative arrangements made.
- Before a home visit, a Line Manager or other designated contact must know the address, expected start and finish time and the staff member's contact details. An appropriate check-in arrangement must be agreed, including confirmation that the visit has ended safely. If the employee fails to check in at the agreed time and cannot be contacted, the agreed escalation procedure must be followed promptly.
- Staff should carry out a dynamic risk assessment on arrival and throughout the visit. Staff must never feel obliged to enter or remain in a property because an appointment has been arranged.
- Visits must only be made to pre-approved addresses.
- Home visits do not routinely need to be undertaken in pairs. However, two members of staff should attend where identified risks, safety or safeguarding concerns make lone working inappropriate. Where a school has a procedure requiring home visits to be conducted in pairs, this must be followed.
- If concerns arise, staff should leave immediately and report them to the Ethos Lead. If circumstances differ materially from those expected, or the staff member has any concerns about their safety, they should not enter or should leave immediately and report the concern.
- Where possible, meetings should take place in public spaces (e.g., coffee shops, libraries community hubs).
- Personal alarms or body cameras may be used as additional security measures.

- Risk assessments should consider the risk of harassment, including sexual harassment by service users, family members, visitors, contractors, or other third parties. Appropriate preventative measures must be implemented where such risks are identified.

4.5 Home Working

- All home working must be agreed in advance with the employee's Line Manager and undertaken in accordance with Grace Foundation's home-working arrangements.
- Staff must ensure they have a suitable and safe working environment, including an appropriate workstation, and follow relevant health and safety, DSE, data protection and confidentiality requirements.
- Any health, safety, wellbeing or equipment concerns relating to home working should be reported promptly to the Line Manager.
- Do not undertake high-risk activities (e.g., handling hazardous substances, heavy lifting) while home working.

4.6 Personal Safety

- Do not undertake high-risk activities (e.g., handling hazardous substances, heavy lifting) while lone working.
- Employees should inform their Line Manager of any health, disability, pregnancy or other circumstances that may affect their safety when lone working, so that an appropriate individual risk assessment and any necessary reasonable adjustments or additional controls can be considered.
- All staff must be familiar with local fire evacuation procedures and first aid protocols.

4.7 Assessment of Risk

Risk assessments must consider:

- The environment (location, security, access, safety)
- The context (nature of the task, any special circumstances)
- Individuals involved (any known risks or concerns)
- History (previous incidents in similar situations)

All risk assessments should be updated regularly to reflect changes in risk levels.

4.8 Planning

- Staff must be fully briefed on possible risks before undertaking lone working.
- Communication, check-in procedures, and contingency plans must be in place.
- Line Managers are responsible for ensuring these arrangements are implemented.

4.9 Training

All employees who undertake lone working must receive:

- Lone working awareness training;
- Dynamic risk assessment training;
- Conflict management/de-escalation training where appropriate;
- Incident reporting training;
- Refresher training at intervals determined by risk.

5. Reporting

- Any incidents must be reported immediately to the Line Manager and, where necessary, escalated to the Principal and the Health and Safety lead for Grace Foundation.
- A debrief should follow any incident to review procedures and implement necessary changes.

6. Management Controls

To ensure effective management of lone working risks, the following controls must be in place:

- Clear communication and monitoring systems.
- Emergency procedures known to all staff.
- Appropriate training (e.g., handling difficult situations)
- Provision of necessary safety equipment and procedures.
- Fire evacuation and first aid procedures known to all lone workers.

Employees are encouraged to seek guidance from their Line Manager if they are uncertain about any lone working situation.

Managers should consider the potential impact of lone working on an individual's wellbeing, mental health, and feelings of isolation, and implement support measures where necessary.

7. Lone Worker Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are available on the Grace Foundation Portal. Each lone worker and their Line Manager must ensure that the risk assessment covers all potential risks relevant to their specific circumstances.

8. Monitoring and Review

- Annual reviews of this policy will be conducted, or sooner if significant changes occur.
- Staff must report new hazards to the Ethos Lead or designated Health & Safety lead for their site.
- Training and refresher sessions will be scheduled for all staff involved in lone working.

- Staff must notify their Line Manager of any changes in their health that may impact their ability to work alone.

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