



Sure Start Children's Centre

Lone Working



Sure Start Children's Centre

Policy Approved And Adopted By: Oak Meadow and Strawberry Meadow Children's Centres Partnership Board

Due For Review: November 2011

Members Of Staff Responsible For Implementation And Review :
Clare Quirke/Debbie Simmons

Oak Meadow and Strawberry Children's Centres are committed to reducing the risk to employees during periods of solitary working. It will provide effective identification, monitoring, training and management of risks associated with lone working. The centre will discharge its responsibilities to reduce the risks to staff so far as is reasonably practicable, by carrying out risk assessments and introducing appropriate preventative and protective measures.

Managers will:

- Ensure they take steps to avoid lone working that presents undue risk in their business area where reasonably practicable and always where it is identified that there is a legal requirement or local instruction to do so.
- Ensure that lone workers receive appropriate information about safe working practices, receive training as required and have access to equipment that is safe and well maintained.
- Ensure that persons who work alone receive adequate support, so far as is reasonably practicable during their period of lone working.
- Ensure persons who have to work alone have procedures in place for reporting their concerns about lone working to management.
- Ensure persons who have to work alone are aware of their own responsibilities with regard to their health and safety, including the need to co-operate with management on health and safety matters.
- Ensure they review their assessments on a regular basis and in any case after a serious accident or incident in which a person working alone is involved.
- Ensure that the 'Purple Folder' system is implemented and that all staff understand how to use the system accordingly.
- Ensure that the RED phone is charged at all times and that all staff know to answer it should it ring. This includes interrupting other work / phone calls to respond to the RED phone.
- Attend personal safety training.

Staff will:

- Comply with any lone working control procedure set down by Oak Meadow and Strawberry Children's Centres.
- Discuss with their line manager any concerns they might have about lone working controls.
- Attend personal safety training.

Home visits

There are likely to be occasions when certain centre staff members are required to conduct home visits in the course of their duties. The following procedures are to be adopted prior to any home visit irrespective of whether the family is known to the centre or not:

- At allocation meetings, consideration is given to whether the first visit to a family's home should be conducted by two members of staff.
- The family details and address are always to be left in the centre in the Home Visit Book (Purple Folder) with an estimated duration for the visit.
- Staff attending a home visit must ensure that the RED phone telephone number is easily accessible in their personal phone.
- Staff who feel at all uneasy about attending the home at any stage must contact the centre using the RED phone number and alert the centre to the perceived concern by using the Purple Folder code word system.
- Visits are always to be pre-booked and authority to visit gained from a respective manager.
- Arrangements are made to ensure that a member of staff has returned safely from home visits.

The Purple Folder and RED phone system

The Purple Folder and RED phone system has been designed in accordance with the personal safety training and in accordance with the Suzy Lamplugh Trust methods for assessing personal risk and maintaining safe working parameters.

The Purple Folder

- A purple A4 folder is provided to all centres when first attending personal safety training.
- When a member of staff completes a home visiting record, this should be kept in the Purple Folder for the duration of the visit.
- If a member of staff feels unable to undertake or continue with a planned home visit then they can use the RED (see below) phone number to alert the centre using the Purple Folder as a code word. For example by saying: "I have left my Purple Folder at the centre".
- Whilst speaking on the phone staff at the centre can use the basic questions provided in the Purple Folder to assess the immediate risk to that member of staff and to assess how to deal with the situation. For example they could advise that they return to the office to collect the Purple Folder.

The RED phone

- The RED phone is a mobile phone that has been provided to the centre and its number is to be used only in an emergency situation.
- All staff must be trained to ensure that they understand how to use the RED phone linked to the Purple Folder system.
- The RED phone must be answered immediately by the member of staff closest to it.
- The questions to be asked whilst using the RED phone are to be kept in the Purple Folder.

Violent incident reporting

- Staff who have had an occasion to feel threatened in either a verbal or non verbal manner during their normal working day are encouraged to complete a Violent Incident Report form (available on the children's centre staff portal with the policy templates).
- A copy of this report should be sent to Sam Severe, Quality and Performance Officer as well as to the Children's Services Health and Safety Team at cshst@hants.gov.uk.