



Lone Working Policy

Person responsible for policy:	Emma Shaw
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Contextual Information

Park Lane School forms part of Cheshire East LA'S provision for pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties, which includes pupils with additional physical and sensory impairment as well as those pupils on the Autistic Spectrum Continuum. The school is situated within Cheshire East with a catchment area that includes Congleton, Wilmslow, Knutsford and Poynton. There are currently 96 pupils aged from 2-19, with boys and girls being distributed almost equally. There is a very small percentage from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Park Lane School employs 11 teachers and approximately 50 teaching assistants (TAs). The teachers and TAs are assigned to work in specific classes although they may also be directed to work anywhere across school at any time.

The classes are currently located in two different buildings across the Park Lane School site with the Early Years and Key Stage 1 & 2 pupils located in the original Park Lane School building and the Key Stage 3, 4 and post 16 pupils located in the new secondary building.

All Park Lane School staff, including those not involved with teaching the pupils have enhanced DBS checks carried out. Staff who come into school regularly to work with pupils, including those who are not employed by the school, also have DBS checks which school holds details of on its Central Record.

Rationale.

Although most staff work as part of a class team and therefore other adults are either in line of sight or within earshot, there may be times during the day when a staff member needs to work with an individual pupil in a quieter area away from distractions. All reasonable and sensible precautions must be taken to ensure the safety and security of both the child or young person and the adult.

The priority for this will be focused on those pupils who have limited communication skills and lack the understanding to know when they may be uncomfortable or unhappy in a situation. Staff need to be aware that people walking by a situation only catch a snapshot of what is going

on and in that brief time, actions and parts of conversations can easily be misunderstood or misinterpreted. This could lead to people reporting concerns about things they think they may have seen or heard. With this in mind, staff are directed to follow these procedures and practices in order to safeguard the pupils and to minimise the risks of misunderstandings.

Procedures.

If staff are going to work 1:1 with a child in a planned situation, it will be after they have “risk assessed” the situation in terms of considering:

- How they will summon help if a medical situation arises (eg a seizure, diabetic low or asthma attack)?
- How they will summon help if the pupil’s behaviour escalates to the point of presenting potential harm to him/herself or the staff member accompanying them?
- How staff can minimise the possibility of misunderstandings and erroneous allegations being made?

In order to minimise these risks, and where practicably possible, staff will aim to:

- Work within line of sight of a colleague
- Work within earshot of another colleague
- Work in areas that are open to frequent “traffic” (eg a corridor)
- Avoid working in isolation behind closed doors
- Avoid working in an isolated part of the building
- Avoid working in a secluded or unsecured area of the school grounds
- Have an agreed plan with other staff if a situation should suddenly deteriorate
- Have a means of summoning help (access to a walkie talkie)

Specific Area Guidelines:

DC Suite/Library:

Open the blinds on all the windows and if the DC Suite/library is unoccupied, open the door into the corridor slightly so you are within earshot of others. If there are staff in the library, open the screen between the DC Suite and the library slightly.

Roy’s House:

It is recognised that the nature of some music therapy and music tuition sessions need pupils to work one to one with staff. In these cases, due to distractions in the playground and weather conditions, the door to Roy’s House will have to closed.

Sensory Room:

Open the door onto the corridor fully so you are within earshot of others. There is a curtain which can be drawn across the room so it is still able to be dark, but staff won’t be working in isolation behind a closed door and hopefully the curtain will deter other pupils from entering the sensory room as they are passing by

Communication Room:

If there are staff working in the office next to the Communication Room, open the door slightly between the two rooms so whoever is working in the office is aware you are in the room working one to one with a pupil. If there is no one in the office, open the door to the area by the sensory room.

Classrooms:

If you are working with one or two pupils in your classroom and the rest of the class are elsewhere in school prop the main classroom door open a little if possible. Work within sight

of the door if possible, with the pupils facing the door.

For pupils who are verbal and are able to express themselves when they are uncomfortable or unhappy in a situation, staff need to remain vigilant, but can work with the door closed, providing they are within sight of the door and the pupils are facing the door.

It is recognised that some SRE work which may involve sensitive issues where it is not appropriate to have the door to the corridor propped open. This work takes place with pupils who are verbal and able to express themselves clearly.

Supporting pupils with changing & in the bathroom areas:

In situations where pupils are required to be undressed, for example, before going swimming, or in case of needing to be completely changed, there should always be two members of staff present in the changing area/bathroom area.

During regular bathroom times there are usually more than one member of staff within the area as more than one pupil is being toileted. However, it is recognised that there are occasions when pupils may need to be taken to the bathroom during lessons and only one member of staff will be able to leave the class to support this pupil. In these cases, the bathroom door leading into the classroom should be propped open for the duration of the time the member of staff and pupil is in the bathroom area

Eye Gaze Rooms:

The nature of Eye Gaze work is to give pupils a quiet, distraction free area in which to focus on the screen. It is therefore accepted that the door between the Eye Gaze room and the ICT suite can remain closed if necessary. This door has a glass panel in it so anyone in the ICT suite can easily see into the room.

Unforeseen circumstances:

It is recognised that there are occasions when pupils may take exception to moving with the rest of their class from one area of school to another or they may need time in the classroom without their classmates to re-establish positive behaviours. In these situations, staff should always make the rest of their staff team aware that they are alone with a pupil and wherever possible, another member of staff should be around to step in and support if necessary. If there isn't anyone available, the classroom door should be propped open and at the very least, the member of staff should have a walkie talkie so they can summon help if they need to. The other walkie talkie should be with another class team member.

Implementation:

These guidelines have been shared with all staff including physiotherapists, speech & language therapists, school nurses, music therapists and occupational therapists. These guidelines are not designed to stop the fantastic work which goes on in school when staff work one to one with pupils, it is designed to make staff aware of the need for everyone to be open and transparent in their managing of certain situations in order to safeguard the most vulnerable pupils in school. All staff will be asked to read this document and sign to say they have read it and agree to follow the guidelines and practices outlined in it. If staff then choose to ignore the guidelines, they will have to take responsibility for their own actions if any misunderstanding or incidents occur.

If staff find that the guidelines listed above cannot be followed for some reason or if they require further clarification based on an assessment of risk, they should consult the Head Teacher.

Extra vigilance and care should be taken when one to one working involves pupils who have severe health needs or challenging behaviour.

Review of Policy.

The policy will be monitored and updated annually