



Time-Matters UK Ltd
Supporting Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment

Lone Working: Policy, Procedures and Practice Guidance

It is everyone's responsibility to protect children. If you are working alone with children, either in a paid or voluntary capacity, you need to take steps to ensure they are safe.

1. Policy Statement

Where the conditions of delivering services or its associated tasks require Time-Matters UK Mentors to work alone, both the individual staff member and managers have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

2. Purpose

This policy is designed to alert staff and/or volunteer mentors to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff / volunteer mentors who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below.

4. Context

Lone workers face the same risks as anyone else, as well as those directly related to their work. Within Time-Matters UK's overall policy relating to safer working practices, support for lone workers is an essential part, and the same principles apply, particularly: a commitment to supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices recognising and reducing risk a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff a clear understanding of responsibilities the priority placed on the safety of the individual over property a commitment to providing appropriate training for staff.

5. Definitions

A lone worker is an employee who performs an activity that is carried out in isolation from other workers without close or direct supervision. Such staff may be exposed to risk because there is no-one to assist them and so a risk assessment may be required.

6. Mandatory Procedures Personal Safety

The following procedures are necessary for all staff / volunteer mentors to carry out their sessions with children safely. Please read each one carefully.

Safeguarding Concerns

Please make sure you are familiar with the Time-Matters Child Protection Policy.

- If you suspect a child is in immediate danger, call emergency services on 999.

If a concern is not urgent:

- Contact your nominated child protection leads - Dr Lorna Brookes lorna@timemattersuk.com or Emily Livsey livseyemily@gmail.com
- Lorna Brookes or a member of board may escalate any serious concerns to the local child protection service for that child's local authority.

Communicating with families

- Before the session make sure the child's parent or carer knows when the session will take place.
- Do make sure another appropriate adult from Time-Matters UK knows what time you will be running every session, preferably somebody with safeguarding responsibility.
- If you are running an online zoom meeting, make sure it is password protected and only the child and their parent/carer have the password.
- For online sessions, do make sure the child's parent / carer knows when the session is finished. At the end of each session ask the child to ask their parent to come to the screen (if over the internet

rather than face-to-face) so you can tell them that the session is over.

- Never give children your personal contact details. If you need to arrange meeting times, do this via the child's parents or carers.
- If you need to ring a parent/carer make sure you withhold your phone number. Do not share your personal phone number with families. To withhold your number type 141 before the number you are dialing.
- When emailing a parent/carer use your work / university email address. Do not use your personal email address.
- Don't add, follow or interact with children or young people or their families on your personal social media account.
- Any contact must be appropriate, justifiable, approached sensitively and agreed to by the child.
- CC in your supervisor to all communication with the family.

Venue

- For online mentoring, run your zoom mentoring session from an appropriate 'working from home' environment (eg work from a table and chair, not a bed).
- You will not be asked to conduct any lone working in a families home. At present mentors deliver their sessions in schools or online (although access to schools might be restricted due to the Covid19 pandemic).

Appropriate dress

- You should not wear any nightclothes to run your session when working from home, and all your clothes should be professionally appropriate when you are conducting your sessions.

Behaviour

- Always behave appropriately when you are around children and young people. This will help make sure everyone feels comfortable and protected.
- Set appropriate boundaries and do not be overly familiar with children and young people.

- Never make inappropriate jokes or comments to or around children.
- Refer to the Time-Matters UK behaviour codes setting out how you will behave and how you expect the children you work with to behave. These will be shared with children, parents and carers before the mentoring starts.

Recording information

You should write a short summary of each mentoring session:

Make notes on the following four items.

1. Date and time of the session.
2. Activities you did.
3. General outcomes: you might include how the child engaged – what went well, what didn't work etc.
4. Your ideas for your next session.

Only use the child's initials in your notes and emails. This is very important.

Email your notes directly to your supervisor using your work email address.

IF you need to store any notes DO create a password protected file on your computer to keep these notes in. Delete this folder once the programme has completed. Do NOT make handwritten notes that identifies the child you are mentoring.