



## Outreach Lone Working Policy

<b>Date of last review by Local Governing Body</b>	March 2026
<b>Review cycle</b>	Annual
<b>Policy due for review by Local Governing Body</b>	March 2027

## 1. Policy Statement and Rationale (The Why)

This policy sets out Estuary Academy's approach to lone working for staff who visit pupils in their homes as part of a planned response to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), medical reasons or any other barriers to attending school.

It also extends to include 'Walk and Talk' therapy which involves outreach lone working with students who struggle within a school setting where an intervention in the community would help increase engagement. This intervention is undertaken in agreed places including, but not limited to, students' home school (to and from), local shop, park or any location agreed by SLT, Staff Lead and Parent which would benefit the development of social skills, communication and understanding of safety.

Estuary Academy is committed to ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are effective, robust, and consistently applied; staff welfare, safety, and wellbeing are prioritised; and pupils receive appropriate, proportionate, and well-planned support.

In line with Ofsted expectations, Estuary Academy ensures that any off-site or alternative provision is carefully planned, risk assessed, clearly recorded, regularly reviewed by senior leaders, and focused on reintegration into school rather than replacing attendance indefinitely.

Estuary Academy recognises its statutory duties under health and safety legislation, safeguarding guidance, and its employer duty of care.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff from Estuary Academy undertaking lone working home visits.

This policy applies when:

- A pupil is unable to attend school due to EBSA, medical reasons or any other barriers to attending school.
- Home visits form part of a time-limited, planned intervention
- The visit is undertaken by one authorised member of staff
- The pupil has identified medical or mental health needs impacting attendance
- The provision forms part of, or is linked to, an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Undertaking lone walk and talk therapy
- All safeguarding, health and safety, and lone working requirements can be met

Where provision is linked to medical needs or an EHCP, arrangements will be documented, reviewed regularly, and aligned with statutory guidance.

## 3. Key Principles of Lone Working (The How)

Lone working home visits or walk and talk must never be informal. All visits and interventions must be planned, risk assessed, authorised by senior leadership, recorded and reviewed. A note should also be made on Cproms that a home visit has taken place (see section 9 for further details).

## 4. Mandatory Parent/Carer Presence for home visits

A parent or nominated carer **MUST BE** present in the home for the full duration of every visit.

Staff must end the visit immediately if the parent/carers leaves or if circumstances change. Staff should also leave if at any point they feel unsafe or safety concerns arise.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team:

- Approves all lone working home visits.
- Approves all walk and talk therapy requests.
- Ensure safeguarding arrangements meet Ofsted expectations.

Line Managers:

- Review and authorise risk assessments.
- Act promptly on concerns raised.

Staff:

- Follow this policy at all times.
- Complete risk assessments (see section 11 for further details)
- Withdraw from visits if safety concerns arise.

## 6. Pre-Visit/Pre-walk and talk intervention Requirements

Before any home visit:

- Risk Assessment completed.
- Student Risk Assessment taken into consideration and approved for visit or intervention.
- Parental Consent obtained.
- Parent/carer presence confirmed if in home.
- Senior leadership approval recorded.
- Emergency contact and check-in/check-out times agreed.

Buddy System:

1. Share teams calendar with line manager and or nominated buddy.
2. Calendar invites to manager or buddy with home visit time/walk and talk intervention time.
3. Include address of HV and your mobile number in the calendar invite, include name of parent / carer present.
4. Includes route and destination of walk and talk intervention.
5. Call line manager or buddy on entry and exit.
6. NB: if the meeting overruns a text should be sent to advise.

## 7. Emergency Contact and Escalation Procedure

Staff must check in on arrival and check out on departure.

It is the responsibility of the manager or buddy to check times and if the member of staff has failed to check in or out.

If a staff member fails to check out within 15 minutes of the agreed time, escalation procedures will be followed including welfare checks if required. SLT is made aware and the lone worker is called, and the house of location is visited. In emergency situations 999 is called.

## **8. During the Visit/Intervention**

### **In home**

Staff must carry a charged mobile phone, remain in communal areas, maintain a clear exit route, and keep visits within agreed times.

Staff must not enter bedrooms, transport pupils, or accept gifts, food, or money. We would also recommend that staff avoid requesting the use of the bathroom.

### **In Community on walk and talk intervention**

- Choose low-traffic, predictable and known routes
- Set the time frame clearly
- Clarify how breaks, rest stops, or weather changes are handled
- Pace intentionally
- Walk side-by-side at a conversational pace
- Let the Student set the speed when possible

## **9. Post-Visit and Intervention Procedures**

After each visit staff must record outcomes, report safeguarding concerns immediately, and review the ongoing suitability of home visits and interventions.

Details of the Home visit or intervention should be recorded.

- CPOMs
- Outreach Home Visit/ Walk and Talk Therapy
- Log under Attendance
- Log on Edukey for interventions.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

If during the home visit or intervention you have an additional safeguard concern, please log the incident on cpoms in detail and log under safeguarding.

Remember: if you feel a child is at risk of immediate harm or danger you should remove yourself from the property and call 999.

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, following incidents or near misses, or in response to updated safeguarding guidance.

### Lone Working Risk Assessment (Home Visit)

Staff Name	
Role	
Contact Number	

Pupil Name	
Year Group	
Reason for visit (EBSA / Medical / EHCP)	
Visit Address:	
Date of Visit:	
Time in:	Time out:

#### Risk Factors (Please tick).

History of aggression	Animals in the home	Substance misuse concerns	Known safeguarding concerns	Unpredictable household members

Emergency Contact Name	
Emergency Contact Number	
Teams calendar invite shared with line manager and/or nominated buddy (including address of house visit, your mobile number, name of parent or carer present).	Yes / No

Staff Signature	Date
-----------------	------

Manager Approval (Name)	Date
Manager Signature	

#### Lone Working Risk Assessment (Walk and Talk Intervention)

Staff Name	Role
Pupil Name:	Year Group

Staff Contact Number	
----------------------	--

**Risk Factors (Please tick).**

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	How might they be harmed?	Mitigation
Dogs	Staff / Student	Physical injury caused by bites from dogs	<p>Do not assume a dog is friendly.            Do not try to pat a dog, even if it is on a lead with its owner.            Walk away calmly.            In the event of injury</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess level of injury.</li> <li>• End walk and return early if necessary.</li> <li>• Phone ambulance if necessary then phone contact point.</li> </ul>
Traffic	Staff / Student	Physical injury caused by being stuck by a vehicle	<p>Befriender to walk next to any road with young person inside.            Follow the prescribed route.            Cross all roads using zebra crossings and islands wherever possible.            In the event of an injury:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess level of injury.</li> <li>• End walk and return early if necessary.</li> <li>• Phone ambulance if necessary then phone contact point.</li> </ul>
Physical Abuse	Staff / Student	Possible physical abuse by others	<p>Avoid large groups.            De-escalate, avoid potential inflammatory comments.            Stay together and walk away calmly.            Call police as soon as able, 999 if in immediate danger.            In the event of an injury:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess level of injury.</li> <li>• End walk and return early if necessary.</li> </ul> <p>Phone ambulance if necessary then phone contact point.</p>
Weather	Staff / Student	Injury could be caused by falling or blown objects in high winds or by being struck by lighting	<p>Participants will be dressed appropriately for the weather.            If high winds or thunderstorms are forecast, then session will be re-arranged.</p>