



*Developing young people through
personal challenge*

Lone Working Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Youth Challenge Oxfordshire has the necessary safeguarding systems and working practices to ensure the safety of all employees and volunteers undertaking lone working.

Lone workers are those employees and volunteers who are working alone with a vulnerable young person as part of their agreed work with Youth Challenge Oxfordshire eg as part of the Walk 'n' Talk scheme or one to one meetings between Group Leaders and individuals in their youth group. Unless agreed beforehand no employee or volunteer should undertake lone working with a young person.

The Youth Group Manager must agree all lone working arrangements and be aware of where and when the lone working will take place.

Responsibility of Youth Group Manager

The Youth Group Manager has a duty to ensure that:

- Activities during which employees or volunteers may be at risk are identified by assessing the risk and implementing and recording the appropriate control measures.
- Arrangements are in place to record the whereabouts of lone workers wherever possible.
- There is a system in place for employees and volunteers to report that they are safe at the end of a lone working session which should be agreed beforehand.
- All personal safety incidents must be reported, recorded, investigated and action must be taken to try to prevent a recurrence. Volunteers are able to discuss openly with the Youth Group Manager any concern about their personal safety and well-being at any time, real or perceived.
- Appropriate sanctions are implemented to demonstrate that proven acts of violence, intimidation or any other unacceptable conduct towards a volunteer, will not be tolerated.

Responsibilities of Employees and Volunteers

Employees and Volunteers have a duty to:

- Adhere to the guidelines and procedures outlined for managing personal safety.
- Check the current risk assessment prior to lone working.

- Not to place themselves unnecessarily “at risk”.
- When lone working with young people, to choose a venue that provides confidentiality rather than privacy, preferably where the employee or volunteer can be seen easily by other adults.
- Tell the Youth Group Manager or other contact person regarding their whereabouts, how long they will be there, and the expected time of return, and to report all incidents and concerns about personal safety to the Youth Group Manager.
- Adhere to the agreed system for reporting at the end of a visit that they are safe if causes for concern have already been identified.

Working Alone at Youth Group Meetings

Where possible volunteers should avoid being alone with individual young people during youth group meetings, but where this is necessary or part of the programme volunteers should:

- Ensure that the other youth group leader knows where they are, how they can be contacted and how long they will be. Where possible work should be in a room where the volunteer and the young person are clearly visible at all times.
- Check in on an agreed contact number or at an agreed location on completion of the task.
- Ensure that their mobile phone is switched on and accessible.
- It is very important for volunteers that any incidents relating to lone working which have potentially or actually put the volunteer at risk are reported to the Youth Group Manager as soon as possible.
- Should the young person become concerned about their personal safety or the way in which the session is being handled by the volunteer they should report their concerns to the Youth Group Manager who will follow up their concerns and report back. If the session is being conducted by the Youth Group Manager then their concerns should be reported to Christine Douglas (Safeguarding Lead) on 07879468157.
- The outcome of the lone meeting should be recorded as part of the session feedback. If there are any safeguarding issues these must be dealt with according to the YoCO Safeguarding Policy.

Working Alone on a Walk ‘n’ Talk

During the COVID19 lockdown the mental health of the young people may benefit significantly from the opportunity to talk to a trusted adult. Youth Challenge Oxfordshire has responded to this need by offering Walk ‘n’ Talk sessions of one hour for a YoCO young person who requests it. Employees and Volunteers are not expected to do this but Youth Challenge Oxfordshire is very grateful to those who feel able to. The following measures must be in place for this to operate safely:

- The Walk 'n' Talk sessions must be agreed by the Youth Group Manager beforehand. Details of when and where this will take place must also be recorded. They must take place during daylight hours and in a public place that is clearly visible. Social distancing must be observed during the whole session.
- The Volunteer must have a mobile phone that is switched on and charged and the Youth Group Manager should know the mobile phone number
- Should the young person become concerned about their personal safety or the way in which the session is being handled by the volunteer they should report their concerns to the Youth Group Manager who will follow up their concerns and report back. If the session is being conducted by the Youth Group Manager then their concerns should be reported to Christine Douglas (Safeguarding Lead) on 07879468157.
- The outcome of the lone meeting should be recorded whenever possible and appropriate. If there are any safeguarding issues, these must be recorded and dealt with according to the YoCO Safeguarding Policy.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Trustees 8th February 2021

On behalf of the Board of Trustees Jane Cranston (signed)

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees: Review Date February 2022