LONE WORKING AND PERSONAL SAFETY POLICY (CHURCH HOUSE)

INTRODUCTION

The staff at Church House may find themselves working alone on occasions during their working day, especially during the beginning or end of the day.

It is important that the risks associated with lone working are understood and that sensible precautions and adequate arrangements are made to ensure the staff are as safe as possible.

POTENTIAL HAZARDS OF LONE WORKING

There are a number of areas where risks may be greater when working alone:
- Accidents or sudden illness when there is no-one to summon help or first aid;
- Violence or the threat of violence;
- Allegations of inappropriate and / or abusive behaviour;
- Fire or other threat;
- Attempting tasks which cannot be done safely by one person alone, e.g. moving furniture or climbing a ladder;
- Lack of a safe way in or out of a building e.g. danger of being accidently locked in or out;
- Loss or damage to property e.g. theft of equipment.

ASSESSING THE RISKS OF LONE WORKING

The perception of what is a risk and the actual risk itself may be seen differently by individuals. Each member of staff should consider the risks and take appropriate steps to reduce the risk.

MEASURES TO MINIMISE THE RISKS OF LONE WORKING

There are a number of things which can be done to minimise risks when working alone. The most important precautions to be taken are:
- Knowing the telephone short code for the site security guards which is #805 (full number is 07971 009 652);
- Knowing as much as possible about any potentially risky situation;
- Ensuring there is a means of communicating with others;
- Not getting into a situation to become vulnerable and knowing what exits are available if required;
- Informing another person as to the details of the lone situation, by having a "Buddy" who is aware of the situation and will call to check for safety. A predetermined code word between staff member and Buddy should be agreed in case the need to summon help arises;
- Keeping all external doors locked at all times;
- Ensure that any lost keys to external doors are reported and the locks changed where appropriate;
- Using the intercom to check the identity of callers before opening the door;

- Checking the identification of callers claiming to be from a utility company or contractor;
- Ensuring that security lights are switched on in poor light;
- Ensuring that the telephone answerphone does not identify that there may be lone workers on the site;
- Calling the police as soon as an intruder is suspected or anything suspicious is observed;
- Ensuring that staffing is organised to reduce lone working as much as possible;
- Not having visitors in the office where a staff member is alone. Callers should be requested to make an appropriate appointment to visit, without disclosing that the staff member is alone on the premises.

REPORTING INCIDENTS

Incidents should be reported so that the staff member can be supported as well as learning lessons and improving practice.

CONCLUSION

Establishing safe working practices for lone working should take into account the risk factors and then implement the safest ways of working.

Further details on Personal Safety can be obtained from:

Suzy Lamplugh Trust
http://www.suzylamplugh.org

National Churchwatch
http://nationalchurchwatch.com/

Local Police Force website
https://www.cheshire.police.uk/