



**Somerset SENDIAS**  
Special Educational Needs and Disability  
Information, Advice and Support (0-25)

**A free impartial service for children and young people with SEND (aged 0 – 25), and their parent/carer**

**Lone Working Policy**

**Introduction**

1. Somerset SENDIAS is a free impartial and confidential service providing information, advice and support about SEND. Any information shared with the service is treated in confidence and is regulated in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2020.
2. The role of Somerset SENDIAS is to ensure that children, young people and their parent and carers have access to confidential and impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions about their own or their child's SEND. This is achieved by working in partnership with children, young people and their parent and carers.
3. SENDIAS members of staff may in the course of their duties work directly with children, young people and their parent and carers. This policy acts as a guide to safe working practices during such circumstances.
4. Lone working means:
  - a. working in a fixed establishment with nobody else on site, or when others may be elsewhere on the premises
  - b. working in a remote location, including outdoors
  - c. working from home or visiting a parent and carer's home
  - d. travelling in the course of work.
5. In these circumstances, the individual is a 'lone worker' and potentially is more at risk during the course of their duties, these risks, although very low, may involve:
  - a. having an accident and being unable to get help;
  - b. dealing with aggressive or violent behaviour (see guidance at Annex A);
  - c. being the subject of false allegations.



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6. Sometimes it may be advisable to carry out a risk assessment prior to any planned lone working.

## **Section 2 – Responsibilities**

7. Lone working is an essential part of SENDIAS duties. The service is committed to ensuring that this does not put any of its staff in a situation of unreasonable risk. Overall responsibility for identifying and ensuring risk to a SENDIAS worker lies with the SENDIAS Manager.

8. All SENDIAS staff have a duty to safeguard their own safety and that of their colleagues, service users and other members of the public.

9. In order to assess and control the risks, the SENDIAS Manager will:

- a. ensure that where a role is likely to involve lone working this will be specified in the recruitment information or job description, in order to make this requirement explicit to all applicants;
- b. ensure that the induction programme for SENDIAS staff and include written materials and discussion about the SENDIAS Lone Working Policy and the risk assessment and control measures in place for lone working;
- c. hold a 'Staff ' Personal Details' Form (Annex B) in the SENDIAS office;
- d. carry out risk assessments and implement appropriate preventative protective measures (control measures) to reduce risks so far as is reasonably practicable;
- e. Complete Risk Assessment form (Annex C).

10. In order to assess and control the risks staff will:

- a. take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others;
- b. not carry children, young people and/or their parent and carer in their own vehicles in any circumstance;
- c. follow any instructions resulting from a risk assessment, as instructed by their line Manager;
- d. comply with all relevant policies and attend training as appropriate;



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- e. report any new or lone working issues to the SENDIAS Manager;
- f. report any accidents, incidents of violence, aggression or implied aggression where a situation may have escalated, using the form available from SENDIAS Manager or on the Somerset Council HR intranet).

### **Section 3 – Risk Assessment**

- 11. If any risks are identified, these will be discussed with the SENDIAS Manager and SENDIAS worker who will contact any named social worker to discuss further.
- 12. The SENDIAS Manager will agree with the SENDIAS worker how support will be provided.
- 13. If the risk assessed is to avoid meeting in the parent and carer or young person's home, SENDIAS worker will arrange to meet with the family in public places/buildings (i.e. libraries, children's centres) as long as confidentiality can be maintained.

### **Section 4 – Procedures**

- 14. The most common lone working situation is when staff meet with parents and carers, in their own homes in such circumstances it is vital that staff and are familiar with the SENDIAS 'Code of Conduct during appointments' (Annex D). The following guidelines apply in this instance:
  - a. identification badges must be worn by staff and whenever they are carrying out SENDIAS duties;
  - b. appointments with children, young people and their parent and carer must be pre-arranged;
  - c. such appointments can be carried out either in the child, young person or parent and carer's home or in a mutually convenient location such as a children's centre, library, school etc. as long as confidentiality can be maintained;
  - d. it is not permitted in any circumstance, for children, young people or parent and carer to meet in the home of SENDIAS staff



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- e. Staff must withhold their personal details e.g. home address, personal contact numbers and social media platforms from families they are supporting;
- f. staff should ensure that they let someone in the SENDIAS office, another member of staff know the location and time of any meeting with a service user. Outlook calendars must be kept up to date and used for this purpose within the SENDIAS team;
- g. staff may accompany each other to appointments and home visits. Staff will obtain parent's permission and Manager's agreement before a joint visit.
- h. staff must take their work mobile phone with them when conducting SENDIAS duties. The phone should be kept close to hand throughout the appointment;
- i. staff are advised to input ICE (In Case of Emergency) numbers on their mobile phones and download what3words app.
- l. visits with children, young people and their parent and carer should only be carried out between core working hours between 9am to 4pm. Meetings in the home of children, young people and their parent/carer should be time-limited and not exceed more than 1 hour 30 minutes. If SENDIAS staff require longer than this, another appointment should be arranged.
- m. personal safety should be paramount at all times and it is acceptable to ask parents and carers to locate animals in alternative areas in their home or request them not to smoke during the meeting.
- n. staff should dress appropriately for professional meetings/appointments and appropriately for home visits e.g. sensible footwear and clothing and should avoid carrying any valuables to appointments.
- o. it is advisable that sensitivity should be used when parent and carers share personal or confidential information about their child with SEND, in the presence of that child or young person;
- p. staff should ensure they are never in a room alone with a child (under the age of 16). They must ensure when they meet with a child in a home environment that a parent and carer or adult with parental responsibility is always present. If the parent and carer does leave the property whilst staff are present, this incident would need to be recorded and reported back to the SENDIAS Manager.

## **Somerset SENDIAS**

The Hollies Children's Centre, South Road, Taunton, TA1 3AG  
01823 355578 [SomersetSENDIAS@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetSENDIAS@somerset.gov.uk) [www.somersetsend.org.uk](http://www.somersetsend.org.uk)



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- q. if staff feel threatened or intimidated during a meeting with a child, young person or parent and carer, they should terminate the meeting immediately and follow the recommended SENDIAS procedures.
- r. appointments should be recorded in the required format with accurate and factual details. Service users are entitled to have a copy of such records if requested.

15. SENDIAS adheres to the codes of conduct outlined in Somerset Council policies with regards to driving, alcohol and substance misuse and gifts. All SENDIAS staff are expected to adhere to these codes of conduct. Further details are available on the Somerset Council intranet or can be requested from Human Resources (HR) Advisory Team.

### **Section 5 – Recording an Incident**

16. All incidents must be recorded on the 'Incident Form' (Annex E) and reported to your SENDIAS Officer and or SENDIAS Manager immediately.

17. All reported incidents will be entered in the Incidents File by the SENDIAS Manager who also has a duty to report them to the Health and Safety Executive within 10 working days.

### **Section 6 – Cause for Concern**

18. In the event that a member of staff or volunteer fails to return from an appointment with a service user or from carrying out SENDIAS duties within a reasonable time frame, the following procedure should be followed:

- a. a SENDIAS member of staff will repeatedly attempt to contact the staff member
- b. contact should be made with the young person or parent and carer of the child the SENDIAS staff member or volunteer was meeting with (if the appointment was in a home environment) or someone from the appointment venue e.g. children's centre manager or place of duty, should be contacted in an attempt to establish further details;

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- c. the SENDIAS Manager, in the first instance, or Participation Partnership Business Manager – Children’s Services should be contacted to decide on what further action may be necessary;
- d. in the event of continued concern for the safety and wellbeing of the staff or volunteer, action may be taken to contact their Next of Kin (if not already informed) and the Police.

**Section 7 – Policy Review**

- 19. The SENDIAS Manager will review the Lone Working Policy annually.
- 20. SENDIAS Officers responsible for supervising staff and should provide an opportunity for monitoring the on-going safety of the team.
- 21. Individual concerns relating to lone working should be raised in supervision sessions with the Manager or the SENDIAS Officer.

**Section 8 – Contact details**

Somerset SENDIAS  
The Hollies Children’s Centre  
South Road  
Taunton  
TA1 3AG

01823 355578  
sometersendias@somerset.gov.uk  
www.sometersend.org.uk

**Section 9 – Administration**

Date written: September 2023



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Review date: September 2024

To request this Policy in Easy Read, Braille, Large print or Translated into other languages, please contact Somerset SENDIAS on 01823 355578 or email [somersetseindias@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:somersetseindias@somerset.gov.uk)

**Section 10 – References**

Annex A - Dealing with difficult behaviour

Annex B – Staff and ' Personal Details Form

Annex C – Lone Working Risk Assessment

Annex D – Code of conduct during appointments'

Annex E - Incident Form



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**Annex A**  
**(Lone Working Policy)**

**Dealing with difficult behaviour**

A1. Very occasionally parents/carers and young people may exhibit unpleasant behaviour that causes workers to feel threatened, intimidated and uncomfortable.

2. Signs of threatening or aggressive behaviour can be:

- a) rising tension in face and body, shouting, swearing, kicking/banging furniture and walls;
- b) personal insults, tended to cause distress or harassment;
- c) verbal threats, gestures, stances or obstruction;
- d) possession of any kind of weapon, regardless of the overt threat to use it;
- e) being incapable whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- f) racial harassment/sexual harassment/disability harassment;
- g) deliberate silence;
- h) bullying;
- i) assault, grasping, pulling clothes, poking, punching, shouting;
- j) any unwanted physical contact;
- k) assault: causing Actual Bodily Harm or Grievous Bodily Harm;
- l) threatening use of dogs/animals/minder.

3. If Somerset SENDIAS staff and experience any of the above behaviours, the meeting must be ended and remove themselves from the situation, and report the incident to the SENDIAS Office and SENDIAS Manager.

**If at any point you feel your personal safety is ultimately compromised, dial 999 and seek Police assistance.**



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**Annex B  
(Lone Working Policy)**

**Staff Personal Details Form**

**Your Details:**

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

.....

.....

**Home Tel No:** .....

**Mobile:** .....

**Email:** .....

**Usual means of travel:** .....

**Car Registration:** .....

**Make/Model:** .....

**Next of Kin Details:**

**Name:** .....

**Relationship:** .....

**Home Tel:** .....

**Mobile:** .....

**Please state below any additional information you feel may be relevant:**

.....

.....

.....



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Note: leave 5 empty pages after this page i.e. p 11 - 16 page to allow for Risk Assessment Form to be included chronologically.  
Print this policy and also signed Risk Assessment Form and scan altogether to capture as one document.



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**Annex C**  
**(Risk Assessment)**

## Risk assessment form (H&S)

Name of assessor(s)		Group / Establishment:	
Date			

What is the workplace / activity / equipment / conditions (delete as appropriate) being assessed:	How was the assessment done? e.g. desktop exercise, site visit, in consultation with employees, managers, safety representatives?	Next review date:
		Is the assessment 'generic' or specific to the situation?

Who could be harmed, and how?	What is already being done to control the risks?	*Risk Rating Severity x Likelihood			What further action is recommended to reduce risks further?	Action by whom?	Date action due	Date action done
		S	L	S x L				

\* [Click here](#) for guidance in calculating Risk Rating. Rate the severity of the potential harm (between 1-5, where 5 is fatal) and the likelihood of the harm occurring (again 1-5 where 5 is very likely). Guidance is at [HS 004](#).

Please now pass this assessment to your manager for approval			
Name of assessor's manager:		Date:	
Signature:		Manager's comments	



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**Annex D**  
**(Lone Working Policy)**

**Code of conduct during appointments**

B1. When meeting with service users, Somerset SENDIAS staff and can follow the procedure outlined below to enhance their personal safety and well-being:

- a. A request can be made to the SENDIAS office or another member of staff requesting a phone call approximately ten minutes after the estimated time of arrival. The purpose of this call is to establish that all is well initially.
- b. If contact cannot be established via mobile phone due to lack of signal, an attempt should be made to phone either the service user's landline, if available or the host venue's landline. All reasonable steps should be taken to make contact in these circumstances.
- c. In the event that the member of staff or volunteer is unhappy or uncomfortable for any reason, they should make the following statement:
- d. "I can see that would be a problem. Do you need me to come back to the office immediately?"
- e. This in turn should alert the member of staff phoning that all is not well.
- f. The member of staff or volunteer should terminate the meeting immediately and **within ten minutes** make contact with their colleague/member of staff (who made the initial phone call) to report that the meeting has been ended and that they are safe and secure.
- g. If for any reason, the member of staff or volunteer fails to call the office or member of staff within ten minutes, another attempt should be made to contact the member of staff or volunteer by phone.
- h. If there continues to be cause for concern, paragraph 17 of this document, should be implemented i.e. the SENDIAS Manager or Business Partnership Manager – Children's Services, should be contacted to decide on what further action is necessary.



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**Annex E**



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**Incident Form**

This form should be completed following any incident that occurs during your duties for Somerset SENDIAS. On completion, this form must be given to the SENDIAS Manager immediately.

<b>1. When, Where and Who?</b>			
<b>When</b> did the incident occur? (please give details and time)			
<b>Where</b> did the incident occur?			
<b>Who</b> was involved?			
What was the nature of any injuries, assaults or allegations?			
<b>2. What and How?</b> What happened and how did it happen? What was going on leading up to the incident?			
Name(s) of witness(es).			Please attach any witness statements
<b>3. What next?</b>			
Describe any action that was taken after the incident.			
<b>Name</b>			
<b>Signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	

END.