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| Policy/Procedure Name: | COVID-19 – Working with students off-site |
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| Policy/Procedure Owner: | Principal |
| Management Committee Approved By: | Senior Management Team |
| Governor Committee/Trustee Committee (where appropriate) Approved By: | Quality and Performance Committee |
| For Action By: | All Staff |
| For Information to: | All staff, students and other stakeholders (published on Intranet) |
| Approval requested to upload on the Treloar Website: | No. (tick if requested) |

Treloar Covid-19 Guidance Note:

Please note that this should be read in conjunction with existing policies including:

[HS008 Lone Working Policy](#)

[Guidelines for Safer Working Practice and Code of Conduct](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults](#)

Working away from Treloar with students

Given the change in circumstances due to Covid-19 there may now be students who would ordinarily attend Treloar's who cannot attend on site, and where it may be considered appropriate for support to be provided by Treloar staff off-site, either in the family home or on other appropriate premises (e.g. in another setting).

Government guidance has indicated that this should be considered if necessary and in line with meeting student need:

Those with an EHC plan should be risk-assessed by their school or college in consultation with the local authority (LA) and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. **This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services.** Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.¹

As this will be a change to normal working practices, some additional considerations are needed:

- Any proposed support off-site should be approved in advance by a member of the Treloar Senior Management Team (e.g. Principal, Head of School, Head of Therapy).
- There should be a written record of this approval, and it should clearly list the purpose of the visit, with this also being communicated to student and family to avoid any uncertainty about the purpose of, and scope of, the visit (e.g. to provide advice, to provide care, to provide therapeutic input). This should be recorded on Databridge.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

- A “Lone Working” Risk Assessment should be completed by the line manager of the person(s) who will be providing support off-site in line with [HS008 Lone Working Policy](#). This should consider factors relating both to the worker themselves (e.g. their own health, training needs), to the student (e.g. their own care needs and skills required) and the environment in which they will be working (e.g. physical environment, manual handling equipment, known hazards, animals).
- Where possible visits should be completed by two members of staff, although this will not always be possible or appropriate.
- At times when a worker is visiting a student off-site their manager (or an identified “stand-in”) should be contactable via telephone in order to offer advice or support.
- The worker and their manager should identify in advance their schedule including times and addresses of any planned visits. They should agree a plan of how the worker will keep the manager up to date with their movements – likely sending a text message on arrival and on leaving a visit would be appropriate.
- Prior to visiting the worker (or their manager) should contact the family/student and establish:
 - That their visit is expected and appropriate
 - That no-one in the property has symptoms of Covid-19 (persistent cough, high temperature) or has had symptoms in the past 14 days. If there had been then discussion needed with Treloar Health Centre and Senior Management Team to determine if visit essential (i.e. to provide vital care), and if so whether there appropriately trained and equipped members of staff to safely manage this in line with guidance from Public Health England.
- Standard personal protective equipment (PPE, for example gloves and an apron if carrying out care where could be in contact with bodily fluids) should be provided to the worker by their line manager in line with any likely procedures/therapy that may be carried out during their work, it is not the responsibility of the family or student to provide this.
- All staff should be aware that normal reporting practices apply, and that they have the same duty to safeguard students (and other children or adults they encounter) regardless of where they are working. If anyone is concerned they should call the Treloar Safeguarding number (**07825262418**) as soon as possible.
- Accidents, incidents and near misses should be recorded on IRIS.

- Managers should also offer enhanced supervision to those working off-site, ideally on a minimum of a weekly basis but in line with the skills and needs of those carrying out this work.

General guidance and advice for managers to consider when supporting staff to work with students off-site²:

Travelling on public transport

If members of staff travel on public transport in the course of work, they should be aware of their surroundings and risks to their personal safety during the journey. If they notice aggressive behaviour they should remove themselves from the vicinity. They should be mindful of paying for bus/train/tram fares and the risk of robbery. Having the correct change ready will help.

The availability of timetables for transport departure and arrival times would be helpful for members of staff.

Driving safety measures

There are a number of hazards associated with driving and a number of measures that can be adopted to ensure safer driving conditions for members of staff.

Ensure the worker has a car that is roadworthy. Keep a record of the worker's car including car tax due dates, current MOT certificate, service records and current insurance policies (should include business insurance) and encourage the worker to belong to a breakdown service (or purchase group cover for all members of staff). Treloar staff may also consider use of the Treloar Pool Car or other transport.

Ensure that staff don't get too low on fuel. Make sure they are aware of the local petrol stations, particularly those that the organisation may have accounts with, and the distances they might have to travel between stations.

Ensure that members of staff do not encourage 'road rage' from others by responding to the aggressive behaviour of other drivers.

A GPS system may assist members of staff to travel safely and directly to unknown areas.

Members of staff should not have any valuables on show in the car. These should be kept in the boot, or in a place where they cannot be seen.

Before leaving from any visit, members of staff should have their car keys to hand so that they can get into the car quickly. Also they should lock their doors while driving between visits. These suggestions are especially important when travelling at night or in quiet rural areas or high risk urban areas.

If driving in hazardous weather conditions, members of staff should not put their own safety at risk. When driving through a storm or torrential rain, it may be safer for the worker to

² From "Skills for Care" www.skillsforcare.org.uk

stop and let the worst of the storm pass by. This may prevent an accident occurring. It may not be safe for members of staff to drive through thick snow and alternative methods of transport or personnel based closer to the addresses to be visited may be a safer option.

Parking safety measures

Assessment will highlight any parking problems, but members of staff should be mindful of alternative places to park, especially if the visit is taking place in dark, unlit areas. Also, the worker should be aware of car park entrances and exits, payment machines and their own personal safety when parking. Any incidents or suggestions for a safer method of parking should be communicated to the manager and other staff visiting the same address.

Accident and breakdown procedures

If the worker is involved in a car accident or breakdown (and if they are able), it is important to summon help as soon as possible from the appropriate emergency or breakdown services. They should also let their own organisation know that they are unable to continue their visits.

When waiting for services (unless attending an injured person), the worker should stay in the car with the doors locked. (Except if on the hard shoulder of a motorway or similar road, as per Highway Code guidance.) If anyone stops to help, members of staff should be aware of their motives for doing so, and let them know, without fully opening the door or window, that the emergency services will be arriving in two minutes. If a worker is in any way concerned, they should also tell the person that the police will be arriving in two minutes, then summon the help of the police as soon as possible. For more detailed advice, see the Highway Code, sections 274 and 275.

Visits to unknown people and locations

The first time a worker visits a new person or location, they will be unsure of the situation they are entering and so should remain alert for any sign of threat.

If the person to be visited is not present, the worker should not enter the address, and should explain to the person at the door that another appointment will be made.

Members of staff should pay particular attention to entrances and exits, how doors are opened and shut and whether the door would need to be unlocked in order to leave the property – in which case a worker should say that it is company policy not to work in anywhere that they are locked in. They should always follow someone into the building, not enter first.

Members of staff should be wary of any changes in behaviour of the person being visited or others present. They should try to keep calm and distance themselves from any angry or aggressive person.

Members of staff should not meet aggression with aggression. They should try to stay calm and diffuse the situation.

If the worker feels uncomfortable in any way, they should remove themselves from the house as soon as possible, making an excuse such as having to get some paperwork or equipment from the car. They should then phone for advice or help. If they do not want to go back into the house, they

should call the person visited on the phone to say they have been called back to the office urgently. Future visits would then need to be planned in pairs if deemed safe.

Theft

Members of staff should be mindful of their own personal safety and not do anything that will jeopardise this. They should take into an address only that which is needed for the visit. Additional unnecessary baggage may afford an opportunistic thief the chance of stealing something more easily.

If a thief tries to steal something from the worker, it is safer to let them have the items. Fighting back may cause injury to the worker.

If able, the worker should summon help during the attack or, if not, as soon as practicable afterwards.

First aid and first aid kits

Members of staff who work alone would benefit from having first aid training, in case of injury to the person being visited or to assist themselves or others if there is an accident. For this reason it may be prudent to provide a simple first aid kit for members of staff to keep in their car.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

There may be times when PPE is required to reduce risk to members of staff. This can be to prevent the spread of infection or to protect the worker from chemicals used for cleaning purposes around the home.

If a worker does have to use PPE then it is also important that they are trained in how to put it on, remove it and dispose of it safely.

Using chemicals safely

Chemicals used for cleaning purposes, such as detergents and disinfectants, should have a separate COSHH assessment carried out and members of staff should receive training on how to use them safely and how to deal with spillages.

The use of PPE is appropriate when using chemicals, for the safety of the worker.

Manual handling

To ensure the safety of members of staff when moving and handling people (a very big risk to the health and safety of members of staff), ensure that each person being visited has had an assessment of their moving and handling needs.

Ensure that any equipment that is required is up-to-date with its inspection, is safe to use and there is enough room for the worker to use it.

Where there is a risk to the worker and/ or person being visited with only one person operating equipment, ensure two people carry out the lifting task.