STEP IN SUPPORT SERVICES

Lone Working, Outreach, Home Visits, Remote Working & Health and Safety Policy

Supporting Reintegration Every Step of the Year

Policy owner	Step In Support Services Directors
Approved by	Directors
Version	1.0
Effective from	October 2026
Review due	October 2027 or earlier if guidance/legislation changes

1. Purpose and scope

Step In delivers support beyond conventional classrooms. This policy establishes safe systems for 1:1 work in schools, homes, community settings and other agreed locations.

This policy applies to all Step In directors, employees, sessional practitioners, associates, volunteers and contractors. It applies to work delivered in schools, homes, community venues, online where agreed, and other off-site locations.

Step In supports young people aged 11-18 through bespoke reintegration programmes combining attendance and engagement work, therapeutic/wellbeing support, educational support, social and personal development, family liaison and multi-agency working.

2. Risk assessment before delivery

- Obtain relevant risk, medical, safeguarding and behavioural information from the commissioner.
- Agree the location, session time, arrival/departure arrangements, emergency contacts and responsible adult arrangements where relevant.
- Assess known risks associated with the young person, household, location, travel, community context, peers, animals, substances, weapons, violence, exploitation, absconding or environmental hazards.
- Record control measures and review them when circumstances change.

3. Lone-working controls

- A manager/colleague must know the practitioner's planned location and expected session finish time.
- Use an agreed check-in/check-out process for home/community work.
- Practitioners keep a charged phone available and know emergency/escalation contacts.
- If risk becomes unacceptable, the practitioner may end or relocate the session and must inform Step In/commissioner promptly.
- No practitioner is expected to remain in an unsafe environment.

4. Home visits

- Home visits are purposeful, agreed and recorded; unplanned visits are exceptional and risk-led.
- Where appropriate, a parent/carer or responsible adult should be aware of the visit.
- Work in an appropriate shared space where practicable while maintaining reasonable privacy for therapeutic conversations.
- Practitioners must not enter where there is an immediate threat from violence, intoxication, weapons, aggressive animals or another serious hazard.

5. Community and off-site activity

- Activities must link to the reintegration plan and be age/need appropriate.
- Location-specific risks, travel, road safety, accessibility and supervision are considered.
- High-risk activities require separate approval and specific risk assessment; they are not undertaken simply because a young person requests them.
- The commissioner/parent/carer is informed of agreed off-site arrangements as appropriate.

6. Remote and Online Delivery

Step In may use remote and online intervention to complement face-to-face, school-based, home and community support and to provide continuity between in-person interventions.

- Remote support may include therapeutic mentoring, counselling where appropriate, educational or Functional Skills support, attendance and reintegration work, and individual check-ins.
- Before remote work begins, practitioners should consider the young person's individual needs and any known safeguarding, wellbeing, communication or other risks that may affect safe and effective online engagement.
- Remote sessions must take place through agreed professional platforms and should normally be scheduled in advance as part of the young person's agreed support arrangements.
- Practitioners must conduct remote sessions from an appropriate professional environment that protects confidentiality, maintains professional boundaries and minimises unnecessary interruptions.
- Practitioners should establish, where appropriate, the young person's location at the start of a remote session and be aware of relevant emergency or safeguarding contact arrangements.
- Practitioners must remain alert to changes in the young person's behaviour, presentation, communication or surroundings that may indicate a safeguarding, wellbeing or safety concern.
- Where a young person unexpectedly disconnects or becomes uncontactable and there is concern about their immediate safety, reasonable attempts should be made to re-establish contact and the concern escalated in accordance with Step In's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and agreed commissioner arrangements.
- Where remote sessions are repeatedly missed or a young person is unable to engage effectively online, Step In will review the suitability of remote delivery with the young person, parent/carer and commissioning school as appropriate. Increased face-to-face or outreach support may be considered.
- Remote interventions must be recorded in the same way as face-to-face work, including the date, nature of the intervention, engagement, relevant outcomes and any safeguarding or follow-up actions.
- Remote intervention does not replace emergency or crisis services. Where there is an immediate risk to the young person or another person, practitioners will follow Step In's safeguarding and emergency escalation procedures.

7. Missing/non-arrival

1. Check the agreed attendance/collection arrangement and attempt appropriate contact.
2. Inform the named school/commissioner contact promptly where the young person was expected during education time.
3. Consider known safeguarding risks and follow the individual plan.
4. Escalate immediately to the school DSL, parent/carer, police or other agency where risk indicates this is necessary.
5. Record actions and outcome.

8. Accidents, incidents and emergencies

Immediate safety and medical needs take priority. Call 999 where necessary. All significant accidents, near misses, violence, threats, property damage or safeguarding incidents must be recorded and reported. Risk assessments and controls will be reviewed after incidents.

9. First aid and medication

Step In will clarify first-aid arrangements with commissioning settings and for off-site work. Practitioners do not administer medication unless this has been expressly agreed, they are competent/authorised to do so and an appropriate care plan is in place.