

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



1.1 Children's rights and entitlements

- STEPS Pre-School promotes children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in the setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- STEPS Pre-School promotes children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- STEPS Pre-School promotes children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- STEPS Pre-School helps children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- STEPS Pre-School work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all the children.

What it means to promote children's rights and entitlements to be 'strong, resilient and listened to'.

To be strong means to be:

- secure in their foremost attachment relationships, where they are loved and cared for by at least one person who is able to offer consistent, positive and unconditional regard and who can be relied on;
- safe and valued as individuals in their families and in relationships beyond the family, such as day care or school;
- self-assured and form a positive sense of themselves – including all aspects of their identity and heritage;
- included equally and belong in the setting and in community life;
- confident in their own abilities and proud of their achievements;
- progressing optimally in all aspects of their development and learning;
- part of a peer group in which they learn to negotiate, develop social skills and an identity as global citizens, respecting the rights of others in a diverse world; and

To be resilient means to:

- be sure of their self-worth and dignity;
- be able to be assertive and state their needs effectively;
- be able to overcome difficulties and problems;
- be positive in their outlook on life;
- be able to cope with challenge and change;
- have a sense of justice towards themselves and others;
- develop a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others; and
- be able to represent themselves and others in key decision making processes.

To be listened to means:

- adults who are close to children recognise their need and right to express and communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas;
- adults who are close to children are able to tune in to their verbal, sign and body language in order to understand and interpret what is being expressed and communicated;
- adults who are close to children are able to respond appropriately and, when required, act upon their understanding of what children express and communicate; and
- adults respect children's rights and facilitate children's participation and representation in imaginative and child centred ways in all aspects of core services.

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

STEPS Pre-School will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

STEPS Pre-School is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

- The designated people for Child Protection and Safeguarding who has overall responsibility for child protection practice in the setting are, **GINA DARLING, FIONA BUTCHER** and **RUTH LANSTONE**. The designated officer who oversees this work and is the St Stephen's Church Parish Children's Representative is **Hannah Penlington**.
- The designated person and the designated officer ensure they have relevant links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.
- STEPS Pre-School ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children's social care team or the NSPCC. They receive updates on safeguarding at least annually.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.
- All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2018) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All staff understand LSCB thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm.
- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard.
- All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of mobile phones), whistleblowing and dignity at work.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age appropriate way.
- All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
- Volunteers must:
 - ◆ be aged 17 or over;

- ◆ be considered competent and responsible;
 - ◆ receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings;
 - ◆ be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
 - ◆ be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - ◆ the criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - ◆ certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate;
 - ◆ the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - ◆ details of who obtained it.
- All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- STEPS Pre-School notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
- Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO.
- The designated person in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate online safety policy in place.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
- The designated person will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to children's social care, the LADO, Ofsted or Riddor.

STEPS Pre-School is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering children through the early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Designated Persons receive appropriate training, as recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, every two years and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually.

- STEPS Pre-School ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision. We ensure that all staff receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters, online training and/or discussion at staff meetings at least once a year.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being within sight and/or hearing of other staff or volunteers.

Curriculum

- At STEPS Pre-School we introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. (see Staff and Administration Policy)

Support to families

- At STEPS Pre-School we believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure, and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

STEPS Pre-School is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG, 2015) and the Care Act 2014.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- STEPS Pre-School acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- STEPS Pre-School ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:

- ◆ significant changes in their behaviour;
 - ◆ deterioration in their general well-being;
 - ◆ their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - ◆ changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
 - ◆ unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - ◆ any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- STEPS Pre-School is aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.
 - We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
 - STEPS Pre-School is aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision, such as abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, including through internet abuse; Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation or extremism.
 - In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCB procedures on responding to radicalisation.
 - The designated person completes online Channel training and online Prevent training STEPS Pre-School is aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police.
 - STEPS Pre-School staff also make themselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
 - Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and follow the LSCB procedures.
 - Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the designated person. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
 - In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
 - STEPS Pre-School refer concerns to the local authority children's social care team and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
 - STEPS Pre-School staff take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.
 - STEPS Pre-School staff take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

- All staff are also aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.
- We have a whistleblowing policy in place.
- Staff/volunteers know they can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing; if they feel that the organisation has not acted adequately in relation to safeguarding they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
 - ◆ listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - ◆ does not question the child, although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification;
 - ◆ makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the designated person is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity, and within one working day.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

1.3 Allegations against a Member of Staff

How can we protect ourselves?

- If a child sustains an injury whilst in our care, we will record it in the accident book as soon as possible. When the child is collected, we will inform whoever picks the child up about the injury and ensure that they also sign the accident book.
- If a child arrives with an injury sustained elsewhere we will ask for an explanation and again record this in the incident book and ask whoever has brought in the child to sign the record.
- We will ensure that all staff undertake regular child protection training.
- Our behaviour management policy states that no physical sanctions will be used and we will ensure that everyone complies with this within the setting.
- We will try to avoid situations where an adult is left alone in a room with a child. If this does occur, we will make sure that the door is left open and there are other people around.
- We will avoid engaging in rough physical play with children – as this may be misconstrued and could cause accidental injury to a child.
- We will avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
- We will take up references, including one from the candidate's last employer, and will always question any gaps in employment history.
- We will encourage an open door ethos to enable staff to talk to the manager if they have concerns about the conduct of any of their colleagues.

What happens if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff in the setting?

- If anyone makes an allegation of abuse against a member of our staff, one of the team of Designated People for the setting will be informed immediately and will contact:
Area Children's Safeguarding Officer who acts in the role of LADO, or Local Authority Designated Officer. The Incumbent will also be informed.
They will assess whether the allegation reaches the threshold for referral to Police/Children's Social Services and advise accordingly regarding further action to be taken in respect of the child and the member of staff.
- The relevant designated person will complete the attached form for recording allegations or complaints made against staff
- The relevant designated person will not discuss the allegation with the member of staff concerned, unless advised to do so by Children's Social Services.
- **All staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt – consult.**
- If Children's Social Services and / or the police decide to carry out an investigation, **it may be possible that we will be advised to suspend the member of staff, whilst enquiries are carried out.** STEPS Pre-School could also invoke their disciplinary procedure.
- We will not carry out an investigation ourselves **unless** Children's Social Services and the Police decide it is not appropriate for them to do so. We understand that Ofsted may wish to undertake further investigations.

ALWAYS REMEMBER THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD IS PARAMOUNT

Guidance for Managers completing Checklist for handling and recording allegations or complaints of abuse made against a member of staff regarding a child/children in their care. (Appendix One).

1. Record the name and position of member of staff against whom the allegation or complaint has been made.
2. Verbal complaints should be backed up in writing by the complainant if appropriate; so may require immediate action that does not allow time for this to happen.
3. It is important to identify who made the complaint and whether it was received first hand or is a concern that is passed on from somebody else. If this is the case it is better that you receive the information first hand. If a parent, carer or a member of staff at STEPS Pre-School makes a complaint against you it must be passed immediately to your line manager.
4. Record the full name, age and date of birth of the child.
5. The address recorded should be the address at which the child lives with the main carer.
6. If there are one or more alleged incidents, be specific as possible about dates that they are alleged to have happened.
7. Check the attendance register / diary of work to see if the child was present / seen on that day and the shift patterns of the staff member involved to see if they were working at that time. This will confirm the likelihood of the incident having taken place.
8. If you have received the complaint in writing attach it to the checklist. You can then summarise it on the form.
9. Any other information should be factual. It will be helpful if you can confirm things such as the level of contact that the staff member has with the child and any other minor concerns that may have been raised previously. **Do not attempt to investigate the complaint yourself.**
10. Remember that if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of our staff you must inform one of the team of designated people, who will contact the Children's Safeguards Team for further advice.
11. **Ofsted must be informed** if an allegation is made against a member of our staff, even if the Children's Safeguards Team decides no further action is required. Ofsted may do their own investigation to ensure that registration requirements are being met.

12. Make a note of any actions the Children's Safeguards Team or Ofsted advise you to take and the date or times at which you implemented them.
13. **If the allegation is against either RUTH LANSTONE or FIONA BUTCHER then you should speak to GINA DARLING (Manager) who will follow the procedures above.**
14. If **GINA DARLING** is not available, you should speak to **SARAH BROWN (Chairperson)**.
15. **If the allegation is against GINA DARLING, then you should speak to FIONA BUTCHER or SARAH BROWN.**

1.4 Looked After Children

STEPS Pre-School is committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of 'Looked after Children' (LAC): *Children and young people become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).*

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being.

Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home; however there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who works.

In our settings, we place emphasis on promoting *children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to*. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on these two important concepts, *attachment and resilience*. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives as the basis for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and are the basis in developing positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

- The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- We offer places to two-year-old children in exceptional circumstances who are in care. In such cases, the child should have been with the foster carer for at least two months and show signs of having formed a secure attachment to the carer and where the placement in the setting will last a minimum of three months.
- We offer places for funded three and four-year-olds who are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and has formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
- Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

Procedures

- The designated person for looked after children is the designated child protection co-ordinator.

- Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensures appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The setting recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting that will determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates and the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
- The care plan needs to consider such issues for the child as:
 - ◆ the child's emotional needs and how they are to be met;
 - ◆ how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
 - ◆ the child's sense of self, culture, language/s and identity – how this is to be supported;
 - ◆ the child's need for sociability and friendship;
 - ◆ the child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
 - ◆ how any special needs will be supported.
- In addition the care plan will also consider:
 - ◆ how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
 - ◆ what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;
 - ◆ what written reporting is required;
 - ◆ wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and
 - ◆ with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings, fun-days etc alongside the foster carer.
- The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a relationship with his or her key person sufficient to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.
- In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.
- Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage 6 areas of learning.
- Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.
- If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker according to the setting's safeguarding children procedure.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.

- Transition to school will be handled sensitively and the designated person and or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

1.5 Uncollected Child

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session, STEPS pre-school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by two experienced and qualified practitioners who are known to the child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible.

We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Procedures

- Parents of children starting at the setting are asked to provide the following specific information which is recorded on our Registration Form:
 - ◆ Home address, telephone number and email address - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.
 - ◆ Work telephone number (if applicable).
 - ◆ Mobile telephone number (if applicable).
 - ◆ Names and telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
 - ◆ Who has parental responsibility for the child.
- On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they inform us of how they can be contacted.
- On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they provide us with details of the name and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child. We agree with parents how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child by the use of a pass word only known by the parent, person collecting and the setting.
- Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number.
- We inform parents that we apply our child protection procedures in the event that their children are not collected from the setting by an authorised adult within one hour after the setting has closed and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises.
- If a child is not collected at the end of the session, we follow the following procedures:
 - ◆ The diary is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
 - ◆ If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
 - ◆ If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting – and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form – are contacted.
 - ◆ All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
 - ◆ The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file, unless parents have given specific consent to do so.
 - ◆ If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
 - ◆ We contact our local authority children's social care team on 01732 362442.
 - ◆ The child stays at setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker.
 - ◆ Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative if they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
 - ◆ Under no circumstances do staff members go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.

- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.

1.6 Missing Child

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedures

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the setting leader.
- The setting Manager/Deputy Manager calls the police and reports the child as missing and then calls the parent.
- The setting Manager/Deputy Manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The setting Manager/Deputy Manager talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- The setting Manager/Deputy Manager contacts the chairperson of the STEPS Support Group and reports the incident. The chairperson comes to the setting immediately to carry out an investigation, with a church representative. If the setting leader is not the Manager or Deputy Manager at the time of the incident, they will be contacted and will make arrangements to attend the setting as soon as possible in order to liaise with other agencies.

Child going missing on an outing

This describes what to do when members of staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the setting leader and/or other staff back in the setting. If the setting Leader has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated carer and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The setting Manager/Deputy Manager are contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and one will make their way to the venue..
- The setting Manager/ Deputy Manager contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The setting Manager/ Deputy Manager contacts the parent, who makes their way to the venue or the setting.
- The staff and children return to the setting.
- In an indoor venue, a member of staff contacts the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- The Manager/Supervisor contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson comes to the setting immediately to carry out an investigation, with a church representative. The setting Manager/Supervisor, or a member of staff may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

NB. In the event that, the chairperson is unavailable please contact Rev. Mark Barker, Chair of the Parochial Church Council on 01732 353079

The investigation

- Staff are to keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The setting Manager/Supervisor together with the chairperson, speaks with the parent(s).
- The chairperson and a church representative carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the report.
 - What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
 - When the child was last seen in the group/outing.
 - What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
 - The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
 - A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing all staff present during the incident. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- Ofsted is informed and they may conduct their own investigation.
- The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Setting leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the setting leader. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the setting manager/deputy manager and the other should be the chairperson of the management committee or representative, No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The chairperson or proprietor will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice
- from the Diocese.

1.7 Online safety (inc. mobile phones and cameras)

STEPS Pre-School take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment or exposure to inappropriate materials in the setting.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment

- Only ICT equipment belonging to the setting is used by staff and children.
- The designated person is responsible for ensuring all ICT equipment is safe and fit for purpose.
- The designated person ensures that safety settings are set to ensure that inappropriate material cannot be accessed.

Internet access

- Children do not normally have access to the internet and never have unsupervised access.
- The designated person has overall responsibility for ensuring that children and young people are safeguarded and risk assessments in relation to online safety are completed.
- Children are taught the following stay safe principles in an age appropriate way prior to using the internet;
 - ◆ only go on line with a grown up
 - ◆ be kind on line
 - ◆ keep information about me safely
 - ◆ only press buttons on the internet to things I understand
 - ◆ tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet
- Designated persons will also seek to build children's resilience in relation to issues they may face in the online world, and will address issues such as staying safe, having appropriate friendships, asking for help if unsure, not keeping secrets as part of social and emotional development in age appropriate ways.
- All computers for use by children are located in an area clearly visible to staff.
- Children are not allowed to access social networking sites.
- Staff report any suspicious or offensive material, including material which may incite racism, bullying or discrimination to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk.
- Suspicions that an adult is attempting to make inappropriate contact with a child on-line is reported to the National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at www.ceop.police.uk.
- The designated person ensures staff have access to age-appropriate resources to enable them to assist children to use the internet safely.
- If staff become aware that a child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they discuss this with their parents and refer them to sources of help, such as the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 or www.nspcc.org.uk, or Childline on 0800 1111 or www.childline.org.uk.

Email

- Children are not permitted to use email in the setting. Parents and staff are not normally permitted to use setting equipment to access personal emails.
- Staff do not access personal or work email whilst supervising children.

Mobile phones and Cameras

- Children do not bring mobile phones or other ICT devices with them to the setting. If a child is found to have a mobile phone or ICT device with them, this is removed and stored in the office or locked kitchen until the parent collects them at the end of the session.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form for the above purposes and have access to records holding visual images of their child.

- Parents use of mobile phones is to be kept outside of the pre-school and that they ask permission before taking images of children.
- Mobile phones owned by staff should not be kept on their person during working hours. Staff use of mobile phones is permitted only in the kitchen and Manager's Office away from children and this should be kept to a minimum during the settings opening hours.

Social media

STEPS Pre-School recognises the increased use within society of social media including websites such as Facebook and Twitter. STEPS Pre-School and St Stephen's Church place value upon the improved communication that can result from their use, and believe that through this, we can enhance our reputation, increase awareness of our various activities and reach out to people with the love of Christ. As such, this policy aims to ensure that both staff and families are fully aware of the restrictions that we place on the use of such sites from the perspective of STEPS.

Social media is a term used to describe a suite of applications that are used to communicate or broadcast to people via the web. Social media is unique because it supports collaboration and the sharing of opinions including matters of faith on a global scale. It is distinctive because the content is usually managed by users rather than the provider of applications. Social media activities include maintaining a profile page on a networking site such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn.

Guidelines for STEPS Facebook Group

St Stephen's Church require those taking part in social media to be honest, respectful and that any views expressed should be consistent with the stated vision and values of St Stephen's Church. The lines between public and private can become blurred so both staff and parents/carers should assume that everything that is written is permanent and can be viewed by anyone at anytime. STEPS Staff should also assume that everything can be traced back to you personally as well as to your colleagues or the church.

Staff use of social media applications as part of your role within the church must be approved by the Office Manager. In the case of a dispute he/she will raise the matter with the vicar.

Both employees and parents/carers posting on the page must ensure that their content, or links to other content, is:

- ◆ **Appropriate and Professional** - The content and use of the resource should be suitable for the purpose and should reflect the character of the group.
- ◆ **Necessary** - The use of social networking for groups should be of value to the church and be in line with the purposes of the ministry.
- ◆ **Integrity** - The viewable profile of the group should reflect the Christian life.
- ◆ **Accompanying** - A virtual relationship is only alongside a physical, pastoral relationship.
- ◆ **Discernment** - Asking oneself what is appropriate and suitable, and questioning the decision as to the use and function of various features and settings.

Any group affiliated to St. Stephen's Church for the benefit of its members and the local community must be approved by the Office Manager and Incumbent. Any unofficial pages or groups will be asked to close or be reported to Facebook accordingly.

Administration

The STEPS Facebook group should have at least two administrators whom are church members, and one of whom must be a member of the ICT Committee. Once a person has left the church they should no longer hold administrator rights. The current administrators are **JONO RODGERS & CRAIG SPICKERNELL** (ICT Support Group) and **RACHAEL PLOWMAN** (Church Administrator) & **DAWN CLARKE** (Steps Administrator)

The STEPS Facebook group is for those who are part of, or connected to, STEPS Pre-School. It is used for notices, updates, sharing information and photographs.

Membership

As this is a group relating to a service provided to children and their parents/carers, people have to ask to become a member of the group.

Parents of children who are no longer connected to the Pre-School, for example if their child has left for Primary School, will be removed from the group.

The use of Facebook is not intended as a replacement for a pastoral relationship.

Posting Permissions

Only members can post in the group and all posts must be approved by the page administrators prior to appearing on the group page.

Group Settings

The STEPS Facebook page is a 'Secret Group'; meaning that only members can see the group, who is in it and posts that are published to the page.

Content

The STEPS Facebook page is designed to be a forum for sharing information regarding the activities and services of the setting.

Photographs of children will not be included without the specific written permission from parents on each occasion. Any photographs that are included with this specific permission, will not include the name of the child.

Electronic learning journals for recording children's progress

- Managers seek permission from the senior management team prior to using any online learning journal. A risk assessment is completed with details on how the learning journal is managed to ensure children are safeguarded.
- Staff adhere to the guidance provided with the system at all times.

Use and/or distribution of inappropriate images

- Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images. In the event of a concern that a colleague or other person is behaving inappropriately, the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy, in relation to allegations against staff and/or responding to suspicions of abuse, is followed
- Staff are aware that grooming children and young people on line is an offence in its own right and concerns about a colleague's or others' behaviour are reported (as above).

1.8 Promoting positive behaviour

STEPS Pre-School believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are understood, supported and met and where there are clear, fair and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

As children develop, they learn about boundaries, the difference between right and wrong, and to consider the views and feelings, and needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places and objects. The development of these skills requires adult guidance to help encourage and model appropriate behaviours and to offer intervention and support when children struggle with conflict and emotional situations. In these types of situations key staff can help identify and address triggers for the behaviour and help children reflect, regulate and manage their actions. [We appoint a member of staff as behaviour coordinator to oversee and advise on the team's responses to challenging behaviour.]

Procedures

In order to manage children's behaviour in an appropriate way I/we will:

- ◆ attend relevant training to help understand and guide appropriate models of behaviour;
- ◆ implement the setting's behaviour procedures including the stepped approach;

- ◆ have the necessary skills to support other staff with behaviour issues and to access expert advice, if necessary;

Stepped approach

Step 1

- We will ensure that EYFS guidance relating to 'behaviour management' is incorporated into relevant policy and procedures;
- We will be knowledgeable with, and apply the setting's procedures on Promoting Positive Behaviour;
- We will undertake an annual audit of the provision to ensure the environment and practices supports healthy social and emotional development.
- We will ensure that all staff are supported to address issues relating to behaviour including applying initial and focused intervention approaches.

Step 2

- We address unwanted behaviours using the agreed and consistently applied initial intervention approach. If the unwanted behaviour does not reoccur or cause concern then normal monitoring will resume.
- Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others will be discussed between the key person, Manager and/or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). During the meeting, the key person will use their knowledge and assessments of the child to share any known influencing factors (new baby, additional needs, illness etc.) in order to place the behaviour into context. Appropriate adjustments to practice will be agreed and if successful normal monitoring resumed.
- If the behaviour continues to reoccur and remains a concern then the key person and SENCO should liaise with parents to discuss possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. If relevant and appropriate, the views of the child relating to their behaviour should be sought and considered to help identify a cause. If a cause for the behaviour is not known or only occurs whilst in the setting then the behaviour coordinator will suggest using a focused intervention approach to identify a trigger for the behaviour.
- If a trigger is identified then the SENCO and key person will meet with the parents to plan support for the child through developing an action plan. If relevant, recommended actions for dealing with the behaviour at home should be agreed with the parent/s and incorporated into the plan. Other members of the staff team should be informed of the agreed actions in the action plan and help implement the actions. The plan should be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person and SENCO until improvement is noticed.

Step 3

- If, despite applying the initial intervention and focused intervention approaches, the behaviour continues to occur and/or is of significant concern, then the key person and SENCO will invite the parents to a meeting to discuss external referral and next steps for supporting the child in the setting.
- It may be agreed that the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or Early Help process should begin and that specialist help be sought for the child – this support may address either developmental or welfare needs. If the child's behaviour is part of a range of welfare concerns that also include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, follow the safeguarding guidelines.
- Advice provided by external agencies should be incorporated into the child's action plan and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child's progress.

Initial intervention approach

- We use an initial problem solving intervention for all situations in which a child or children are distressed on in conflict. All staff use this intervention consistently.

- This type of approach involves an adult approaching the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions, acknowledging the feelings of those involved, gathering information, restating the issue to help children reflect, regain control of the situation and resolve the situation themselves.
- High Scope's Conflict Resolution process provides this type of approach but equally any other similar method would be suitable. Periodically the effectiveness of the approach will be checked.

Focused intervention approach

- The reasons for some types of behaviour are not always apparent, despite the knowledge and input from key staff and parents.
- Where we have considered all possible reasons, then a focused intervention approach should then be applied.
- This approach allows us to observe, reflect, and identify causes and functions of unwanted behaviour in the wider context of other known influences on the child.
- We follow the ABC method which uses key observations to identify a) an event or activity (antecedent) that occurred immediately before a particular behaviour, b) what behaviour was observed and recorded at the time of the incident, and c) what the consequences were following the behaviour. Once analysed, the focused intervention should help determine the cause (e.g. ownership of a toy or fear of a situation) and function of the behaviour (to obtain the toy or avoid a situation) and suitable support will be applied.

Use of rewards and sanctions

- All children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.
- Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers may provide an immediate change in the behaviour but will not teach children how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the child with the skills to manage situations and their emotions. Instead, a child is taught how to be 'compliant' and respond to meet adult's own expectations in order to obtain a reward (or for fear of a sanction). If used then the type of rewards and their functions must be carefully considered before applying.
- Children should never be labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group and left alone in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. However, if necessary children can be accompanied and removed from the group in order to calm down and if appropriate helped to reflect on what has happened.

Use of physical intervention

- The term physical intervention is used to describe any forceful physical contact by an adult to a child such as grabbing, pulling, dragging, or any form of restraint of a child such as holding down. Where a child is upset or angry, staff will speak to them calmly, encouraging them to vent their frustration in other ways by diverting the child's attention.
- Staff should not use physical intervention – or the threat of physical intervention, to manage a child's behaviour unless it is necessary to use 'reasonable force in order to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damage property' (EYFS).'
- If 'reasonable force' has been used for any of the reasons shown above, parents are to be informed on the same day that it occurs. The intervention will be recorded as soon as possible within the child's file, which states clearly when and how parents were informed.
- Corporal (physical) punishment of any kind should never be used or threatened.

Challenging Behaviour/Aggression by children towards other children

- Any aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will result in a staff member intervening immediately to challenge and prevent escalation.

- If the behaviour has been significant or may potentially have a detrimental effect on the child, the parents of the child who has been the victim of behaviour and the parents of the child who has been the perpetrator should be informed.
- The designated person will contact children's social services if appropriate and will consider whether notifying the police if appropriate.
- The designated person will make a written record of the incident, which is kept in the child's file; in line with the safeguarding guidelines.
- The designated person should complete a risk assessment related to the child's challenging behaviour to avoid any further instances.
- The designated person should meet with the parents of the child who has been affected by the behaviour to advise them of the incident and the setting's response to the incident.
- Ofsted should be notified if appropriate.
- Relevant health and safety procedures and procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints should be followed.
- Parents should also be asked to sign risk assessments where the risk assessment relates to managing the behaviour of a specific child.

Challenging unwanted behaviour from adults in the setting

- Settings will not tolerate behaviour from an adult which demonstrates a dislike, prejudice and/or discriminatory attitude or action towards any individual or group. This includes negativity towards groups and individuals living outside the UK (xenophobia). This also applies to the same behaviour if directed towards specific groups of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK.
- Allegations of discriminatory remarks or behaviour including xenophobia made in the setting by any adult will be taken seriously. The perpetrator will be asked to stop the behaviour and failure to do so may result in the adult being asked to leave the premises and in the case of a staff member, disciplinary measures being taken.
- Where a parent makes discriminatory or prejudiced remarks to staff at any time, or other people while on the premises, this is recorded on the child's file and is reported to the setting manager. The procedure is explained and the parent asked to comply while on the premises. An 'escalatory' approach will be taken with those who continue to exhibit this behaviour. The second stage comprises a letter to the parent requesting them to sign a written agreement not to make discriminatory remarks or behave in a discriminatory or prejudiced manner; the third stage may be considering withdrawing the child's place.

1.9 Nappy Changing

No child is excluded from participating in our setting who may, for any reason, not yet be toilet trained and who may still be wearing nappies or equivalent. We work with parents towards toilet training, unless there are medical or other developmental reasons why this may not be appropriate at the time.

We make necessary adjustments to our bathroom provision and hygiene practice in order to accommodate children who are not yet toilet trained.

We see toilet training as a self-care skill that children have the opportunity to learn with the full support and non-judgemental concern of adults.

Procedures

- A child's key persons discuss with the parents the child's personal changing needs where the child still wears nappies or 'pull-ups'.
- Each child is changed using the baby changing table provided by the setting.
- Each young child has their own nappies or 'pull ups' provided by parents and kept in their bag with a change of clothes.

- Gloves and aprons are put on before changing starts and the areas are prepared. Paper towel is put down on the changing mat freshly for each child.
- All staff are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when changing nappies.
- In addition, staff ensure that nappy changing is relaxed, and is a time to promote independence in young children.
- Staff are gentle when changing; they avoid pulling faces and making negative comment about 'nappy contents'.
- Staff do not make inappropriate comments about young children's genitals when changing their nappies
- Nappies and 'pull ups' are disposed of hygienically. Cloth nappies, trainer pants and ordinary pants that have been wet or soiled are placed in a bag for the parent to take home.
- NB If young children are left in wet or soiled nappies/'pull ups' in the setting this may constitute neglect and will be a disciplinary matter. Settings have a 'duty of care' towards a child's personal needs.

Toileting

- Some children in the setting require help with toileting.
- Children are taken to the toilet by their key person or another adult in the setting.
- Children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it.
- Children needing assistance with toileting must not be left on their own whilst sitting on the toilet.
- Children accessing the toilet when they have the need to are encouraged to be independent.
- All children are encouraged to wash their hands after they have used the toilet.

Telephone Numbers

Mark Barker	Church Parish Children's Representative	c/o 01732 379900 office 01732 353079 vicarage
LADO	Local Safeguarding Children's board	01732 525381
Ofsted		0300 123 1231
LA Social Care Department		01732 362442
Tonbridge Police Station		Call 101 and request Tonbridge
Independent Safeguarding Authority		0300 123 1111
Rev Mark Barker	Incumbent of St Stephen's Church	01732 771977/ 01732 353079

Approved at a meeting of the STEPS Support Group held on:		(date)
Signed on behalf of the STEPS Support Group		
Name of Signatory	Mrs Sarah Brown	
Role of Signatory	Chair	
Date to be reviewed:	October 2019	

Checklist of handling and recording allegations or complaints of abuse made against a member of staff regarding a child / children in their care

1	Name and position of staff who is the subject of allegations / complaint:		
2.	Is the complaint: Written or Verbal? (delete as necessary)		
3.	Complaint made by:		Relationship to child:
4.	Name of child:		Age and date of birth:
5.	Parent / carer name and address:		
6.	Date of alleged incident/s		
7.	Did the child attend on this / these date/s:		
8.	Nature of complaint (if received in writing see guidance)		
9.	Other relevant information (continue on a separate sheet if needed):		
10	Social Services		
11.	Ofsted contacted at (date and time):		
12.	Further actions advised by Social Services Department and Ofsted:		
Your name and position:			
Signature:			
Today's date and time:			