

Safeguarding Children Policy

At First Steps, Headstart & Stepping Stones Day Nurseries & Pre-Schools we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. In our setting we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation, and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the nursery's other policies and procedures. Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. At the Nurseries all staff, students and visitors are made aware of and adhere to, the policy.

We will have regard to the Government's Statutory Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. If our staff have concerns about children's safety or welfare the setting will notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and in emergencies, the police.

This policy applies to all staff, management and volunteers working in the setting, and the families accessing the Nurseries.

- The welfare of the children attending our Nurseries is paramount and concerns about child abuse are taken seriously. This policy therefore compliments and supports a range of other policies, for instance ICT, social networking, child safety, confidentiality, medications, missing child, prevent duty, whistle-blowing and mobile phone.
- We work within the guidelines set out by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership for Child Protection and Early Help which are underpinned by the statutory document entitled 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' July 2018 (refer to procedure).
- Recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers working with children and will follow EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements with regard to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, and references.
- Where there is a delay in obtaining the enhanced DBS check, staff will not have unsupervised contact with children.
- All staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children whether received before or during their employment at the setting. There is a process in place that provides staff with opportunities to share such information.
- All staff are trained in the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures within the first week of employment and will be required to access and attend appropriate training. Training will be refreshed every 3 years.
- All staff are made aware of possible indicators of child abuse and the procedures for recording and reporting, through staff training both internal and external.

- Staff will be made aware of the importance of recognizing and reporting inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments: excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities: or inappropriate sharing of images (see whistle blowing policy) through staff training, both internal and external.
- Procedures are implemented for identifying, recording and reporting concerns.
- The Nurseries provide a safe environment in which children feel valued, can learn and develop, feel secure and are encouraged to talk and be listened to.
- The Nurseries will not tolerate on the premises any parent/carer under the influence of alcohol or any other substance. Any parent under the influence of alcohol and or any other substance will be refused admission, and the Nurseries will determine if it is appropriate and safe for the child to leave with them. If a child is kept on the premises in this situation other adults authorised to collect the child will be contacted. If there is no other authorised adult available to collect the child, the setting will contact the police in accordance with the uncollected child policy.
- We have practitioners who have been designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and liaising with local statutory children's services and with by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Each nursery has 2 designated lead practitioners.
- The lead practitioners will provide support, advice, and guidance to any other staff on an on-going basis, and on any specific safeguarding issues as required.
- The designated lead practitioners have accessed a level 2 taught course in safeguarding and will refresh this training every 3 years.
- The use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting is covered in our safeguarding procedure. (see procedure)
- The Nurseries have a clear procedure that will be implemented when an allegation has been made against a member of staff. (see procedure)
- The Nurseries disciplinary procedure will inform any action in the event of an allegation. (see disciplinary procedure)
- As registered providers we will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after the children on the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere).
- The Nurseries will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations.
- Where an allegation is upheld, the Nurseries will make a referral to the DBS, in accordance with our responsibilities under the Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Where there is an indication or evidence to suggest that a member of staff failed to execute their duty to safeguard a child/(ren) at the Nurseries or elsewhere he/she will be subjected to the Nurseries' safeguarding and/or disciplinary procedure.
- This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the safeguarding children procedure.
- Safeguarding children (child protection) concerns will be confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis.

- **Concerns regarding safeguarding children will be directed to the following in accordance with the LSCP's policy and the requirements of the EYFS.**

Lincolnshire County Council Children Services Customer Service Centre (CSC): Office Hours: Tel. 01522 782111 or out of hours: Tel. 01522 782333.

- Where there is an allegation against a member of staff or person living or working on the premises we will also liaise directly with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) - Direct line 01522 554674.
- Lincolnshire Police - non-emergency number 0300 111 0300.

The Nurseries will implement the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's Escalation Protocol if there are concerns that a referral to the Customer Service Centre (CSC) has not been dealt with appropriately.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our safeguarding procedure which sets out our processes for responding to concerns.