



01	<p>This policy applies to all staff, students or anyone working on behalf of First Steps Childcare Ltd. We believe that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people to keep them safe.</p> <p><b>Terminology</b></p> <p><i>Child Protection</i> refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm. Protecting children from maltreatment preventing the impairment of health or <i>Safeguarding</i> and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.</p>
02	<p>We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms- physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect. When children are suffering from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or neglect, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour, or in their play. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where children’s play gives cause for concern, we will investigate. We will take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or ask questions of children.</p>
03	<p>With respect to <i>child protection</i>, we aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Create an environment which encourages children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture, or home background.</li> <li>· Help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.</li> <li>· Encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.</li> <li>· Enable children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.</li> <li>· Work with parent to build their understanding of the commitment to the welfare of all our children</li> </ul>
04	<p><i>Safeguarding</i> and promoting welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, always, what is in the best interests of the child.</p> <p>Children who may require early help will be offered early intervention through Early Help support services for families.</p>

	<p>Staff at First Steps Childcare will also be alerted to the potential need for early help for children who are more vulnerable, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children with a disability and/or specific additional needs</li> <li>• Children with special educational needs.</li> <li>• Children who are acting as a young carer.</li> <li>• Children who are showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour especially if there is a concern that it is exploitative.</li> <li>• Children whose family circumstances present challenges, such as substance abuse, adult mental health or learning disability, domestic violence.</li> <li>• Children who are showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.</li> </ul> <p>Staff at First Steps Childcare are aware of the main categories of maltreatment: physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and neglect. They will also be aware of the indicators of maltreatment and specific safeguarding issues so that they are able to identify cases of children who may need help or protection.</p>
05	We will notify the registration authority (OFSTED) of any major incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which affects the well-being of children.
06	We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers to ensure that it is easy, in an emergency, for us to work quickly & effectively with social services.
07	We provide adequate and appropriate staffing and resources to meet the needs of children.
08	Applicants for posts with the setting will be clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information. Training in Recruitment has been undertaken by our DSL Ruth Garland-Davies [June 2021], Samantha Fry Deputy DSL, and more recently training DSL (Samantha Ware). All members of staff employed at First Steps are registered on the DBS update system.
09	We abide by OFSTED requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the setting or has access to the children within our care.
10	When we receive visitors, their details are recorded, including their arrival & departure times.
11	Should we have cause to dismiss a member of staff at any time because of misconduct relating to a child, we will notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.
12	The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision, in line with Ofsted regulations.
13	We introduce key elements of child protection into our foundation stage curriculum, so that children can develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe and understand who they can go to if they feel at risk.
14	We will ensure that all parents know how to make a complaint regarding a staff member within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse. This is shown in our Complaints Procedure / guidelines attached to this policy.

15	<p><b>Dealing with a disclosure.</b></p> <p>If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.</li> <li>• Accept what is being said.</li> <li>• Allow the child to talk freely.</li> <li>• Reassure the child, but do not make promises that might not be possible to keep.</li> <li>• Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone-as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.</li> <li>• Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault.</li> <li>• Stress that it was the right thing to tell.</li> <li>• Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify.</li> <li>• Explain what must be done next and who must be told.</li> <li>• Make a written record.</li> <li>• Pass the information to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay</li> <li>• All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reason for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, the staff member should discuss this with the DSL or Deputy DSL.</li> <li>• When a child has made a disclosure the staff member will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record as soon as possible after the conversation.</li> <li>• Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.</li> <li>• Record the date, time, witness, place, and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.</li> <li>• Indicate the position of any injuries.</li> <li>• Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.</li> <li>• All records are given to the DSL or Deputy DSL promptly. No copies are made by the staff member.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
16	<p>When recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures we will make a record of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child's full name.</li> <li>• The child's address.</li> <li>• The child's DOB.</li> <li>• The date and time of the observation or the disclosure.</li> <li>• An objective record of the observation or disclosure.</li> <li>• The exact language used by the child.</li> <li>• The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time.</li> <li>• The names of any other person present at the time.</li> <li>• Details of any and all action taken as a result of the concern.</li> </ul>

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

17	Within the setting these disclosures are written up on a red observation sheet. These are kept in a locked filing cabinet. All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.
18	We will take every step in our power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, and those associated with our setting. We will continue to welcome the child and family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. With the provision that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.
19	<b>Allegation involving staff members.</b> In a situation where a member of staff is accused of abuse to a child or another member of staff, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) must be contacted immediately. In respect of case in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, the DSL will then follow all instructions given from the LADO. Our LADO's are Antony Gable & Stacey Davies 0300 123 2224.
20	<b>Mobile devices &amp; cameras</b> All staff mobile devices, cameras, and internet devices must switched off during work hours. The only exceptions are with agreement of the Manager or Deputy Manager due to circumstances discussed and agreed beforehand. In addition, no mobile devices are allowed in the setting. Parents are also not permitted to use personal mobiles on site to ensure the safety of all children and staff.
21	Staff are not permitted to give gifts or cards to any children or their families.
22	To protect our children from radicalisation we promote, and all staff have received training in British Values.
23	Our Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer (LDSL) is Ruth Garland-Davies. [Manager] Our Deputy DSL is Samantha Fry (Senior Supervisor)/ Samantha Ware (2023) Deputy Manager.

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*Please also see guidelines for:*

Safer recruitment guidelines

E safety guidelines

Health eating guidelines

Guidelines in the event of a sudden death of a child