

# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

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## **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

At Stepping Stones Nursery School we are committed to safeguarding all children, young people and vulnerable adults that we come into contact with. Safeguarding the welfare and wellbeing is paramount. Children have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from any abuse/neglect in whatever form. As such we have a duty to the children, parents/carers and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that comes to our attention. All staff will work as part of a multi-agency team where needed in the best interests of the child. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

### **Law and Guidance**

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006), the Children and Families Act 2014, the Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015, What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015, Prevent Duty 2015. The guidance reflects Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Child Protection Procedures.

### **Definitions**

To this end we will:

- Have regard that early years providers have a duty under Section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006 to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Have regard for the statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children 2015 and What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016
- Believe that children have a right to grow up safe from harm and the safety and well-being of the children is always our paramount concern
- Ensure all children, young people and vulnerable adults have an equal right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, race, religion, ability, gender, language, background or sexual identity

- Work in partnership with other agencies and share information appropriately to promote the welfare and wellbeing of children
- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children

### **Responsibilities and Leadership**

As Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Stepping Stones Nursery Stephanie Howard has a clear commitment to safeguarding children and promoting welfare. If anyone believes this policy is not being upheld they have a duty to inform the Stepping Stones Management Committee at the earliest opportunity. In the absence of Stephanie Howard, Deborah Goold/Karen Netley will assume the role of DSL.

### **PREVENTION**

Stepping Stones Nursery has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society. This policy states the procedures that will be adhered to if we have any reason to believe that a child in Stepping Stones Nursery's care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

All practitioners have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare and wellbeing of children. Due to the number of childcare hours Stepping Stones Nursery provides staff maybe the first to sense that there is a concern. Early Years Practitioners maybe the first people a child confides in regarding abuse.

All practitioners have a duty under section 26 of the counter- Terrorism and Security Act (2015) to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. Practitioners will be aware of how to identify vulnerable families in respect of terrorism and radicalisation and where to seek support.

Stepping Stones Nursery's primary responsibility is the welfare and wellbeing of all children in our care. As such we have an obligation to children, parents/carers and staff

to act quickly and responsibly to any instance that may come to our attention. All staff will work as part of a multi-agency team where needed in the best interests of the child.

All Practitioners are aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage, honour based violence or 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.

The Practitioners aim to protect children and teach them to understand British Values by recognising and valuing the universal uniqueness of all individuals and we are mindful to instill learning and resilience to protect children against the development of extremist and radicalised thinking and behaviour.

Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns.

All staff must be aware of their own responsibilities to act quickly upon any suspicions or concerns they may have regarding any child or member of staff at Stepping Stones Nursery School. Stepping Stones Nursery will adhere to the statutory procedures outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Surrey Safeguarding Children Board Procedure Manual, (accessible from [www.proceduresonline.com/sscb/chapters/contents.html](http://www.proceduresonline.com/sscb/chapters/contents.html)) and ensure advice is sought on all subsequent steps taken. Stepping Stones Nursery has a duty to report any suspicions or concerns to the local authority who have an obligation to investigate such matters.

### **Safer Recruitment**

Stepping Stones nursery School acknowledges that paedophiles and those that pose a threat to children may be attracted to employment that allows them access to children and young people. As part of this policy we will ensure that people working with our children are safe to do so.

Recruitment at Stepping Stones Nursery School is made safer by carrying out the following procedures:

Step 1 – Job Description & Personal Specification: The job description and personal specification should make reference to Safeguarding.

Step 2 – Advertisement: The advertisement will contain reference to our commitment to Safer Recruitment.

Step 3 – Candidate Pack: The candidate pack will include a copy of the Safeguarding Policy. Candidates will be asked to use an Application Form containing:

- Full and former names

- Date of Birth

- Current address

- National Insurance number

- Academic/ vocational qualifications

- Full chronological employment history (disclosing any gaps and reasons for leaving)

Personal CV's will not be accepted nor will other versions of application forms.

Step 4 – Selection: The management committee will scrutinise the application forms for breaks in service, reasons for leaving etc. Suspicious gaps would not automatically bar a candidate from short-listing but the panel would make further checks, including supplementary interview questions and/or requests for clarification from the candidate prior to the interview.

Step 5 – Notification of interview: In the invitation to interview letter candidates will be asked to bring 2 forms of identification including drivers licence and/or passport and 2 proofs of address e.g. utility bill, proof of entitlement to work in UK (if not UK citizen).

Step 6 – Taking References: Two references will be taken prior to final interview.

Should references contain disciplinary information or Safeguarding concerns omitted by the candidate, the invitation to interview will be withdrawn. The management committee will have access to the references prior to the interview and may ask supplementary questions about information contained within them. Generic or pre-written references will not be accepted.

Step 7 – The selection process: The formal interview will contain a range of Safeguarding questions with supplementary questions used to further assess a candidates understanding/ motivations and reasoning regarding Safeguarding issues. Supplementary interview questions may relate to concerns/ queries about information given in initial application.

Step 8 – Making a conditional offer: Once a candidate has been selected a conditional offer will be made based on the following background checks: References (checked prior to interview), verification of identity, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certification (processed by BCC), criminal record self-disclosure (although declaration of spent convictions will not automatically bar a candidate), verification of qualifications and professional status.

For non-UK residents, DBS certification alone will not be sufficient and additional checks will be sought from the candidate's country of origin. Above checks MUST be carried out before the successful candidate is allowed to begin work.

- Supply and Temporary Staff: Supply teachers/staff and temporary staff are subject to the same level of vigilance. Supply agencies must provide evidence that all Safeguarding checks have been completed.
- Parents and Volunteers: We value volunteers and encourage parents/carers to become involved in supporting the setting. Any parent/carer or volunteer with access to children and without direct supervision from a member of staff will be expected to provide two satisfactory references.
- Students: Students will be expected to give their college as a reference to ensure that they are suitably placed within the organisation. Students above 16 years old will be expected to have a satisfactory DBS check. Students will be able to start a placement with us prior to receiving the outcome of the DBS check subject to staff carrying out a risk assessment and students at no time having unsupervised contact with children. The placement will be offered pending a satisfactory DBS check and will be subject to a probationary period as agreed with their supervisor. Students will only be allowed to accompany children to the toilet or change their nappies or clothes with a member of staff.

## **Effective Practice**

We aim to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to communicate and are responded to. We will ensure all children have effective means of communication with more than one adult and we provide opportunities for individual or small group discussions about thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance. Staff and volunteers should ensure that all children make good progress in our Nursery School recognising that ineffective Safeguarding can lead to underachievement. The delivery of the EYFS promotes Personal, Social, Health and Emotional development in all children and should ensure that children are both listened to and encouraged to talk about their feelings. Children should be taught how to recognise risks, how to respond to them and an awareness of whom they can turn to for help. We will include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities which will equip children with the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil their potential.

## **Environment**

The environment should always be planned in ways which minimise the risks to children e.g. physical layout and surroundings, clear roles for everyone, supervising people. Concerns about children's welfare will always be taken very seriously.

## **Monitoring**

Although we are committed to Safer Recruitment procedures we must continue being vigilant after a member of staff/volunteer/student has started working within our setting and staff must know the procedures and channels open should concerns arise (Whistle Blowing Policy). All staff and volunteers will be required to be DBS checked every 3 years. Staff will be expected to attend training to keep up to date and informed on Child Protection issues.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service**



Stepping Stones Nursery provides a safe and secure environment for all children. All staff will have an enhanced DBS disclosure which will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the ongoing suitability of all staff caring for the children. Stepping Stones Nursery does not permit an adult without a DBS enhanced disclosure to have unsupervised access to children and they will not be permitted to change nappies or assist with toileting or any form of personal care whether supervised or not. Personal care includes helping a child, for reasons of age, illness or disability with eating or drinking or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing. Access to children's personal and development records and the taking of children's photographs will also not be permitted until DBS approval has been received.

Staff must inform the Manager of 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 Stepping Stones Nursery. Staff must also inform the Manager of any persons that they are associated with which may affect their suitability to work with children.

### **Disqualification**

In the event of the disqualification by the registered provider of an employee, the management committee must take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the children.

### **Staff Training**

All staff will attend 'Working together to safeguard children' training which is updated every three years. Stepping Stones Nursery aims for all new staff to attend this course within six months of commencing employment, however due to courses being full this is not always possible but they will be expected to read all policies and be made aware of procedures by the DSL. The DSL and Deputies attend safeguarding children training specific to the role. This training is updated when there is a change of legislation or at two yearly intervals.

## **Staff Guidelines**

Stepping Stones Nursery aims to:

- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the care of Stepping Stones Nursery staff
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the signs and understand what is meant by safeguarding and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed including by other children i.e. bullying
- Ensure that all staff aware of Safeguarding practice during Induction, staff meetings, locality meetings and other training opportunities. Effective practice in staff teams should be ensured with effective recruitment, training, supervision and appraisal procedures
- We will enable all our staff and those who work here to make informed and confident decisions regarding Safeguarding. We expect staff and volunteers to have read, understood and adhere to the Safeguarding policy and related procedures
- No images of children are to be used for any publicity without parental permission. Only the child's first name should be used in picture captions
- Discuss any issues concerning children's development or welling including child protection concerns
- Ensure parents are fully aware of safeguarding policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and kept informed of all updates when they occur
- Regularly review and update this Safeguarding Children policy
- All staff and volunteers will be DBS certificated, to be renewed every 3 years

Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child.

## **Visitors**

Visitors will be asked to sign in/out when visiting and a member of staff will escort them to where they need to be. Bags and belongings including mobile phones/recording devices are not permitted to be accessed/used in the vicinity of children and should be left in the office at all times.

## **E-Safety**

Children and young people can be exploited and suffer bullying through their use of modern technology such as the internet, mobile phones and social networking sites.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that ALL staff act responsibly and ALL staff follow the guidelines for their own protection. At Stepping Stones Nursery we take the safety of children and staff seriously. We want to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of all children to give them the best start in life. Where it is suspected that a child is at risk from internet abuse or cyber bullying we will report our concerns to the appropriate agency.

The use of ICT is encouraged within the setting. New technologies, especially internet based technologies are presenting new challenges for children. All computers and ipads are installed with appropriate parental security which means no child or member of staff is able to access any harmful sites.

E-Safety depends on effective practice at a number of levels:

- Responsible ICT use by all staff and service users; made explicit through policies.

- Sound implementation of e-Safety policy in both administration and curriculum, including secure network design and use.
- Safe and secure broadband, including the effective management of content filtering
- The purpose of Internet use in the Nursery is to raise educational standards, to promote achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance management information and administration systems. Internet use is a necessary tool for learning. It is an essential element in 21st century life for education, business and social interaction. Access to the Internet is therefore an entitlement for staff and parent/carers who show a responsible and mature approach to its use. Our Nursery has a duty to provide quality Internet access. Benefits of using the Internet in education include: Access to learning wherever and whenever convenient
- Access to world-wide educational resources
- Educational and cultural exchanges world-wide
- Access to experts in many fields for parent/carers and staff Welfare Requirement – Safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare Every Child Matters – Stay Safe Revised: April 2016 12
- Professional development for staff through access to national developments, educational materials and effective curriculum practice
- Collaboration across support services and professional association
- Improved access to technical support including remote management of networks and automatic system updates
- Exchange of curriculum and administration data with the Local Authority and other bodies It is acknowledged that despite the benefits offered by the Internet unlimited Internet use can have a detrimental effect of the wellbeing of the Nursery. Staff and parents/carers should therefore be taught what Internet use is acceptable and what is not and given clear objectives for Internet use. Internet access should be planned to enrich and extend learning activities

Staff **MUST** only use the setting’s ICT systems and resources for official business. It is the responsibility of **ALL** Staff to ensure that they do not browse, download, upload or

distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory. Staff **MUST** ensure that any images viewed are for learning purposes only and represented in a positive context. Only with a Managers specific consent can ipads be used to upload information to Stepping Stones facebook account and website.

We strive to make all our ICT equipment secure. All computers and ipads are, where possible, password protected. All recording equipment is stored securely in a locked room/cabinet when not in use. All computers and ipads have virus protection.

The setting only takes images of children and/or staff for professional purposes. Prior written consent is obtained from parent and carers. This policy must be used in conjunction with the settings photograph policy.

Due to the increasing personal use of social networking sites, staff and volunteers at Stepping Stones Nursery School should be aware of the impact of their personal use of such sites in regard to their professional position.

Staff and volunteers are advised that it is inappropriate to discuss any aspect of their involvement or place any images, sound or text relating to their position at Stepping Stones Nursery on ANY social networking sites. This includes children, staff, activities and the naming of Stepping Stones Nursery School. In addition staff and volunteers should always conduct themselves in a professional manner and be aware that any offensive, discriminatory or accusatory conduct will not be tolerated by Stepping Stones Nursery. Stepping Stones Nursery School feel it is inappropriate for any staff members to be connected/friends with current families attending the Nursery on any social networking site and request that all staff refrain from doing so. Failure to adhere to this policy could potentially lead to disciplinary action.

The setting has a mobile phone policy which must be used in conjunction with this policy. The use of staff mobiles is prohibited during Stepping Stones Nursery session times. Mobile phones must be stored safely in staff lockers which are kept locked during operating hours. Volunteers and visitors are requested not use mobile phones whilst on the premises unless there is an emergency and then the call may be taken outside of

the building away from the children. If staff or volunteers need to be contacted in an emergency Stepping Stones Nursery's landline should be used.

## **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of **ALL** staff to ensure that their online activity both inside and outside of work will not bring the setting or their professional role into disrepute. It is the responsibility of **ALL** staff to report any suspicions or concerns to the settings Manager or the settings Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **EARLY HELP**

### **Definition**

Stepping Stones Nursery aims to provide both universal and targeted services to meet the various individual needs of families in the locality. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare and wellbeing of children than reacting later. Children in need of early help are defined as those children who are not attaining one or more of the Five Outcomes for Children:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Economic well-being

**BUT** whose circumstances do not reach Child Protection thresholds. It is important that children in need of early help receive this support in a timely fashion to prevent the escalation into abuse and to lessen the risk of harm or impairment. By providing support

and information to all families we aim to prevent families reaching crisis point by identifying families that are struggling at an early stage.

### **Procedure**

Staff must ensure that they are recognising signs and symptoms of need of Early Help and responding appropriately to adult's and children's disclosure of need of Early Help. Staff must also record signs and symptoms and disclosure of children in need of Early Help. Concerns should be recorded and shared appropriately. Staff must report a need for Early Help to the DSL and discuss the options for the family. Options could include:

- carry on recording incidents and take no further action at the present time
- further discussion with parents/carers and devising and providing a plan for Early Help within the setting; and/or organising extra support with other professionals

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

### **Purpose**

Stepping Stones Nursery considers it the duty of staff and volunteers to protect children and young people whom they come into contact with from abuse. Managers and staff will work together to ensure effective implementation of this Child Protection Policy and Procedures thus ensuring the safety of children. This is part of our Safeguarding children procedure.

### **Definition**

Child Protection is defined as 'Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare'. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. We recognise that we have an explicit duty to safeguard children who are in need, or who may suffer significant harm. The 4 recognised categories of abuse are:

- Physical Abuse.
- Sexual Abuse

- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

### 1. **Physical Abuse**

Action will be taken under this heading if staff has reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

#### *Procedure*

- Any sign of a mark/injury to a child when they come into nursery will be recorded
- The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer
- Such discussion will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records
- If there appears to be any queries regarding the injury, the Child Protection Unit in the Local Authority will be notified

### **Signs of physical abuse**

**Signs** - All children have accidents such as bumps and falls which cause injury. However, you may have reasons for thinking that an injury has been inflicted on purpose if:

- an injury strikes you as odd
- a child is injured repeatedly
- a parent delays seeking treatment
- a parent or child gives unconvincing or inconsistent explanations about an injury

What injuries are normal for children?

- Bruising on the shins, knees, elbows, and backs of the hands
- Bruising on children who are crawling or walking (especially older children)
- Bruising on the forehead (for toddlers)



- Minor scalds from hot liquid spills on the upper body

What could be abuse?

- Bruising on the cheeks, ears, back, buttocks, palms, arms, tummy, hips, backs of legs, and feet
- Bruising on babies who are not yet crawling or walking
- A history of bruising
- Multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs
- Bruises which look like they have been caused by fingers, a hand, or an object
- Burns of the backs of the hands, feet, legs, genitals, or buttocks
- Burns which have a clear shape

## 2. **Sexual Abuse**

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have witnessed occasions where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing or has an excessive obsession with sexual matters or has an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.

### *Procedure*

- The observed instances will be reported to the nursery manager
- The matter will be referred to the Local Authority

Children who have been sexually abused may show a variety of signs and symptoms, including:

- aggressive behaviour, sleep problems, bed-wetting or soiling
- problems with school work or missing school
- risk taking behaviour during adolescence
- becoming sexually active at a young age
- Promiscuity

**Signs** - In addition to the effects that sexual abuse may have on a child you may also notice other warning signs such as a child who:

- suddenly starts to behave differently
- thinks badly or does not look after him or herself
- displays sexually inappropriate behaviour, including use of sexual language and sexual information which you would not expect them to know
- has physical symptoms that suggest sexual abuse – these can include anal or vaginal soreness or an unusual discharge, and pregnancy
- avoids being alone with a particular family member
- fears an adult or is reluctant to socialise with them
- tries to tell you about abuse indirectly, through hints or clues
- Describes behaviour by an adult that suggests they are being ‘groomed’ for future abuse

You should also be alert to any adults who pay an unusual amount of attention to your child, for example:

- giving your child gifts, toys or favours
- offering to take your child on trips, outings and holidays
- Seeking opportunities to be alone with your child

### **3. Emotional Abuse**

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

#### *Procedure*

- The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer
- Such discussion will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records
- If there appear to be any query regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority

## **Signs of emotional abuse**

A parent's behaviour is central to a child's development.

- If a parent's negative behaviour towards their child is severe and persistent it may indicate that a child is being emotionally abused. You may also notice a difficult relationship between a child and parent: a fearful, distant or unaffectionate relationship may indicate a problem

Signs of emotional abuse may also be present in a child's actions.

- A child should be able to understand and express a range of emotions as they grow older. Similarly their mental capacity, such as intelligence, memory and speech should be normal for their age

## **4. Neglect**

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which could result in serious impairment of the child's health or development including failure to thrive.

### *Procedure*

- The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer
- Such discussion will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records
- If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances the Local Authority will be notified

Neglect can have a debilitating and long-lasting effect on a child's physical wellbeing and on their mental, emotional and behavioural development. In some cases the effects can cause permanent disabilities and in severe cases death. The effects of physical neglect may include:

- poor muscle tone/prominent joints
- poor skin: sores, rashes, flea bites
- thin or swollen tummy
- poor hygiene, like being dirty or smelly

- untreated health problems, such as bad teeth
- unwashed clothing
- inadequate clothing such as not having a coat in winter

### **FGM(Female Genital Mutilation)**

Action will be taken under this heading if staff has any concern that a child is at risk of FGM and they must inform the Manager/DSL

#### *Procedure*

- A request must be made to meet parents in private and ask them directly if they are seeking to take their daughter abroad to have FGM carried out on her
- If the Manager/DSL is dissatisfied with their response and has real concerns that FGM may be imminent they should refer the matter to the Local Authority or to the Police
- The parents should be told about the referral only if it is felt that it will not bring further risk to the child

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of physical abuse against children. FGM is also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting. FGM has no health benefits and it harms girls and women in many ways.

The signs that children may be at risk of FGM are as follows:

- Child is female (newborn, during childhood, adolescence, sometimes at marriage or during the first pregnancy)
- From a culture where FGM is practised
- Parents request an extended summer holiday to the country of origin

FGM is defined by the World Health Organisation as “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons”. FGM has no health benefits for girls and women and procedures can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating and later cysts, infections, infertility as well as complications in childbirth.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act was introduced in 2003 and came into effect in March 2004. It was made illegal to:

- practice FGM in the UK
- take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country
- Aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Child sexual exploitation - where a young person (or a third person or persons) receives “something” (food, gifts, money, affection) as a result of them performing and /or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Risk indicators include:

- Disclosure of older boyfriends
- Gang affiliation
- Receiving gifts/drugs/money
- Missing and truanting
- Coercive relationships
- Trafficking
- Chatting to strangers on line
- Found in risky locations

If a member of staff feels any child, older siblings or young parents are at risk of CSE then child protection procedures should be followed and a referral made.

### **Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA)**

Children experiencing violence at home may be affected in a number of different ways. Staff will need to treat them sensitively, record their concerns informing the Manager/DSL and consider informing the Local Authority. Domestic violence and abuse (DVA) is the abuse of one person over another who is, or has been, in a relationship. The abuse may be verbal, sexual, physical, emotional, financial or psychological. Both

men and women can be abused or abusers. It occurs in all groups and all areas of society and may be experienced differently to, and compounded by, racism, sexuality, disability, age, religion, culture or class. We are committed to supporting the wellbeing and safety of children and acknowledge the profound and damaging effects of DVA on them. Children are always affected by living or witnessing DVA. It is estimated that 90% of children are in the same or next room when the abuse occurs. Children may:

- Witness the outcome after the event, by seeing or hearing the violence
- Be used by the perpetrator to intimidate/blackmail the victim
- Think that they have triggered the violence
- Be affected by the physical and emotional effects on the victim
- Be drawn into violence towards the victim
- Be physically, emotionally or sexually abused or neglected

Staff must always be guided by the need to keep a victim and their children safe.

Staff should be able to recognise the signs of DVA which include:

- Hiding of injuries, minimises their extent or cause, appears frightened, overly anxious or depressed and/or is submissive or afraid to speak in front of the partner
- Partner always attends unnecessarily and may refuse to leave and/or may be aggressive or dominant
- Children showing the signs and symptoms of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect

The conversation should be recorded and reported to the Manager/DSL. If we have serious concerns about a victim's situation we will inform the Local Authority who should refer the case to the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference).

### **What to do if abuse is disclosed**

When a child discloses abuse, the member of staff should take the following action:

- Stay calm
- Listen to what the child / young person is actually saying
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you

- Do not promise the child that this can be kept secret, as subsequent disclosure could then lead to the child feeling betrayed. Explain that you are obliged to inform other people
- Reassure the child that the people who will be informed will be sensitive to their needs and will be looking to help protect them. Inform them that it will have to be passed on to the appropriate agencies
- Make a note of any conversations with the child, trying to make these as detailed as possible, including when and where the conversations took place. Use the body map, if appropriate, to show the position of any bruises or marks the child or young person shows you, trying to indicate the size, shape and colour
- Record as soon as possible and use the actual words used by the child

### **Dealing with an Emergency**

In some instances staff or volunteers may be the first people to recognise that the child may need immediate attention resulting from child abuse. This may need to be your first action. Depending on the circumstances you may need to:

- Telephone for an ambulance or the police (dial 999)
- Ask a doctor to call
- Ask the parent to take the child to the doctor or the hospital at once
- Offer to take the parent and child to the hospital/surgery/clinic for immediate medical attention as appropriate
- Take the child yourself to the hospital/surgery/clinic..

It is important to remember that the child is the legal responsibility of the parents/carers and that person (identified on child's membership forms) must be involved in the matter as soon as practicable and if it is believed that doing so puts the child at no further risk. Having taken the necessary emergency action, any suspected abuse must be reported to the safeguarding lead as soon as practicable. If the abuse implicates the Manager the concerns should be discussed with the next tier of line management - the Governing Body member responsible for Child Protection. If necessary, report the disclosure yourself to the LADO and OFSTED. A record of an account of the emergency must be written retrospectively when it is possible to do so.

There may be occasions when a child will disclose abuse which occurred in the past, termed historical abuse. This information needs to be treated in exactly the same way as a disclosure of current child abuse. The reason for this is that the abuser may still represent a risk to children now.

## **Recording**

Any member of staff or volunteer receiving disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. Records should be clear, use straightforward language, concise, accurate, contemporaneous, dated, presented chronologically, written to differentiate between facts, opinion, judgments and hypothesis, written to show emphasis by underlining and with a mind that the subject of a record does have the right in law to request access to them at any stage. Judgments made, actions and decisions taken and who agreed and who is responsible should be carefully recorded. Your records should cover these basic facts:

- What you saw: when and where (this includes the position of any bruises or marks that you have seen on the child, trying to indicate size, colour and shape recorded on the body map)
- What you said: when, where and who to
- What was said to you: when, where and who by
- What you thought and why you thought it
- What you did
- Any other relevant information

## **Reporting Abuse**

It is appropriate to seek support from the DSL, as to how to deal with situations and confirm appropriate action to take. Any member of staff or volunteer receiving disclosure of abuse or noticing possible abuse must therefore report their concerns to the



safeguarding lead. If the abuse implicates the Manager the concerns should be discussed with the next tier of line management. If necessary, staff should report the disclosure themselves to the LADO and OFSTED. Staff should discuss the appropriate action to be taken with the safeguarding lead.

### **Support to Staff Volunteers or Students**

As a result of dealing with disclosure or reporting your concerns you may feel angry or upset. It is important that you are able to work this through. Stepping Stones Nursery will fully support all members of staff in following this procedure.

### **Allegations against a member of staff, volunteer or student**

Staff, volunteers or students may also be subject to allegations of abusing children. While support will be offered, the staff and Governors will ensure that the investigating agency concerned is given all assistance in pursuing any investigation. The Disciplinary Procedure may be implemented.

The following signs and symptoms may mean that staff, volunteers or students are involved in abuse:

- Paying an excessive amount of attention to a child or groups of children
- Providing presents, money or having favourites
- Seeking out vulnerable children, eg: disabled children
- Trying to spend time alone with a particular child or group of children on a regular basis
- Making inappropriate sexual comments
- Sharing inappropriate images
- Being vague about where they have worked or when they have been employed
- Encouraging secretiveness
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If it appears that a member of staff, volunteer or student has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; or possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or behaved in an inappropriate way towards a child which may have indicated the he or she is unsuitable to work with children, then the following procedures must be followed:

- Concerns must be recorded and reported to the safeguarding lead. They will then take steps to ensure that during the remainder of the working day that person concerned is not left in sole charge of the children or any child
- If it appears that the Manager or person responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child or possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or behaved in an inappropriate way towards a child which may indicate that he or she is unsuitable to work with children, then staff should contact the SCC Designated Officer or the LADO directly. If this is the case, concerns should be reported to an alternative senior manager
- If appropriate, Social Services and/or the Police will be informed by the LADO. Relevant evidence and information will be given by the Nursery and Centre if required. Proven allegations may be deemed as gross professional misconduct and could lead to immediate termination of employment
- The DSL should make a signed and dated written record of their concerns, observations or the information they have received to pass on to the LADO and maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being considered or investigated and follow local information sharing protocols
- The setting should then follow the LADO's advice on how to deal with allegations against staff

OFSTED should be informed of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, Governors or volunteer or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises or during a visiting or outing. While support should be offered to the involved, the staff and Governors will ensure that the agencies concerned are given all assistance in pursuing any investigation.

Stepping Stones Nursery School will fully support all members of staff, student or volunteer in following this procedure following an allegation or investigation. While support will be offered to the person where an allegation has been made, the Management committee will ensure that the agencies concerned are given all assistance in pursuing any investigation.

Staff, volunteers or students may also be subject to allegations of abusing children. While support will be offered, the staff and Governors will ensure that the investigating agency concerned is given all assistance in pursuing any investigation. The following signs and symptoms may mean that staff, volunteers or students are involved in abuse:

- Paying an excessive amount of attention to a child or groups of children
- Providing presents, money or having favourites
- Seeking out vulnerable children, eg: disabled children
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- Being vague about where they have worked or when they have been employed
- Encouraging secretiveness

If it appears that a member of staff, volunteer or student has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child or possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or behaved in an inappropriate way towards a child which may have indicated the he or she is unsuitable to work with children, then the following procedures must be followed: Concerns must be recorded and reported to the safeguarding lead. They will then take steps to ensure that during the remainder of the working day that the person concerned is not left in sole charge of the children or any child.

## **Confidentiality**

It is always important to listen to children. Strict confidentiality will be observed at all times. Staff must not comment either publicly or privately about a parent's supposed or actual behaviour. Staff must raise concerns initially with the Manager/DSL. The Manager/DSL will then discuss the matter with the registered person and appropriate action will be taken. All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. Staff responsibilities do not include investigating the concerns. However staff will keep accurate records of their observations, signed and dated of anything said to them by the child or others in connection with the concerns.

This information will be kept in a locked cabinet. The DSL will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

### **The Prevent Duty**

We have a duty to keep children safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. The EYFS focuses on children's personal, social and emotional development and supports children in age appropriate ways to learn right from wrong, mix, and share with other children and value others views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our safeguarding duty and should be responded to as such. All staff should receive prevent awareness training.

**National Domestic Helpline 08082000247**

**Your Sanctuary Surrey 24hr Helpline 01483 776822**

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**This policy is used in conjunction with:**

Mobile phone policy

E-safety policy

Whistle blowing policy

Reviewed July 2017

Code of Conduct for Staff

Safer Recruitment

Supervision

Disciplinary procedures

Staff handbook

## **Whistleblowing Helplines**

### **Contact Telephone Numbers**

- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub **(MASH) 03004709100**
- Local Authority Contact Centre **0300 2001006** (8am to 6pm)
- Emergency Duty Team **01483 517898** (out of hours referrals)
- Ofsted **0300 123 1231**
- Duty Local Authority Designated Officer **0300 1231650 option 4** Safeguarding children unit then select **option 3 (LADO)**
- Early Years & Childcare Service named person **01372 833895**