



# First Steps Children's Nursery & Forest School

## Child Protection Policy

### Statement of intent

First Steps Nursery will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

### Aims

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our 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;
- promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- promoting 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;
- helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults; and
- working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

The legal framework for this work is:

#### *Primary legislation*

The Children Act 1989 - s 47

The Protection of Children Act 1999

Data Protection Act 1998

The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

The Children (NI) Order

The Children (Scotland) Order



### *Guidance*

What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2004)

The Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and Their Families (2000)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 1999)

The Common Assessment Framework 2005

### *Secondary Legislation*

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

Human Rights Act (1999)

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

### *Liaison with other bodies*

- We work within the guidelines set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (H.M. Government 2010).
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you a worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- We will consider the need of the child/family in relation to Right Services Right Time and take appropriate action to undertake early intervention such as Family Common Assessment Framework (fcaf) or make a referral to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- If a referral is to be made to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, we act within the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

### **Methods**

First Steps Nursery is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.



## Staffing and volunteering

- Each of our nurseries has a designated member of staff who co-ordinates child protection issues
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources 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.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau 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.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Disclosure and Barring Service checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

First Steps Nursery is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (H.M. Government 2010)

## Method

### Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern using the Company 'Incident Form' and discusses what to do with the setting leader or manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.



- Staff in the setting take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.

### **Allegations against staff**

#### **See also Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board Procedures on Allegations against Staff and volunteers.**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident on the Company's 'Incident Form'.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Office:
  - Birmingham 0121 675 1669 (675 4806 out of hours) to investigate
  - Wolverhampton 01902 550477
  - and OFSTED.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- Our policy is to suspend the member of staff for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

### **Disciplinary action**

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

First Steps Nursery is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

### **Method**

#### **Training**



- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.

We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting which are:

- Note concern on an 'Incident Form' using correct terminology and providing enough detail.
- The 'Incident Form' must be signed by the Manager in order that she is definitely made aware of the concern.
- In the Manager's absence all staff must make sure that the Incident form is signed by the next in charge – Deputy Manager then Supervisory Nursery Nurse.
- If the member of staff feels that the concern is not being taken seriously enough, they must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
  - Birmingham 0121 675 1669 (675 4806 out of hours) to investigate
  - Wolverhampton 01902 550477

## 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 visible to others.

## Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of child protection 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 understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, 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.

## Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child



## **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

Staff make a record of any suspicions on the 'Incident Form' and or the significant events folder

- the child's name;
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- the names of any other person present at the time.
- If there are any bruises, marks or injury then these must also be noted on the diagram.

These records are signed and dated by both practitioner and Manager and are kept in the child's personal file.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

## **Informing parents**

- Parents are normally the first point of contact however advice can be sought from Children's Information Advice Service/ MASH (0121 303 1888)
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the local Area Safeguarding Children Committee does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

## **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 Area Safeguarding Children Committee or the LSCB.

## **Support to families**

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- Families are signposted to Children Centres to access additional services
- We make it clear to parents their role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. We use H.M. Government's 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' document for guidance.



- The nursery continues 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 LSCB in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the 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 procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the LSCB.