

# Safeguarding and child protection policy

## Introduction

**First Steps Childcare (Cambs) Limited** fully recognises the responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

Through their day-to-day contact with children and direct work with families, all staff, students and volunteers at the setting have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and in referring them to the Designated Person for Child Protection. This policy sets out how the setting complies with statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who attend the setting.

**There are four main elements to our policy:**

- 1. Prevention** through the support offered to children and the creation and maintenance of a whole-setting protective ethos.
- 2. Procedures** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- 3. Supporting children**
- 4. Promoting a protective ethos.** Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the setting, including volunteers. Concerned parents may also contact the setting's Designated Person/s for Child Protection.

## 1. PREVENTION

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children. The setting will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are actively listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

## 2. PROCEDURES

We will follow Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)\* procedures, which can be accessed online ([www.cambslscb.org.uk](http://www.cambslscb.org.uk)).

**The Designated Persons for Child Protection in the setting are:**

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\* LSCBs bring together representatives of each of the main agencies and professionals responsible for helping to protect children from abuse and neglect in a given area. The LSCB is a multi-agency forum set up to agree how the different services and professional groups should cooperate to safeguard children in that area, and for making sure that arrangements work effectively to bring about good outcomes for children.

*Sarah Vick*

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*Sam Hawksley*

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### **The setting will:**

- Ensure it has a Designated Person for Child Protection on site at every session, who has undertaken, as a minimum, the two-day child protection training course.
- Ensure this training is updated every three years.
- Recognise the importance of the role of the Designated Person and ensure she/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties.
- Ensure there are contingency arrangements should the Designated Person not be available (another Designated Person will be on site).
- Ensure that the Designated Person has access to Social Care at the Local Authority for 'what if' conversations. The Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) is also available.

### **The roles of staff and management**

The setting will ensure every member of staff knows:

- The name of the Designated Person and her/his role.
- How to pass on and record concerns about a child.
- That they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns to relevant agencies and within the timescales set out in LSCB procedures.

The setting will follow 'safer recruitment' procedures. Training will be provided for all staff from the point of their induction, and the setting will ensure that it is updated every three years at a minimum. Training made available must enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond to these in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- Significant changes in children's behaviour.
- Deterioration in children's general well-being.
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of abuse or neglect.
- Children's comments which give cause for concern.
- Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting for example in the child's home.
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or other person working with the children.

### **Liaison with other agencies**

The setting will work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance and written reports at child in need, Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings and child protection conferences and core groups.

## Record keeping

The setting will keep clear, detailed written records of concern about children's welfare using the Log of Concern Form (noting the date, event and action taken). The setting will ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations. Unless it would place the child at risk of acute harm, parents will be informed that a Log of Concern Form has been completed, where it will be stored and what will happen to it when the child leaves the setting.

When the child about whom there have been child welfare concerns (whether subject to a child protection plan or not) leaves the setting or transfers to school, the child's child welfare file will be transferred to the receiving school or setting using the following protocol:

- The file will be marked 'confidential, addressee only' and sent to the Designated Person, if known, of the receiving setting or school. The file will be delivered by hand if possible; otherwise sent by delivery that can be tracked and signed for.
- The setting will contact the receiving setting/school by telephone to make them aware that there is a child welfare file and, once sent, ask them to confirm as soon as possible that they have received the file. The setting will keep a record that the file has been received in order to be able to identify its location.
- Parents will be made aware that child welfare records will be transferred, unless this would place the child at risk of acute harm.
- If individual child welfare files cannot be transferred for any reason, the setting will archive them for 25 years from the child's date of birth.

## Confidentiality and information sharing

Staff will ensure confidentiality and that relevant and proportionate information is shared appropriately.

The Designated Person may disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share relevant and proportionate information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

If a child discloses information that may indicate that they are at risk of abuse or neglect, the staff member must be clear that they cannot promise to keep the information a secret. The staff member should be honest to the child and explain that it will be necessary to tell someone else in order to help them and keep them safe.

The LSCB Guidance on the Sharing of Information on Children in Need and in Need of Protection can be accessed from the LSCB website ([www.cambslscb.org.uk](http://www.cambslscb.org.uk)).

## Communication with parents

The setting will:

- Undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances may put the child at further risk of harm. If in any doubt, staff will seek advice from Social Care as required.
- Ensure that all parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the setting and staff for safeguarding and child protection by ensuring that they receive a copy of this policy when registering their child at the setting.

### 3. SUPPORTING CHILDREN

We recognise that children who are abused or witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and trust those around them.

We recognise that some children may adopt inappropriate or abusive behaviours and that these children may be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The setting will endeavour to support the child through:

- Activities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment that values people.
- A behaviour policy aimed at supporting all children. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the child's sense of self worth. The setting will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but she/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies which support the child and family such as Social Care and Locality Teams.
- A commitment to develop partnerships with parents.
- Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse/violence, mental ill-health or substance misuse may be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.
- Monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and seeking advice or making a referral to other agencies, e.g. Social Care, when necessary.

### Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Additional Needs

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Setting staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

### 4. PROMOTING A PROTECTIVE ETHOS

The settings will create an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and they are listened to. This will be achieved in the following ways:

- All staff, including the Designated Persons, are trained regularly to ensure skills and knowledge are up-to-date.
- Staff know how to respond to child protection concerns.
- Contribution to an inter-agency approach to child protection by working effectively and supportively with other agencies.
- Raising children's awareness and actively promoting self-esteem building, so that children have a range of strategies and contacts to ensure their safety.
- Using personal safety programmes.

- Working with parents to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to the welfare of the children.
- Ensuring the relevant policies are in place, i.e. the use of mobile phones and cameras, behaviour management, intimate care, whistle-blowing, social networking.
- Being vigilant to the inappropriate behaviour of staff or adults working with children and ensuring that all staff and volunteers know the allegations procedure and relevant contacts.
- Staff acting as positive role models to children and young people.

## **5. WHISTLEBLOWING**

The setting has a separate whistle-blowing policy which aims to help and protect both staff and children by:

- Preventing a problem getting worse;
- Safeguarding children and young people;
- Reducing the potential risks to others.

The earlier a concern is raised, the easier and sooner it is possible for the setting to take action.

The responsibility for expressing concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour rests with all staff, students and volunteers.

## **6. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST ADULTS WHO WORK OR VOLUNTEER IN THE SETTING**

If an allegation is made against a staff member, company director or volunteer, the following action will be taken (as per the 'Allegations of Abuse against Adults who Work or Volunteer in a Childcare Setting' flowchart and guidance):

- The setting will ensure the immediate safety of the children.
- The setting will not start to investigate and will immediately contact the Early Years Named Senior Officer (if the Early Years Named Senior Officer is not contactable, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be contacted direct).
- The setting will notify Ofsted of a significant incident.
- The Early Years Named Senior Officer will notify the LADO, who will decide if it could be a child protection case.
- If the LADO decides the matter is a child protection case, external/internal agencies (e.g. police) will be informed by the LADO and the setting will act upon the advice given to ensure that any investigation is not jeopardised.
- It may be necessary for the employer to suspend the alleged perpetrator. Suspension is a neutral act to allow a thorough and fair investigation.
- If it is agreed that the matter is not a child protection case, the setting will investigate the matter and feed back the outcome of the investigation to the Early Years Named Senior Officer and Ofsted.

- In the case of a Company Director allegation to be deemed as valid, the person will not be able to return to the setting premises. Legal proceedings will be implemented for the removal of the Director of the Company.

## 7. MANAGEMENT CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Company Directors fully recognises their responsibilities with regard to child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They will:

- Ensure that this policy is annually reviewed in conjunction with the setting's Designated Person/s.

## 8. ADOPTION AND ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE POLICY

Signed on behalf of the  
Management:

*Sarah Vick*

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*First Steps Childcare © Limited – 12.08.15*  
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This policy was  
reviewed on:

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reviewed on:

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**Useful contacts:**

Early Years Safeguarding Advice Line	01223 729040
Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre (Social Care)	0345 045 5203
Early Years Named Senior Officer (Gemma Hope)	01223 714760 or 07876 038762
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01223 727967
Ofsted	0300 123 1231
Police – non-emergency and Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU)	101