

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN/CHILD PROTECTION

Safeguarding policy for Stepping Stones Montessori Nursery and Pre School

Definition of safeguarding/child protection

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is a part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone is duty bound to report any concern.

Safeguarding Children - Policy statement and principles

Stepping Stones Montessori Nursery and Preschool is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people and expects all staff, students and volunteers to share this commitment.

Representatives of the nursery including the children themselves, their parents/carers, staff, students and volunteers will therefore be involved in the review and development of this policy. We work with children, parents/carers, external agencies and the community to promote the well-being and safety of all children. We support and encourage all children to be strong and resilient, we treat all children with respect and keep them safe from harm in order to give them the very best start in life.

Duty of Stepping Stones Montessori Nursery and Preschool

Due to the many hours of care, we are providing, staff will often be the first people to sense there is a problem. They may be the first people to whom children confide about abuse. The nursery has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society. This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to an emotional, physical or sexual abuse or neglect.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of the children in our care. As much we believe we have a duty to the children, parents/carers and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance which may come to our attention.

It is also the aim of the nursery to provide a secure and safe environment for all children.

It aims to:

- Ensure the children are never placed at risk while in the charge of the nursery staff.
- Ensure confidentiality is always maintained.
- Ensure staff are familiar with safeguarding issues including the identification of sign and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to be followed.
- Ensure staff are up to date with child protection training including 'In-House' training on topical and current issues.
- Regularly review and update this policy.
- Ensure all children are treated equally regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability, language or religion
- Ensure staff are kind, empathetic, gentle carers who listen to the child and provide a positive role model.
- Involve children in relevant decision making.
- Promote positive behaviour.
- Ensure staff can recognise children who may be vulnerable to abuse and how to support them accordingly.

- Promote British values (Under the Prevent Duty 2015) to prevent children/adults from being drawn into terrorist or extremist groups. This is done by learning:
 - Democracy: Making decisions together
 - The rule of law: Understanding that rules matter.
 - Individual liberty: Freedom for all, developing a positive sense of ourselves and learning it is ok to have a different opinion.
 - Mutual respect and tolerance: Treat others as you wish to be treated.

- If at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made to i-ART immediately. **Anybody can make a referral.** If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, any staff member with concerns should press for reconsideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

- All staff members will maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

Child Protection – Policy statement and principles

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, students and volunteers and are consistent with those of Cheshire West and Chester Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

The nursery has a duty to report any suspicion of abuse to the Local Authority which has a duty to investigate such matters. The nursery will follow the procedures set out in the Local Authority Child Protection Documents, and as such will take their advice on all steps taken subsequently.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Owner/Managers:

- will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency work in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is explicit in the role holder's job description
- ensures the nursery has a Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and a Staff Behaviour Policy that are consistent with LSCB and the statutory requirements; they are reviewed annually and made available to staff and parents
- has set procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff, students and volunteers including allegations made against the Designated Safeguarding Lead and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children
- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, students and volunteers receive information about the nursery's safeguarding arrangements on induction
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are understood and implemented by all staff, students and volunteers
- ensures that all staff complete child protection training, which is updated every 3 years and that the DSL receives refresher training every 2 - 3 years, with in-house training taking place once a year
- ensures that the nursery contributes to inter agency working and child protection plans
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively
- supports the DSL with looked after children in promoting the educational achievement of any children who are looked after by the Local Authority and to ensure that all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe

- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that children are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe at all times including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- refers all allegations that a child has been harmed by or that children may be at risk of harm from a member of staff or volunteer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day prior to any internal investigation
- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service, as advised by the LADO

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) is appropriately trained and carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of all children and their parents/carers and all staff, students and volunteers.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads have:

- completed the full Designated Safeguarding Lead training course and will complete a refresher every two to three years
- a working knowledge of Cheshire West and Chester Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures
- ensured that all staff receive necessary training, information and guidance
- the status and authority to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- an understanding of the Team Around the Family process to ensure effective assessment and understanding of children's additional needs in order to inform appropriate provision of early help and intervention

The Designated Safeguarding Leads will:

- keep detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged, but kept separate from, the child's general file
- refer cases of suspected abuse to i-ART or Police as appropriate
- notify i-ART if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensure that when a child with a Child Protection Plan leaves the nursery, their information is passed to their new setting and the child's social worker is informed
- ensure the child protection file is passed securely to any new setting as soon as possible but transferred separately from the child's general file
- attend and/or contribute to child protection conferences
- coordinate all contributions to child protection plans as part of core groups, attending and actively participating in core group meetings
- ensure that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the safeguarding/child protection policy
- ensure that the safeguarding/child protection policy is regularly reviewed and updated annually
- liaise with the owner
- keep a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- make the child protection policy available publicly through our website
- ensure that all parents/carers are aware of our role and responsibility in safeguarding
- ensure parents/carers are aware that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect from themselves may be made as well as any allegations about a member of staff, student or volunteer will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day prior to any internal investigation; and to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as appropriate

- act as case officer in the management of allegations concerning members of staff and volunteers, as directed by the child protection director
- act as a source of support and expertise to the children and their parents/carers and all staff, students and volunteers
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings

Types of abuse

It is a nursery priority to ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the different forms of abuse and signs and symptoms as detailed in the document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015'. All staff will attend appropriate training to help them identify and respond to signs of abuse.

1. Physical Abuse

Action will be taken under this heading if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to the 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 safeguarding unit in the Local Authority will be notified.

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, and drawing or had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.

Procedure

- The observed instances will be reported and recorded to the Nursery Manager and Designated Lead.
- The matter will be referred to the Local Authority.
- The staff will not approach the parent(s)/carer(s) about this matter

3. Emotional Abuse

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have reason to believe that there is 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(s)/carer(s).
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carers will have access to such records.
- If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority.

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 results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Procedure

- The concern will be discussed with the parent/carers.
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carers will have access to such records.
- If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

It is very important that staff report all of their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are - they do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

Becoming aware of safeguarding concerns

There are many ways in which a member of staff may become aware of safeguarding concerns for a child. For example, anonymous report, third party information, direct report from a child, concern about a child's appearance or a report about a staff member's behaviour towards a child (contact LADO).

All staff will participate in regular supervisions with the Nursery Manager or Nursery Deputy Manager. Supervisions will offer staff members an opportunity to discuss topics of concerns such as the welfare of children or the staff behaviour towards children.

What to do if you are concerned about a child

Should any member of staff have concerns for the welfare of any child they will take action and NOT assume someone else will deal with it.

Stage 1:

- Initially talk to the child about what you are observing. It's ok to ask questions, but avoid leading questions
- Listen carefully and gather as much information as possible. It is always important to listen to children and respect their right to confidentiality, unless however, the nursery considers the child to be at risk of harm
- Stepping Stones Montessori Nursery and Preschool staff's responsibilities do not include investigating the suspected abuse, but to act on it.
- Explain to the child your responsibility to take action if what they tell you suggests they or another child are at risk of harm (refer to the page 'receiving disclosures' for further information).
- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will treat all allegations seriously.
- Record the information the staff member has as soon as possible on a cause for concern' form (see attached to the policy). The person receiving the allegation or who has the concern should be the individual who completes the record and ensure this is signed and dated. This form will document a detailed account of the staff member's concern. This form can then help towards building a bigger picture. The staff will keep accurate records of their observations and of anything said to them by the child or others in connection with the suspected abuse.

- The Nursery staff will remember confidentiality and safe storage of information.
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief

Stage 2:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take immediate action if there is any indication that a child has been abused or likely to be abused.

In such circumstances, the Named person will contact police/Children's Social Care Contact and Referral Team (i-ART). If a referral is made direct to i-ART this will be followed up in 24 hours to ascertain the outcome.

N.B Parents and Carer's need to be told about any referral to Children's Social Care unless to do so would put the child at greater risk.

Notifying Parents

The nursery will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents/carers. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parents/carers in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. However, if we believe that notifying parents/carers could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will be sought first from i-ART.

Making a referral to Integrated Access Referral Team (i-ART)

The DSL will call i-ART with a referral if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The i-ART Team will advise the DSL of the next step as this can differ with individual circumstances. The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents/carers will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders have failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education emphasises that any member of staff can contact Children's i-ART if they are concerned about a child.

Whistle blowing

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague - including visiting professionals and volunteers - towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood a situation, and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise a colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Our whistle blowing policy enables staff to make a sensitive enquiry and to raise concerns or allegations in confidence. The term 'whistle blowing' refers to when a worker reports suspected wrongdoing at work. Officially this is called 'making a disclosure in the public interest'. A worker can report things that aren't right, are illegal or if anyone at work is neglecting their duties including:

Someone's health and safety is in danger, damage to the environment, a criminal offence, the company isn't obeying the law or covering up wrongdoing.

Concerns or complaints about the manager should be reported to the owner of the nursery. Concerns or complaints about the owner of the nursery should be reported to LADO/Ofsted.

Staff may also report concerns about suspected abuse or neglect directly to i-ART or the LADO or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to ensure action is taken.

Allegations against staff/volunteers:

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the nursery will follow the guidelines set out by the Local Safeguarding Board for Cheshire West and Chester and Ofsted.

All staff have a duty of care and must notify their supervisor or manager if they have any concerns regarding the misuse of mobile phones, cameras or social websites by staff. Any breach of protocol will result in disciplinary procedures.

Staff must be able to recognise and report inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any person working with 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. All members of staff are duty bound to report any inappropriate behaviour.

If any member of staff witness the inappropriate treatment of a child by a member of staff they have a duty to report it to a nursery manager immediately, failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the local authority safeguarding unit (the LADO- Local Authority Designated Officer- Contact details below) will be informed

immediately and must be within 24 hours. The LADO will guide the nursery in how to manage the allegation including whether the member of staff should be suspended pending investigation and the nursery disciplinary procedure will be followed. OFSTED will be informed as soon as reasonably practical but at the latest within 14 days of being made. The provider will also be informed.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff whilst in the care of the nursery the allegation will be recorded accurately and witnesses to sign it along with any staff witness statements. The staff member receiving the allegation will ensure the safety and well-being of the child and that they are away from the individual against whom the allegation has been made. The LADO and Parent(s)/Carer(s) will be informed immediately. Parents will usually be informed following the consultation with the LADO unless injury has occurred in which case the parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed immediately.

If a parent(s)/carer(s) make an allegation against a member of staff the allegation will be recorded accurately and the parent(s)/carer(s) will be asked to sign and date the allegation. The LADO will be informed immediately.

During the investigation period of the allegation (and including if there was a suspension in place pending investigation) the nursery will inform the LADO and DBS immediately if the accused member of staff: resigns from their post; fails to comply with the investigation or does not respond to communication from the nursery regarding the investigation. This includes a member of staff who is dismissed or would have been because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.

An internal investigation will be done following discussion with the LADO so not to jeopardise any tandem processes. The nursery investigation officer and deputy investigation officer will be the Designated Person and Deputy Designated Person for Child Protection at the nursery as stated below.

During any investigation the nursery states that staff do not disclose any information surrounding a staff member's personal details or details of the allegation with any third party; including any parent(s)/carer(s) using the setting; the press or any social networking sites. In the result of a break of confidentiality the nursery disciplinary policy will be followed.

The nursery will seek advice from the LADO on how the allegation is managed and how to support and give information to the child, the parent(s)/carer(s) and the subject of the investigation process.

If a member of staff feels their concerns regarding any safeguarding issue are not being listened to or dealt with appropriately they must bring this to the attention of the Nominated Persons for Child Protection/Safeguarding or the most senior member of staff available. If their concerns are still not listened to they must raise the bar by contacting the Cheshire

West LSCB for advice and to report the concern. Chester Child Protection Unit (contact number below).

Support for children, families and staff involved in a child protection issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child. It can also result in distress and anxiety for the families and staff who become involved.

We will support children, their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person (*usually the DSL*) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, a separate link person will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from children, families and/or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

Complaints Procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent/carer raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the owners/managers of the nursery. Please see separate complaints procedure policy.

Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff, students and volunteers who will have direct contact with children are required to attend an induction where management will discuss

- the nursery's child protection and safeguarding policy
- signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect
- responding to disclosure of abuse or neglect by a child
- reporting and recording concerns and disclosures
- the staff code of conduct
- details of the DSL.

The nursery's safeguarding/child protection policy will be sent by email when confirming an appointment to attend an induction. The individual is required to read the policies in advance of the induction. The individual will be given an opportunity to clarify any issues and then asked to sign to confirm that they have read and understood the policy and undertake to comply with them.

All staff, including management will receive Level 1 Safeguarding training that is regularly updated annually.

DSL will attend training for newly appointed DSLs and refresher training every two to three years delivered by Cheshire West and Chester Local Safeguarding Board.

All staff will receive regular updates on safeguarding through staff meetings.

Confidential information

Confidential information will be stored in the office or on a password protected computer (Nursery Manager's computer). Only the Nursery Manager, Nursery Deputy Manager/Third In Charge and Nursery Owner will be informed of these passwords and have access to this computer.

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the DSL.

It is reasonable for staff to discuss day-to-day concerns about children with colleagues in order to ensure that children's general needs are met. However, staff should only refer child protection concerns to the DSL, manager or the nursery owner. The person receiving the referral will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to know' basis. In the case of concerns being about the DSL, manager or the nursery owner, the concern should be made to LADO/Ofsted.

Safer Recruitment

Stepping Stones Montessori Nursery and Preschool ensures that all staff and volunteers are safe to work with children. At least one member of the management team will have attended safer recruitment training. All staff and volunteers employed at the nursery will be subjected to the following procedures and regulations

- 1) Face to face interview with prepared questions. Interviews will be carried out by at least two members of the management team. During the interview the individual is asked about any criminal convictions, cautions or other legal restrictions on working with children or any pending cases that could affect their suitability to work with children.
- 2) Full DBS check (CRB) enhanced disclosure
- 3) Identity checks and eligibility to work in the UK
- 4) Full employment/educational history including seeking explanations for gaps between employments/educational history.
- 5) Academic history/original copies of certificate seen
- 6) References obtained, questions asked on their skills and suitability to work with children.
- 7) If recruiting from abroad additional references are taken up and if a DBS is not available, a "fit for persons" will be sought where available.
- 8) Employment application form will be completed
- 9) Three month 'Trial Period'

All new members of staff, students and volunteers will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the nursery's child protection and safeguarding policy's and Staff Behaviour policy as well as identifying their child protection training needs.

Any staff working within the nursery whilst waiting for a DBS to be obtained will be supervised at all times and not permitted to take children in a small group from the room, to the toilet or to change nappies.

If the nursery uses supply staff we obtain written confirmation from their supply agency that they have satisfactorily undertaken all appropriate checks that we as a nursery would undertake if we were employing the individual directly.

The nursery maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Any visitors or contractual staff i.e. Fire/engineers/builders etc will be supervised at all times and ID checked on arrival and must sign in and out of the visitor's sheet in the entrance way. The identification must be checked by the Nursery Manager or a senior member of staff and they must notify all of the playrooms of the visitor's arrival, including their purpose and how long they will be in the nursery and then when they have left the building. If there is any doubt when checking identification, the nursery manager will contact the company or appropriate body and admission for the nursery will be refused until the matter is resolved.

For any non-members of staff or non-business visitors, i.e.. perspective parents, staff friends or partners, access will be restricted to where necessary and no one shall be left unattended anywhere in the building at any time.

Safe Word: If there is unknown person in the building and a member of staff is concerned as to their motive, staff must tell the most senior member of staff that "Mr Smith has come to see you". This will alarm the senior member of staff to act accordingly with the unknown adult.

All staff will be given training on Child Protection/Safeguarding which is advised to be refreshed every two years, where this is possible from Cheshire West. Staff will be supported by the management team in any safeguarding issue and 'In-House' training will be given to staff to refresh knowledge and understanding of procedures, identifying cause for concern and identifying signs and symptoms of abuse training will also bridge any gaps between outside availability on taught courses and give opportunity to introduce new legislation, introduce any new LSCB guidelines and procedures to keep abreast of any topical Child Protection issues in the press.

Record Keeping

The nursery will:

- keep clear, detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to i-ART immediately
- keep written records in individual folders in a meticulous chronological order
- ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations
- ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to any receiving nursery, school or other education establishment that a child moves to.

Child protection records are kept separately from the child's general file and will only be accessible to the Designated Safeguarding Leads, Managers and the owner of the nursery.

All staff will record safeguarding or child protection observations, concerns and/or disclosures about a child on a 'cause for concern' sheet.

Such records will include, in addition to the name and date of birth of the child, timed and dated observations describing the child's behaviour, appearance, statements/remarks made to staff or other children and observations of interactions between the child, other children, members of staff and/or parents/carers that give rise to concern. Where possible and without interpretation, the exact words spoken by the child or parent/carer will be recorded. Records will be signed, dated and timed by the member of staff making the record. These records are completed as a paper version with any extra information being electronically recorded and password protected. When a referral is made and all evidence is sent through the post by recorded delivery it is photocopied to enable us as a nursery to maintain the file.

It is important that all staff keep to this one consistent system for the recording of concerns and that all records are passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who should complete the form to confirm what action has been taken.

Out of nursery injury form

Out of nursery injury form will be used to record any injury or markings a child may have that have not occurred while at the nursery. Staff will seek an explanation of how the injury occurred from parent(s) or carer(s) and it will be recorded with a parental/carer signature, if appropriate. The forms will be kept alongside the children's individual medicine forms and will be audited on a monthly basis by the accident auditor or safeguarding officer. At any time a member of staff or parent(s)/carer(s) has any concern regarding a child they must speak to the safeguarding officer or most senior member of the team as soon as possible.

Children absent from nursery

Please see policy 60 'Absent Child'.

All electronic and paper registers must be completed by 10am. If a child has not attended nursery that day and is on the register then the Room Leader must inform the DSL of this so they can follow the "Absent Child" Policy.

Mobile telephones

Personal mobile telephones belonging to staff must be switched off before the start of the shift and kept in the staff room at all times. Staff may use their telephones if necessary during their lunch breaks only in the staff room or outdoors at the front of the nursery. Staff

are not allowed to carry any type of personal media on their person while in the nursery including the garden areas. Visitors to the nursery including students, safety officers, inspectors, will be asked for their telephone which will be put in the staff room or in the Managers office.

Staff have a duty to report to the person in charge immediately if they suspect a member of staff is carrying any type of media on their person or has failed to place their telephone in the lockers, this open, partnership approach is paramount in protecting children from potential dangers. Staff are to inform their next of kin that they can be contacted at the nursery on 01244 332270 during working hours.

We ask that parent(s)/carer(s) dropping children off and collecting children from the setting refrain from using their mobile telephones in the nursery playrooms or outdoors. Phone calls can be made or received in the reception area or outdoors at the front of the nursery. This is to prevent the privacy of staff and children being put at risk. Staff will ask any parent(s)/carer(s) to finish their call before giving them access to the main part of the nursery and are expected to in a respectful manner, challenge any parent(s)/carer(s) who attempt to use their mobile telephone while in the main part of the nursery.

Cameras

The nursery provides Ipads with a digital camera to be used by staff. When photographing children staff will ensure images are positive and children are not photographed while having their personal needs met. The setting will ensure that children who have additional reasons for safeguarding of identity and location are inclusively protected without discrimination. Staff are permitted to use the cameras for the use of recording observations of children and special moments like birthdays, Graduation day etc.

The cameras are allowed to be used in the setting playrooms and garden. Photographs must be purposeful, any blurred or multiple copies of photographs must be deleted from the camera immediately to prevent printing of pictures that are not required. Permission is sought from parent(s)/carer(s) at registration for their child to be photographed or video recorded by nursery staff for use of display, staff training/parent workshops within the nursery. This permission will last for the length of the child's stay at the setting. Parents retain the right to withdraw their consent at any time and can do so in writing to the setting Manager. Students requiring to use photographs as part of the course will have to seek separate written permission from parent(s)/carer(s).

When not in use the Ipads are stored in the Staff Room. For occasions when parent(s)/carer(s), staff and children join together to celebrate Graduation day or similar events permission will be sought at the event for parent(s)/carer(s) for all in attendance to

be allowed to record or photograph the event. The person in charge will take responsibility to ensure every child attending the event will have an adult attending otherwise individual written permission will be sought prior to the event.

Prevent Duty

Stepping Stones Montessori Nursery and Preschool is committed to preventing children from being radicalised and drawn into any form of extremism or terrorism in accordance with the government counter terrorism strategy.

Our Nursery aims to help protect children who may be at risk of radicalisation by ensuring that children understand the value of themselves and others around them by promoting our British Values.

We will be vigilant in recognising any issues around children or families that may raise cause for concern and act appropriately.

The nursery will closely monitor any use of computer technology that may have links with the internet and actively promote the safe use of the internet with the children.

We are committed to ensuring that all staff have a good knowledge of the Prevent Duty and staff will undergo online training about Prevent Duty through their induction and regular updates.

Should staff have a concern regarding a child or family they should speak with the DSL who will then contact the Prevent Hotline for further advice. Staff can also contact the hotline directly on 02073407264

County Lines

County lines is the name given to drug dealing where organised criminal groups (OCGs) use phone lines to move and supply drugs, usually from cities into smaller towns and rural areas. They exploit vulnerable people, including children and those with mental health or addiction issues, by recruiting them to distribute the drugs. This is often referred to as 'drug running'.

Criminals may also use a vulnerable person's home as their base of operations. This is known as 'cuckooing'.

Stepping Stones Montessori Nursery and Preschool is committed to preventing children and families from being involved in County Lines and will look for the signs that may indicate someone is involved in county lines:

- repeatedly going missing from school or home and being found in other areas
- having money, new clothes or electronic devices and they can't explain how they paid for them
- getting high numbers of texts or phone calls, being secretive about who they're speaking to
- decline in school or work performance
- significant changes in emotional or physical well-being

If staff are concerned about drug-related crime in your area or think someone may be a victim of drug exploitation, they will call 101. If it's an emergency, please call 999. It can also be reported online or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via crimestoppers-uk.org.

British Values

The nursery promotes **British Values** which includes:

- **Democracy**
- **The rule of law**
- **Individual liberty**
- **Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.**

We provide children with the opportunity to learn how to discuss and debate points of view and to understand a range of faiths and ensure that all children are valued and listened to.

All staff are made aware of the importance of identifying indicators of children being radicalised and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

The nursery will make appropriate referrals in respect of any child whose behaviour or comments suggest that they are vulnerable to being radicalised and drawn into extremism and terrorism in order to ensure that children receive appropriate support.

The nursery expects all staff, students, volunteers, visiting professionals, contractors and individuals or agencies that use the premises to behave in accordance with the nursery's Staff Behaviour Policy.

Staff Behaviour Policy:

We will challenge the expression and/or promotion of extremist views and ideas by any adult on nursery premises or at special events and, when necessary, will make appropriate referrals in respect of any such adult.

Reporting directly to i-ART agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with i-ART and/or the Police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the DSL, the managers and the nursery owner all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that a direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

In any of these circumstances, staff may make direct child protection referrals and share information without being subject to disciplinary action. However, staff should inform the DSL, managers and/or the nursery owner at the earliest opportunity that they have done so unless in their judgement doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child.

Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. If a looked after child attends the nursery the DSL will have all the appropriate information about a child's looked after status including their background, their social workers name and contact details and details of the carer the child is living with. **The DSL will ensure that information is passed onto staff on a need to know basis only.**

Reviewing and disseminating policies

Policies are reviewed annually by the Nursery Manager, Nursery Owner, Deputy Manager and Third In Charge.

Once a policy has been reviewed by all parties the policy is then sent to and read by all staff/volunteers and these individuals sign to declare they have read and understood the policy.

A copy of the nursery's policies is available to read in the staff room and there is also a 'policy of the month' board in our parent's area.

The policy of the month changes each month and is displayed for parents to read if they wish.

For staff there is a copy of each policy in the office available for staff at any time.

References:

Safeguarding information boards are located for staff/students/visitors in the nursery staff room and for parent(s)/carer(s)/visitors in the nursery entrance.

Whistle blowing, a guide from GOV.UK' is available on the walls

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

The nominated person for child protection/safeguarding children and investigating officer at the setting is: **Lisa Roberts - Nursery Manager**

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:

The deputy nominated person for child protection/safeguarding children and investigating office at the setting is: **Rose Holmes - Deputy Manager**

Contact telephone numbers for referral:

Integrated Access and Referral Team (I-ART)

Office hours 0300 1237047. Out of hours 01244 977277

Emergency Duty Team

Out of hours: 01244 977 277

4.30pm - 8.30am (Mon - Thurs)/From 4pm (Friday)

24 hrs weekends and bank holidays - Cheshire Police: 101

(999 in an emergency)

The Local Authority Designated Office (LADO)

Allegations Referral Form on:

www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/policy-and-procedures/allegations-management-lado

SCiE Team (Safeguarding Children in Education)

Susie Sheasby-Jackson - 07554773926

cheshirewestscp.co.uk/professionals/scie/contact-scie

Written by Lisa Roberts for Stepping Stones Montessori and Preschool - July 2018

Last review date; April 2023 by Lisa Roberts and Lucy Wilson

To be reviewed; April 2024

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include unresponsiveness to, or neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Emotional

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve:

- conveying to them that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- not giving them opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed; interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- seeing / hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- serious bullying causing them frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- exploitation or corruption of them.

Sexual

- forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- physical contact: including assault by penetration e.g. rape or oral sex; or non-penetrative acts e.g. masturbation, kissing, rubbing & touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities: e.g. involving children in looking at/ in the production of sexual images/ activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, grooming a child in preparation for abuse

Physical

- Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- Injuries in babies and non mobile children

Receiving Disclosures:



Receive

- Listen, try not to look shocked or be judgmental
- Believe what they say 'take it seriously'.
- Accept what the young person says.
- Don't make them feel bad by saying "you should have told me earlier"
- Don't 'interrogate' them - let them tell you, try not to interrupt
- Note the date and time, what was done, who did it, and where it took place
- Use the young person's own words
- Don't criticise the perpetrator
- Don't ask leading questions - use 'open' questions to clarify only



Reassure

- Stay calm, tell the young person they've done the right thing in telling you
- Reassure them they are not to blame
- Empathise - don't tell them how they should be feeling
- Don't promise confidentiality, explain who needs to know
- Explain what you'll do next
- Be honest about what you can do



Report and Record

- Make a Brief, accurate, timely and factual record
- Discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy, without delay
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the situation and decide on the next steps
- **Things to include:**
- Time and full date of disclosure/incident and the time and full date the record was made
- An accurate record of what was said or seen
- Whether it is 1st or 2nd hand information
- Whether the child was seen/spoken to
- Whether information is fact/ professional judgement
- Full names and roles/status of anyone identified in the report
- Avoid acronyms/jargon/abbreviations
- Sign the record with a legible signature.
- Record actions agreed with/by the Designated Lead

Records should be reviewed regularly and any new concerns should be added and responded to immediately.

