



Steps Pre-School Child Protection Policy

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

Date written: October 2021

Date of last update: May 2022

Date agreed and ratified by Reverend Mark Barker

Date of next full review: February 2023

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures

Key people

	Name	Contact information
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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Fiona Butcher, Supervisor	01732 363642 Fiona.butcher@ststephens.org.uk
Registered person	Rev. Mark Barker	01732 379900 Mark.barker@ststephens.org.uk
Other key staff Designated Safeguarding Lead	Ruth Lanstone, SENCO/Practitioner	01732 363642 Ruth.lanstone@ststephens.org.uk

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What to do if you have a welfare concern in Steps Pre-School

Why are you concerned?

- For example
 - Something a child has said-e.g allegation of harm
 - Child's appearance – may include unexplained marks as well as dress
 - Behaviour change
 - Witnessed concerning behaviour

Act immediately and record your concerns. If urgent, speak to a DSL first

Follow this procedure

- Reassure the child
- Clarify concerns if necessary (**TED: Tell, Explain, Describe**)
- Use child's own words, record facts not opinions
- Sign and date your records
- Seek support for yourself if required from DSL

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or refer if appropriate

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm e.g. unsafe to go home
- Access the Kent Safeguarding Support Level Guidance document and procedures: www.kscmp.org.uk
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate e.g. Internal or community services, early help open access, LADO, Police or Request for Support for integrated children's services
- If unsure then consult with Area Education Safeguarding Advisor (03000412284) or Local Authority Social Worker at the Front Door.

If you are unhappy with the response

Staff:

- Follow local escalation procedures
- Follow whistleblowing procedures

Children and Parents/Carers:

- Follow setting complaints procedures (Shown in Information, Records and Administration policy)

Record decision making and action taken in the child's child protection file

Monitor

Be clear about:

- What you are monitoring e.g. behaviour trends, appearance etc.
- How long you will monitor
- Where, how and to whom you will feedback and how you will record

Review and request further support if necessary

At all stages the child's circumstances will be kept under review
The DSL/Staff will request further support if required to ensure the **child's safety is paramount.**

1. Child Focused Approach to Safeguarding

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.' Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021

1.1 Introduction

- St. Stephens PCC as the trustee of Steps Pre-School believes that all those directly involved with our setting have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. Our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child can achieve their full potential and we take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.
- Steps Pre-School recognises our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and all those directly connected (staff, volunteers, , parents, families, and children) are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and have an essential role to play in making this community safe and secure.
- Steps believe that the best interests of children always come first. All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- Staff working with children at Steps will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child and if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.
- As part of the safeguarding ethos of the setting we are committed to:
 - Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
 - Providing an environment and culture in which children feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
 - Developing appropriate and positive relationships between children and the adults that care for them
 - Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties
 - Using learning opportunities to increase self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness, and decision making. This is so that young children develop a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others
 - Working with parents/carers to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations
 - Ensuring all staff have regular and appropriate training (including induction) to enable them to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and ensure they are aware of the setting's procedures and reporting mechanisms
 - Monitoring children who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection, keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
 - Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, including temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers.
- Steps adheres to the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) safeguarding children's procedures. The full KSCMP procedures document and additional

guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the KSCMP website: www.kscmp.org.uk

1.2 Policy Context

- This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and has due regard to the related guidance. This includes:
 - DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE)
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTSC)
 - Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework'
 - Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000
 - Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (Online)
 - Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework 2021 (EYFS)
- This policy has been implemented to ensure compliance with section 3, the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS.
- Steps is currently operating in response to coronavirus (Covid-19), however, our safeguarding principles, remain the same. We will continue to follow government guidance and will amend this policy and our approaches, as necessary.
 - As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic some members of our community may have been exposed to a range of adversity and trauma including bereavement, anxiety and in some cases increased welfare and safeguarding risks. We will work with local services, such as health and the local authority, to ensure necessary support is in place.

1.3 Definition of Safeguarding

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) states that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
 - Protecting children from maltreatment.
 - Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- It also reminds us that safeguarding “**is everyone’s responsibility**” and everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. Everyone should consider wider environmental factors in a child’s life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- The setting acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues including (but not limited to):
 - Abuse and neglect
 - Bullying, including cyberbullying
 - Children and the court system
 - Children with family members in prison
 - Children Missing Education (CME)
 - Child missing from home or care
 - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
 - Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
 - Contextual safeguarding (risks outside the family home)
 - County lines and gangs
 - Domestic abuse
 - Drugs and alcohol misuse
 - Fabricated or induced illness
 - Faith abuse
 - Female genital Mutilation (FGM)
 - Forced Marriage
 - Gangs and youth violence

- Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls
 - Hate
 - Homelessness
 - Honour based abuse
 - Human trafficking and modern slavery
 - Mental health
 - Missing children and adults
 - Nude or semi-nude image sharing, aka youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “Sexting”
 - Online safety
 - Peer on peer abuse
 - Preventing radicalisation and extremism
 - Private fostering
 - Relationship abuse
 - Serious violence
 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment (including between children)
 - So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
 - Up skirting
 - Youth produced sexual imagery or “sexting”
- If staff have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow this policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

1.4 Related Safeguarding Policies

- This policy is one of a series of our integrated safeguarding portfolio, and should be read and actioned in conjunction with the policies as listed below:
 - Behaviour Management (inc. anti-bullying)
 - Code of Conduct/Behaviour policy
 - Online Safety
 - Social Media
 - Data protection and information Sharing
 - Image/Camera use
 - Drugs
 - Health (inc. personal and intimate care)
 - Health and safety and risk assessments
 - First aid and accidents (including medicines)
 - Managing allegations against staff
 - Behaviour policy/code of conduct for staff, including Acceptable Use of Technology (AUP)
 - Safer Recruitment
 - Whistleblowing
- **Supporting Guidance (to be read and followed alongside this document)**
 - “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings” - Safer Recruitment Consortium, May 2019.
 - “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused” – DfE, March 2015
 - Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 Welfare Requirements
 - KSCB document “Safe practice with technology-guidance for adults who work with children and young people”
 - KCC Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidelines for early years staff
 - KCC guidelines for “Safeguarding Record keeping
 - KCC Advice notes – Dealing with Disclosures
- These documents can be found in the shared drive on Steps computer
- Steps policies can be found in one folder, in the entrance hall as well as in the office.
- All staff are given their own personal copies of Steps policies.

1.5 Policy Compliance, Monitoring and Review

- Steps will review this policy at least annually (as a minimum) and will update it as needed, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt. The policy will also be revised following any national or local updates, significant local or national safeguarding events and/or learning, and/or any changes to our own procedures.
- All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy.
- Parents/carers can obtain a copy of the Child Protection Policy and other related policies on request. Additionally, our policies can be viewed via our website: www.stepspreschool.org
- The policy forms part of our development plan and will be reviewed annually by St Stephens PCC as trustees of Steps which has responsibility for oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and manager will ensure the Registered person and trustees receive regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems. They will not receive details of individual children's situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

2. Key Responsibilities

2.1 Leadership and Management

- The Rev. Mark Barker as the Registered person, the trustees and the Manager and Designated Lead Gina Darling have a strategic responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements and will comply with their duties under legislation.
- They have regard to the EYFS 2021 and KCSIE 2021 guidance and will ensure our policies, procedures and training is effective and complies with the law at all times.
- They will ensure that the DSL is supported to be able to provide support to staff and children regarding any safeguarding and welfare concerns.
- They will ensure staff understand and follow safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The registered person/leadership/management committee will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is supported in their role and is provided with sufficient time so they can provide appropriate support to staff and children regarding any safeguarding and welfare concerns.
- The manager/registered person will ensure that our child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures are understood and followed by all staff.

2.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The EYFS states; *'a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in every setting'*. St Stephens PCC have appointed an appropriately qualified and experienced Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to fulfil this role in our setting.
 - They have appointed (Gina Darling, Manager) as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- The DSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety) in the setting. Whilst the activities of the DSL

may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.

- The setting has also appointed Deputy DSLs who will have delegated responsibilities and act in the DSLs absence.
 - Fiona Butcher, Supervisor
 - Ruth Lanstone, Senco, Practitioner
- It is the role of the DSL to:
 - Acting as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
 - Maintaining a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns
 - Keeping apprised of any updates in policy and practice as agreed by Kent Safeguarding Children Board (via the Education Safeguarding Service)
 - Coordinating safeguarding action for individual children
 - When supporting children with a social worker or looked after children the DSL should have the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child (with the DSL liaising closely with the designated teacher)
 - Liaising with other agencies and professionals in line with KCSIE 2021 and WTSC 2018
 - Ensuring that locally established procedures as put in place by the three safeguarding partners as part of the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures (KSCMP), including referrals, are followed, as necessary.
 - Representing, or ensure the setting is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including child protection conferences)
 - Managing and monitoring the setting role in any multi-agency plan for a child.
 - Being available during setting hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns and ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and out of hours and/or out of term activities.
 - Ensuring all staff, visitors and volunteers are aware of the setting's policies and procedures and their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children.
 - Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within EYFS 2021.
- The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSLs training will be updated formally at least every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.

2.3 Members of Staff

- The EYFS 2021 requires providers *'to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well'* and accordingly, everyone involved in the care of young children has a role to play in their protection. All members of staff in the setting are part of the wider safeguarding system for children and are in a unique position to observe any changes in a child's behaviour or appearance.
- All members of staff have a responsibility to:
 - Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
 - Be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.
 - Know what to do if a child tells them that he or she is being abused or neglected and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child.
 - Be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
 - Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
 - Understand the early help process and their role in it.
 - Understand the settings safeguarding policies and systems.
 - Undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated.

- Be aware of the local process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
- Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- Reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

2.4 Children

- Children have a right to:
 - Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
 - Confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
 - Receive help from a trusted adult.
 - Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

2.5 Parents and Carers

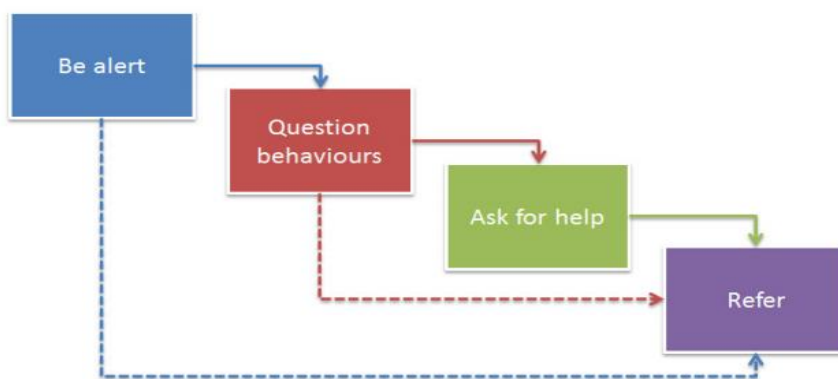
- Parents/carers have a responsibility to:
 - Understand and adhere the relevant policies and procedures.
 - Talk to their children about safeguarding issues with their children and support the setting in their safeguarding approaches.
 - Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online.
 - Seek help and support from the setting or other agencies.

3. Child Protection Procedures

3.1 Recognising Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

- All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), EYFS 2021 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021. This is outlined locally within the [Kent Support Levels Guidance](#).
- Steps recognise that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse:
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Neglect
 - For further information see Appendix 1.
- Steps recognises that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused however all concerns should be taken seriously and will be explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.
- Steps recognises abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot always be covered by one definition or one label alone. In many cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff will always be vigilant and always raise concerns with a DSL.
- Parental behaviours can indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff will be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.

- Children may report abuse happening to themselves, their peers or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.
- Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors and risks outside the setting. Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families; extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.
- Members of staff are aware that child welfare concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. For example, children may be abused in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those close to them or by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or by unknown or in some cases unidentifiable individuals. In the case of honour-based abuse, including forced marriage and female genital mutilation, children may be taken out of the country to be abused. An abused child may often experience more than one type of abuse as well as other difficulties in their lives.
- Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time, however, it can also be a one-off event. This can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.
- Technology can be a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face and in many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online.
- By understanding the indicators of abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow this approach if they are concerned about a child:



- It may not always be appropriate to go through all four stages sequentially and if a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to Children Social Work Service and/or the police.
- In all cases, if staff are unsure, they will always speak to the DSL (or deputy).
- Steps recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.

3.2 Responding to Child Protection Concerns

- If staff are made aware of a child protection concern, they are expected to:

- Listen carefully to the concern and be non-judgmental.
 - Only use open questions to clarify information where necessary, e.g. who, what, where, when or Tell, Explain, Describe (TED).
 - Not promise confidentiality as concerns will have to be shared further, for example, with the DSL and potentially Integrated Children's Services.
 - Be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed.
 - Record the concern in line with setting record keeping requirements.
 - Inform the DSL (or deputy), as soon as practically possible.
 - DSL Or Deputy to inform registered person Rev. Mark Barker or the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Jan Smith, if incident requires this e.g., Social Services or Police involvement.
 - If incident escalates, the Diocese of Rochester Safeguarding Lead (since Steps is part of St. Stephens church) will be informed.
- The DSL or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, a DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should speak to the Rev Mark Barker and/or take advice from Education Safeguarding Service or via consultation with a social worker from the Front Door. In these circumstances, any action taken will be shared with a DSL as soon as is practically possible.
- Steps will respond to concerns in line with the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures (KSCMP).
 - The full KSCMP procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on their website: www.kscmp.org.uk
 - Specific information and guidance to follow with regards to accessing Early Help and Preventative Services and/or Children's Social Work Services as part of Integrated Children's Services (ICS) in Kent can be found here: www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/integrated-childrens-services
- Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger, a 'request for support' will be made immediately to Integrated Children's Services (via the 'Front Door') and/or the police, in line with KSCMP procedures.
 - Steps recognise that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns for a child as identified in line with Support Level Guidance, it is NOT to investigate as a single agency, but to act in line with KSCMP guidance which may involve multi-agency decision making.
 - The DSL may seek advice or guidance from their Area Education Safeguarding Advisor from the Education Safeguarding Service before deciding next steps.
 - They may also seek advice or guidance from a social worker at the Front Door service who are the first point of contact for Integrated Children's Services (ICS).
- In the event of a request for support to the Front Door being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by KSCMP and ICS. Parents/carers will be informed of this, unless there is a valid reason not to do so, for example, if to do so would put a child at risk of harm or would undermine a criminal investigation.
- All staff are aware of the process for making request for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- Where it is identified a child may benefit from Early Help support (as provided by ICS) , the DSL (or deputy) will generally lead as appropriate and make a request for support via the Front Door.
 - The DSL will keep all early help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to escalating concerns to the Front Door or seeking advice via the Education Safeguarding Service if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

- If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving or there is a concern regarding decisions made, the DSL will consider following [KSCMP escalation procedures](#) to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. DSLs may request support with this via the Education Safeguarding Service.

3.3 Recording Concerns

- All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions, and reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing on the setting safeguarding incident/concern form and passed without delay to the DSL.
- Incident concern forms are kept in the child protect folder in the office
- Records will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child's words and will be signed and dated by the member of staff. Child protection records will record facts and not personal opinions. A body map will be completed if injuries have been observed.
- If there is an immediate safeguarding concern the member of staff will consult with a DSL before completing the form as reporting urgent concerns takes priority.
- If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they will discuss their concerns with the DSL.
- Child protection records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and details regarding any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- Child protection records will be kept confidential and stored securely. Child protection records will be kept for individual children and will be maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the setting. Child protection records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained centrally and securely by the DSL.
- All child protection records will be transferred in accordance with data protection legislation to the child's subsequent setting, under confidential and separate cover as soon as possible. Child Protection files will be transferred securely to the new DSL, separately to the child's main file, and a confirmation of receipt will be obtained.
- In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new setting in advance of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new setting to continue to provide support.
- Where the setting receives child protection files, the DSL will ensure key staff such as the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will be made aware of relevant information as required.

3.4 Multi-Agency Working

- Steps recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work within the KSCMP multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The management team and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies in line with statutory guidance.
- Steps recognises the importance of multi-agency working and is committed to working alongside partner agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to KSCMP processes as required, such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings.

- We recognise that STEPS are not the investigating agency when child protection concerns arise and will therefore pass all relevant cases to statutory agencies. We will however contribute to the investigation and assessment processes as required and recognise that the setting plays a crucial part in supporting the child while these take place.
- The chair at St Stephens PCC, Rev Mark Barker, and the STEPS DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

3.5 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Steps recognises our duty and powers to hold, use and share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within WTSC 2018 and KCSIE 2021.
- Dawn Clarke, STEPS Administrator ensures that our setting is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements.
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. DfE "[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#)" (2018) provides further detail.
- The Manager and DSL will disclose relevant safeguarding information about a child with staff on a 'need to know' basis.
- All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep information confidential, in line with our confidentiality policy, they also have a professional responsibility to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children; this may include sharing information with the DSL and with other agencies as appropriate. All staff are aware they cannot promise confidentiality in situations which might compromise a child's safety or wellbeing.

3.6 Complaints

- All members of our community should feel able to raise or report any concerns about children's safety or potential failures in our safeguarding regime. The setting has a complaints procedure available to parents, members of staff and visitors who wish to report concerns or complaints. This can be found in the Information, Records and Administration Policy found in the folder in the Pre-School entrance and the office
- Whilst we encourage members of our community to report concerns and complaints directly to us, we recognise this may not always be possible. Children, young people, and adults who have experienced abuse can contact the NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline on 0800 136 663 or via email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.
 - Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- The leadership team at Steps will take all concerns reported seriously and all complaints will be considered and responded to in line with the relevant and appropriate process.
 - Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with in line with section 8 of this policy.

• **Specific Safeguarding Issues**

- Steps is aware of a range of specific safeguarding issues and situations that can put children at greater risk of harm. Whilst some of these issues may be more likely to involve older children, early years children may still be at risk at harm, for example where there are concerns involving family members.
- Where staff are unsure how to respond to specific safeguarding issues, they should follow the processes as identified in part 3 of this policy and speak with the DSL or a deputy.

3.7 Peer on Peer Abuse

- All members of staff at Steps recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, and that it can happen both inside and outside of the setting and online.
- Steps recognises that peer on peer abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:
 - Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
 - abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
 - physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
 - sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
 - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
 - up skirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
 - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Steps believes that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or dismissed as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.
- Steps recognises that even if there are no reported cases of peer-on-peer abuse, such abuse is still likely to be taking place.
- All staff have a role to play in challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. Staff recognise that that some peer-on-peer abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved, i.e., for gender-based abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators.
- In order to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse, Steps will:
 - Ensure staff follow Promoting Positive Behaviour found in the Welfare Policy
- Steps want children to feel able to confidently report abuse and know their concerns will be treated seriously. All allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with associated policies, including child protection, anti-bullying and behaviour. Children who experience abuse will be offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.
- Alleged victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by peer-on-peer abuse will be supported by:
 - Taking reports seriously, listening carefully, avoiding victim blaming, providing appropriate pastoral support, working with parents/carers, reviewing educational approaches, following procedures as identified in other policies e.g., the anti-bullying,

behaviour and child protection policy, and where necessary and appropriate, informing the police and/or ICS.

3.8 Child on Child Sexual Violence or Harassment

- When responding to concerns relating to child on child sexual violence or harassment, Steps will follow the guidance outlined in Part Five of KCSIE 2021 and the DfE [‘Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges’](#) guidance.
- Steps recognises sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.
- All victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment or be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- When there has been a report of sexual violence or harassment, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).
 - The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.
- Reports will initially be managed internally by the setting and where necessary will be referred to Integrated Children’s Services and/or the Police.
 - The decision making and required action taken will vary on a case by case basis, but will be informed by the wishes of the victim, the nature of the alleged incident (including whether a crime may have been committed), the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance, if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse, if there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or setting staff, and, any other related issues or wider context.
- If at any stage the DSL is unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service.

3.9 Nude and/or Semi-Nude Image Sharing by Children

- Steps recognises that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “sexting”) can be a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).
- When made aware of concerns involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos by children, staff are advised to:
 - Report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
 - Never view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it – this may be illegal. If staff have already viewed the imagery by accident, this will be immediately reported to the DSL.
 - Not delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it.
 - Not say or do anything to blame or shame any children involved.
 - Explain to child(ren) involved that they will report the issue to the DSL and reassure them that they will receive appropriate support and help.

- Not ask the child or children involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery and not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child(ren) involved or their, or other, parents and/or carers. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- DSLs will respond to concerns as set out in the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) and the local [KSCMP](#) guidance. When made aware of a concern involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos:
 - the DSL will hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.
 - parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.
 - All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.
 - a referral will be made to ICS and/or the police immediately if:
 - the incident involves an adult (over 18).
 - there is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.
 - the image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of 13, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent.
 - a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
 - The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.
 - If DSLs are unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service.

3.10 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Steps recognises that CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.
- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of CSE or CCE, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

3.11 Serious Violence

- All staff are made aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include unexplained gifts or new possessions, increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- Any concerns regarding serious violence will be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns.
 - The initial response to child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

3.12 So-Called Honour Based Abuse

- So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.
- All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and concerns should be responded to in line with section 3 of this policy. Staff will report any concerns about HBA to the DSL (or a deputy).

3.13 Preventing radicalisation

- Steps is aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, also known as the Prevent duty and the [specific obligations](#) placed upon us as an education provider regarding risk assessments, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.
- Steps recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and staff will be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.
- Staff will report any concerns to the DSL (or a deputy), who is aware of the [local procedures](#) to follow.

4. Supporting Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

- Whilst all children should be protected, some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm.

4.1 Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

- Steps acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect.
- Steps recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children with SEND will be appropriately supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.
- All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child’s disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND or certain medical conditions may be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as abuse or bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.
- To address these additional challenges, our setting will always consider implementing extra support and attention for children with SEND. The DSL will work closely with the SENCO (Celia Sawyer and Ruth Lanstone) to plan support as required.

4.2 Children Requiring Mental Health Support

- All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are aware that children's experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

4.3 Children who need a Social Worker

- The DSL will hold details of social workers working with children in the setting so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.
- Where children have a social worker, this will inform setting decisions about their safety and promoting their welfare, for example, responding to unauthorised absence and provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

4.4 Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers

- Steps recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.
- Where a child is looked after, the DSL will hold details of the social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.
- Where the setting believes a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement (occurs when a child under 16 or 18 if the child is disabled is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more) we have a duty to recognise these arrangements and inform the Local Authority via the front door.

5. Online Safety

STEPS Pre-School take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment or exposure to inappropriate materials in the setting.

- It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material or behaviours online. Steps will adopt a whole setting approach to online safety which will empower, protect, and educate children and staff in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.
- Steps identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:
 - Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.

- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
 - Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
 - Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.
- Steps will ensure online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies. Online safety is considered as a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing our policies and procedures and when planning our curriculum, staff training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement.
 - Steps recognises that technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and changes rapidly. The setting will carry out an annual review of our approaches to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment which considers and reflects the risks our children face.
 - The manager/registered person will be informed of online safety concerns by the DSL, as appropriate.

5.1 Policies and Procedures

The DSL has overall responsibility for online safety within the setting but will liaise with other members of staff, for example IT technicians as necessary.

- The DSL will respond to online safety concerns reported in line with our child protection and other associated policies, including our anti-bullying and behaviour policies.
 - Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate.
 - Where necessary, concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with local policies and procedures.

Only ICT equipment belonging to the setting is used by staff and children. Children do not normally have access to the internet and never have unsupervised access.

Children are taught the following stay safe principles in an age-appropriate way prior to using the internet:

- only go on line with a grown up
- be kind on line
- keep information about me safely
- only press buttons on the internet to things I understand
- tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet

Suspicious that an adult is attempting to make inappropriate contact with a child on-line is reported to the National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at www.ceop.police.uk.

Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images. In the event of a concern that a colleague or other person is behaving inappropriately the Child Protection policy is followed.

Staff are aware that grooming children and young people on line is an offence in its own right and concerns about a colleague's or others' behaviour are reported (as above).

Email

- Children are not permitted to use email in the setting. Parents and staff do not use setting equipment to access personal emails. Staff do not access work email whilst supervising children.

Staff report any suspicious or offensive material, including material which may incite racism, bullying or discrimination to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk

- Steps recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile and smart technology, including mobile phones, cameras and wearable technology. In accordance with the EYFS 2021. Steps has appropriate mobile and smart technology and image use policies in place, which are shared and understood by all members of the community.

Mobile Phones and Cameras

- Children do not bring mobile phones or other ICT devices with them to the setting. If a child is found to have a mobile phone or ICT device with them, this is removed and stored in the office or locked kitchen until the parent collects them at the end of the session.
- Parents are asked not use mobile phones in the preschool. During preschool performances, parents are asked not to share any photos or videos online.
- Mobile phones owned by staff are not kept on their person during working hours. Staff use of mobile phones is permitted only in the kitchen and Manager's Office away from children and this is kept to a minimum during the settings opening hours.
- Staff ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation. Parents sign a consent form for the above purposes and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Photographs of children will not be included on the STEPS website or social media without the specific written permission from parents on each occasion. Any photographs that are included with this specific permission, will not include the name of the child.

Social Media

St Stephen's Church PCC require those taking part in social media on behalf of STEPS to be honest, respectful and that any views expressed should be consistent with the stated vision and values of St Stephen's Church.

The lines between public and private can easily become blurred so STEPS staff should assume that everything posted by them, even on personal accounts, can be seen publicly and traced back to them and the church.

Staff use of social media applications as part of their role must be approved by the Office Manager. In the case of a dispute he/she will raise the matter with the vicar.

Any online group affiliated to St Stephen's Church for the benefit of its members and the local community must be approved by the Office Manager and Incumbent.

STEPS Facebook Group

The STEPS Facebook group is for those who are part of, or connected to, STEPS Pre-School. It is used for notices, updates, sharing information and photographs.

The current administrators are **Rachael Plowman** (Church Administrator) & **Dawn Clarke** (STEPS Administrator) and **Fiona Butcher** (Steps Supervisor)

Membership

As this is a group relating to a service provided to children and their parents/carers, people have to ask to become a member of the group.

Parents of children who are no longer connected to the Pre-School, for example if their child has left for Primary School, will be removed from the group.

Posting Permissions

The STEPS Facebook page is a 'select group'. Only members can post in the group and all posts must be approved by the page administrators prior to appearing on the group page.

Anyone who posts on the page must ensure that their content is:

- **Appropriate and Professional** - The content and use of the resource should be suitable for the purpose and should reflect the character of the group.
- **Necessary** - The use of social networking for groups should be of value to the church and be in line with the purposes of the ministry.
- **Integrity** - The viewable profile of the group should reflect the Christian life.
- **Accompanying** - A virtual relationship is only alongside a physical, pastoral relationship.

Discernment - Asking oneself what is appropriate and suitable, and questioning the decision as to the use and function of various features and settings

5.2 Information Security and Access Management

- Steps is responsible for ensuring an appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place, in order to safeguard our systems as well as staff and children. All computers, tablets are password protected

5.3 Educating Learners

- Steps will ensure a comprehensive response is in place to enable all children to learn about and manage online risks effectively.

5.4 Working with Parents/Carers

- Steps will build a partnership approach to online safety and will support parents/carers to become aware and alert of the potential online benefits and risks for children by:
 - **Providing information on our setting website, newsletters and offering specific online safety events for parents/carers.**

7. Staff Engagement and Expectations

7.1 Awareness, Induction and Training

- All members of staff have been provided with a copy of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2021 which covers safeguarding information for staff.
 - Setting management staff, including the DSL will read KCSIE in its entirety.
 - Setting management staff and all members of staff who work directly with children will read annex B.
 - All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood the national guidance shared with them. Staff have their own copy. There are copies in the office and entrance hallway of Pre-School

- The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety), including information to ensure they are aware of the setting internal safeguarding processes, as part of their induction. This will be carried out by Gina Darling, Manager or Fiona Butcher, Supervisor.
- All staff members (including agency and third-party staff) will receive appropriate child protection training (including online safety) to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues; this training will be updated every two years.
- In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively via regular staff meetings.

7.2 Safer Working Practice

- All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in our Safe Working Practice Policy
- The DSL will ensure that all staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) have read the child protection policy and are aware of our expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff behaviour policy
- Staff will be made aware of the setting behaviour management and physical intervention policies. Staff will manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and will have a clear understanding of the needs of all children. Physical interventions and/or use of reasonable force will be in line with our agreed policy and procedures and national guidance.
- All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking). Staff will adhere to relevant policies including staff behaviour policy

7.3 Supervision and Support

- The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if members of staff have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- The setting will ensure that members of staff are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021.
- The registered person, Rev. Mark Barker and Gina Darling, Manager of Steps recognise regular, planned, and accountable supervision, which is a two-way process, offers support and develops the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. We see its purpose is to monitor the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children as well as achieving agreed objectives. Supervision also provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any concerns raised about an individual or colleague's practice.
- The setting will ensure all members of staff and volunteers will receive regular and planned supervision sessions. Uninterrupted time will be set aside to ensure any supervision sessions effective for both practitioner and management to ensure that:
 - All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
 - All staff are supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
 - All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.

- Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.
- The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union, the Education Support Partnership or other similar organisations directly.

8. Safer Recruitment and Allegations

8.1 Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding Checks

- Steps is committed to ensure that develop a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with children and staff.
- St. Stephens PCC trustees of Steps are responsible for ensuring that the setting follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance, as stated in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation stage effective from September 2021
 - Dates of recruitment
 - References
 - Identity checks
 - Criminal records check reference number, including date and details of person who completed it
 - Eligibility to work in the UK checks
 - Other essential key data.
- The setting will obtain an enhanced check by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of every person aged 16 and over (including for unsupervised volunteers, and supervised volunteers who provide personal care) who:
 - works directly with children
 - lives on the premises on which the childcare is provided and/or
 - works on the premises on which the childcare is provided (unless they do not work on the part of the premises where the childcare takes place, or do not work there at times when children are present).
- An additional check by the DBS (or checks if more than one country) will also be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.
- St. Stephens PCC trustees of Steps is responsible for ensuring that the setting adopts an application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its center, regardless of employee or voluntary role.
- St. Stephens PCC trustees of Steps is responsible for ensuring that the setting follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance. At least one member of the interview panel must have completed safer recruitment training.
- St. Stephens PCC trustees of Steps is aware of the requirements to make appropriate checks regarding the disqualification status of all staff, including volunteers and temporary staff.
- We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, cautions and warnings.
- We will ensure that all staff and volunteers have read the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and understand that their behaviour and practice must be in line with it.

8.2 Allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to staff and volunteers

- Steps recognises that it is possible for any member of staff, including volunteers, contractors, agency and third-party staff (including supply staff) and visitors to behave in a way that:
 - Indicates they have harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
 - Means they have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children or
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- In depth information regarding staff allegations can be found within our Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff policy. This can be found in the entrance hallway of Steps/Office/Website
- As part of our approach to safeguarding, the setting adopts an open and transparent culture in which all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the setting safeguarding regime. The leadership team at Steps will takes all concerns or allegations received seriously.
- Allegations should be referred immediately to the manager who will contact the [Local Authority Designated Officer](#) (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the manager, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the next senior management who will contact the LADO.
- Where managers are unsure how to respond to a concern about a member of staff, advice will be sought via the [Local Authority Designated Officer](#) (LADO) Enquiry Line and/or the [Education Safeguarding Service](#).
- All members of staff are made aware of the settings Whistleblowing procedure It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.
- Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- Steps has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.
- Steps have a duty to inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). We will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations. Notifications will be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made and are aware that to not do so would be an offence.

9. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

- Steps recognises that children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Our setting will provide a welcoming, safe, and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

- We recognise that early year's settings play an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.
- Steps will provide age-appropriate educational opportunities to enable early years children to develop self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness, and decision making so that they have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, including online.
- Steps recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.
- Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff. Children at Steps will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

10. Physical Safety

- Staff will be made aware of the behaviour management and physical intervention policies, and any physical interventions and/or use of reasonable force must be in line with our agreed policy and procedures and national guidance.

10.1 The Use of Premises by Other Organisations

- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the setting facilities/premises, the manager and the registered person will seek written assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection, and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers. If this assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused.
- Safeguarding requirements will be included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises. Failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.

10.2 Site Security

- All members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.
- Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into the setting as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to, sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on site.
- Staff and visitors will be expected to adhere to any safety arrangements implemented because of Covid-19 restrictions.
- Any individual who is not known or identifiable on site should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.
- Steps will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the site.

11. Local Support

- All members of staff in Steps are made aware of local support available.
 - **Education Safeguarding Service**
 - **Area Safeguarding Advisor**
 - Tonbridge and Malling 03000 412284:
<https://www.theeducationpeople.org/our-expertise/safeguarding/safeguarding-contacts/>
 - **Online Safety in the Education Safeguarding Service**
 - **03000 415797**
 - esafetyofficer@theeducationpeople.org (non-urgent issues only)
 - **LADO Service**
 - **Telephone: 03000 410888**
 - Email: kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk
 - **Integrated Children's Services**
 - Front door: 03000 411111
 - Out of Hours Number: 03000 419191
 - **Kent Police**
 - 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm
 - **Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP)**
 - kscmp@kent.gov.uk
 - 03000 421126
 - **Adult Safeguarding**
 - Adult Social Care via 03000 41 61 61 (text relay 18001 03000 41 61 61) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Categories of Abuse

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women, and children.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person 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. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour and performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide

- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Distrust of familiar adults e.g., anxiety of being left with relatives, a childminder or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Fear of undressing for PE
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fire setting

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs that MAY INDICATE physical abuse

- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs even when hot
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent, or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Signs that MAY INDICATE emotional abuse

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harming
- Eating Disorders
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Excessive need for approval, attention, and affection

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. Neglect 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs that MAY INDICATE neglect.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Low self esteem

Appendix 2: Support Organisations

NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline

- [0800 136 663](tel:0800136663) or help@nspcc.org.uk

National Organisations

- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- Barnardo's: www.barnardos.org.uk
- Action for Children: www.actionforchildren.org.uk
- Children's Society: www.childrenssociety.org.uk

Support for Staff

- Education Support Partnership: www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk
- Professional Online Safety Helpline: www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline

Support for Learners

- ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk
- Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org
- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Fearless: www.fearless.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Support for Adults

- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
- NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): www.napac.org.uk
- MOSAC: www.mosac.org.uk
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Advice now: www.advicenow.org.uk

Support for Learning Disabilities

- Respond: www.respond.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Council for Disabled Children: <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk>

Contextual Safeguarding Network

- <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

Kent Resilience Hub

- <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/>

Substance Misuse

- We are with you (formerly Addaction): www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/
- Talk to Frank: www.talktofrank.com

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic abuse services: www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk
- Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk
- Women's Aid: www.womensaid.org.uk
- Men's Advice Line: www.mensadvice.org.uk
- Mankind: www.mankindcounselling.org.uk
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- Respect Phoneline: <https://respectphoneline.org.uk>

Criminal and Sexual Exploitation

- National Crime Agency: www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are
- It's not okay: www.itsnotokay.co.uk
- NWG Network: www.nwgnetwork.org

Honour Based Abuse

- Forced Marriage Unit: www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage
- FGM Factsheet:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf
- Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information

Peer on Peer abuse, including bullying, sexual violence and harassment

- Rape Crisis: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk>
- Brook: www.brook.org.uk
- Disrespect Nobody: www.disrespectnobody.co.uk
- Upskirting – know your rights: www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk
- Stop it Now! www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Diana Award: www.antibullyingpro.com/
- Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Online Safety

- CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com>
- Marie Collins Foundation: www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety and www.net-aware.org.uk
- Get Safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- Cyber Choices: <https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyberchoices>
- National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC): www.ncsc.gov.uk

Mental Health

- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- Moodspark: <https://moodspark.org.uk>
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- We are with you (formerly Addaction): www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/
- Anna Freud: www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/

Radicalisation and hate

- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism
- True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk

Children with Family Members in Prison

- National information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO): <https://www.nicco.org.uk/>

Approved on behalf of the PCC, at the SRG meeting on		(date)
Signed on behalf of the PCC		
Name of Signatory	Rev Mark Barker	
Role of Signatory	Chair	
Date to be reviewed:	February 2023	