

Safety & Suitability of Premises, Environment & Equipment Policy



3.1 Health and Safety

Steps Pre-school believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers.

- We aim to make children, parents and staff aware of health and safety issues and to minimise the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.
- We have two members of staff responsible for health and safety:
KELLY BARKER AND ANNEMARIE PUTLAND
- They are competent to carry out these responsibilities.
- They will undertake health and safety training and regularly update their knowledge and understanding.
- We display the necessary health and safety poster:
ON THE LARGE NOTICE BOARD

Insurance cover

We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. The certificate for public liability insurance is displayed:

ON THE LARGE NOTICE BOARD

Raising Awareness

- Our induction training for staff and volunteers includes a clear explanation of health and safety issues so that all adults are able to adhere to our policy and procedures as they understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. The induction training covers matters of employee well-being, including safe lifting and the storage of potentially dangerous substances.
- Records are kept of these induction training sessions and new staff and volunteers are asked to sign the records to confirm that they have taken part.
- As necessary, health and safety training is included in the annual training plans of staff, and health and safety is discussed regularly at staff meetings.
- We operate a no smoking policy.
- Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.

Doors

- We take precautions to prevent children's fingers from being trapped in doors.
- Preschool doors are bolted to prevent children pushing the bars and opening the doors.
- The doors are only opened by members of staff whilst children are in the setting.
- At the end of each session the toilets are checked before the doors are opened.
- A member of staff remains at the door at all times during the times, at which, children are dropped off and collected.

Floors

- All floor surfaces are checked daily to ensure they are clean and not uneven, wet or damaged. Any wet spills are mopped up immediately.
- Walkways and stairs are left clear and uncluttered.

Electrical/gas equipment

- All electrical/gas equipment conforms to safety requirements and is checked regularly and is the responsibility of St Stephen's Church.
- Our boiler/electrical switch gear/meter cupboard is not accessible to the children.
- Radiators, electric sockets, wires and leads are properly guarded and the children are taught not to touch them.
- There are sufficient sockets to prevent overloading.
- The temperature of hot water is controlled to prevent scalds.
- Lighting and ventilation is adequate in all areas including storage areas.

Storage

- All resources and materials, which are used by the children, are stored safely.
- All equipment and resources are stored or stacked safely to prevent them accidentally falling or collapsing.

Outdoor area

- Our outdoor area is securely fenced.
- Our outdoor area is checked for safety and cleared of rubbish before each session.
- Adults and children are alerted to the dangers of poisonous plants, herbicides and pesticides.
- Our sandpit is securely covered and is cleaned regularly.
- The raised gardening beds are checked before each session for foreign objects, which are removed.
- Where water can form a pool on equipment, it is emptied before children start playing outside.
- All outdoor activities are supervised at all times.
- Paths are swept and cleared of leaves when necessary.
- Outside play equipment is checked for damages and is discarded and replaced if necessary.
- We check that children are suitably attired for the weather conditions and type of outdoor activities; encourage parents to apply sun cream before sessions, and provide hats during the summer months.
- We supervise outdoor activities at all times; and particularly children on climbing equipment.

Safety of adults

- When adults need to reach up to store equipment they are provided with safe equipment to do so.
- All warning signs are clear visible.
- The sickness of staff and their involvement in accidents is recorded. The records are reviewed termly to identify any issues that need to be addressed.
- Hazardous substances are stored safely away from the children.
- We keep all cleaning chemicals in their original containers.

Hygiene

- We regularly seek information from the Environmental Health Department and the Health Authority to ensure that we keep up-to-date with the latest recommendations.
- Our daily routines encourage the children to learn about personal hygiene.
- We have a daily cleaning routine for the setting which includes play room(s), kitchen, rest area, toilets and nappy changing areas.
- We have a schedule for cleaning resources and equipment, dressing-up clothes and furnishings.
- The toilet area has a high standard of hygiene including hand washing and drying facilities.
- We have a bin for the disposal of nappies which is outside the door.
- We implement good hygiene practices by:
 - ◆ cleaning tables between activities;
 - ◆ cleaning toilets regularly;
 - ◆ wearing protective clothing - such as aprons and disposable gloves - as appropriate;
 - ◆ providing sets of clean clothes;
 - ◆ providing tissues and wipes;

Activities and resources

- Before purchase or loan, equipment and resources are checked to ensure that they are safe for the ages and stages of the children currently attending the setting.
- The layout of play equipment allows adults and children to move safely and freely between activities.
- All equipment is regularly checked for cleanliness and safety and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.
- All materials, including paint and glue, are non-toxic.
- Sand is clean and suitable for children's play.
- Physical play is constantly supervised.
- Children are taught to handle and store tools safely.
- Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.
- Any faulty equipment is removed from use and is repaired. If it cannot be repaired it is discarded.
- Risk assessments are carried out on all activities, pieces of equipment, materials and furniture used by the setting.

3.2 Supervision of Children on Outings and Visits

Children benefit from being taken out of the setting to go on visits or trips to local parks or other suitable venues for activities which enhance their learning experiences. Staff in our setting ensure that there are procedures to keep children safe on outings; all staff and volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures below.

- All off site activity has a clearly identified educational purpose with specific learning and development outcomes.
- There is a designated lead for each excursion who is clear about their responsibility as designated lead.
- Parents sign a general consent on registration for their children to be taken out as a part of the daily activities of the setting. This general consent details the venues used for daily activities.
- Parents are always asked to sign specific consent forms before major outings.
- A risk assessment is carried out before an outing takes place.
- The Manager and all staff taking part in the outing sign off every risk assessment.
- Children with allergies or other specific needs have a separate risk assessment completed i.e. child with allergies visiting a supermarket
- An excursion will not go ahead if concerns are raised about its viability at any point.
- Any risk assessments are made available for parents to see.
- Our adult to child ratio is high, normally one adult to two children, depending on their age, sensibility and type of venue as well as how it is to be reached.
- Staff frequently count their designated children and ensure hands are held when on the street and crossing the road.
- Outings are recorded in an outings record book kept in the setting stating:
 - ◆ The date and time of outing.
 - ◆ The venue and mode of transport.
 - ◆ Names of staff assigned to named children.
 - ◆ Time of return.
- Staff take a mobile phone on outings, and supplies of tissues, wipes, pants etc as well as a mini first aid pack, snacks and water. The amount of equipment will vary and be consistent with the venue and the number of children as well as how long they will be out for.
- Staff take a list of children with them with contact numbers of parents/carers.

3.3 Risk Assessment

We believe that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

Risk assessment means:

Taking note of aspects of your workplace and activities that could cause harm, either to yourself or to others, and deciding what needs to be done to prevent that harm, making sure this is adhered to.

The law does not require that all risk is eliminated, but that 'reasonable precaution' is taken. This is particularly important when balancing the need for children to be able to take appropriate risks through physically challenging play. Children need the opportunity to work out what is not safe and what they should do when faced with a risk.

Health and safety risk assessments inform procedures. Staff and parents should be involved in reviewing risk assessments and procedures – they are the ones with first-hand knowledge as to whether the control measures are effective – and they can give an informed view to help update procedures accordingly.

This policy is based on the five steps below:

- Identification of a risk: Where is it and what is it?
 - Who is at risk: Childcare staff, children, parents, cooks, cleaners etc?
 - Assessment as to whether the level of a risk is high, medium, low. This takes into account both the likelihood of it happening, as well as the possible impact if it did.
 - Control measures to reduce/eliminate risk: What will you need to do, or ensure others will do, in order to reduce that risk?
 - Monitoring and review: How do you know if what you have said is working, or is thorough enough? If it is not working, it will need to be amended, or maybe there is a better solution.
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- The Manager undertakes training and ensures staff and volunteers have adequate training in health and safety matters.
 - Our risk assessment process covers adults and children and includes:
 - ◆ determining where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how we are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers and inspectors;
 - ◆ checking for and noting hazards and risks indoors and outside, in relation to our premises and activities;
 - ◆ assessing the level of risk and who might be affected;
 - ◆ deciding which areas need attention; and
 - ◆ Developing an action plan that specifies the action required, the time-scales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.
 - The risk assessment is written and is reviewed regularly.
 - We maintain lists of health and safety issues, which are checked daily before the session begins, as well as those that are checked on a weekly and termly basis when a full risk assessment is carried out.
 - St Stephen's Church ensures that checks, such as electricity and gas safety checks, and any necessary work to the setting premises are carried out annually and records are kept.
 - We carry out risk assessments that include relevant aspects of fire safety, food safety for all areas of the premises.
 - We carry out risk assessments for work practice including:
 - changing children;
 - preparation and serving of food/drink for children;

- ◆ children with allergies;
- ◆ cooking activities with children;
- ◆ supervising outdoor play and indoor/outdoor climbing equipment;
- ◆ [putting babies or young children to sleep;]
- ◆ assessment, use and storage of equipment for disabled children;
- ◆ the use and storage of substances which may be hazardous to health, such as cleaning chemicals;
- ◆ visitors to the setting who are bringing equipment or animals as part of children's learning experiences; and
- ◆ Following any incidents involving threats against staff or volunteers.

3.4 Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation

Steps Pre-School ensures our premises present no risk of fire by ensuring the highest possible standard of fire precautions. The Manager and staff are familiar with the current legal requirements. Where necessary we seek the advice of a competent person, such as our Fire Officer, or Fire Safety Consultant.

- The basis of fire safety is risk assessment. These are carried out by a 'competent person'.
- Steps Pre-School will ensure that they have a copy of the fire safety risk assessment that applies to the buildings used by the settings and obtained from the church office.
- Fire doors are clearly marked, never obstructed and easily opened from the inside. These doors are kept locked or bolted during preschool sessions for the safeguarding of children but all staff and volunteers are aware of this and can easily open the doors by disengaging the lock or bolts.
- Smoke detectors/alarms and fire fighting appliances conform to BSEN standards, are fitted in appropriate high risk areas of the building and are checked as specified by the manufacturer.
- Our emergency evacuation procedures are approved by the Fire Safety Officer and are:
 - ◆ clearly displayed in the premises;
 - ◆ explained to new members of staff, volunteers and parents; and
 - ◆ practiced each term.
- Records are kept of fire drills and the servicing of fire safety equipment.

Emergency evacuation procedure

In the event of a fire the need to evacuate the setting for any other reason, the following procedure will be adhered to.

- A whistle will be blown to alert children and adults present in the setting.
- The fire exits are clearly labelled.
- The lead practitioner for that session will collect the register and black box containing contact details of all children and staff
- Children and staff will evacuate the setting in a calm and orderly manner taking the exit furthest away from the fire and meet at the assembly point.
- The Steps Manager or Deputy Manager will check the toilets and hall before leaving the setting.
- Children and adults will be assembled in a safe area where the register is called by the lead practitioner.
- The evacuation is timed for recording in the Fire Drill Safety Book.
- The Manager or Deputy Manager will contact the emergency services in the event of a real fire.
- Parents are contacted by telephone in a real emergency and will be told where to collect their children from.
- Children will be taken to the community centre in the event of a real fire or other emergency.

Meeting areas are:

At the Lych-gate if we need to get right away from the building.

Or

At the yew tree in the middle of the children's play area.

The fire drill record book must contain:

- Date and time of the drill.
- How long it took.
- Whether there were any problems that delayed evacuation.
- Any further action taken to improve the drill procedure.

Lockdown Procedure

In any event where the children and staff need to get into the pre-school building whilst in the garden, the following procedure will be adhered to,

- Whistle blown/Visual aid used by members of staff.
- Children ushered inside as quickly as possible. The lead practitioner for that session will collect the register and black box containing contact details of all children and staff
- The children and adults will be assembled in a safe area where the register is called by the lead practitioner. All windows and doors locked, if we are in a room where there are curtains or blinds these will be drawn.
- The children would be positioned away from windows or doors
- Appropriate persons contacted.
- Parents/carers would be contacted by either social media, phone or email with update.
- Tune into local radio for more information.
- Remain where we are and await further instructions from emergency services.

3.5 No Smoking

At Steps Pre-School, it is our policy to maintain a strictly no-smoking environment.

- No Smoking signs are displayed indicating that the Church Hall is a smoke free premises.
- The Pre-School staff check the garden prior to pre-school opening to ensure that a safe and clean environment is maintained.
- Any person found smoking on the premises (hall and garden) will be asked to move away or to stop smoking.
- Staff are not permitted to smoke on the premises, as indicated in the staff handbook.

Approved on behalf of the PCC, at the SRG meeting on 10 th Feb 2020		(date)
Signed on behalf of the PCC		
Name of Signatory	Rev Mark Barker	
Role of Signatory	Chair	
Date to be reviewed:	May 2023	