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Admissions Policy

The criteria considered when deciding whether a child can be offered a place at Stepping Stones Pre-school are as follows:

- Availability of spaces (taking into account staffing, safeguarding and welfare requirements, the age of the child and the registration requirements).
- Due to ratio requirements, pre-school children and children who have turned 3, thus requiring a standard ratio of 1:8 may be given priority to maximise numbers of children we can support.
- Children who are siblings of those already with us will usually have next priority.
- The date the application is received. If a place is not immediately available, parents/carers will be offered a place on the waiting list.
- The setting's ability to provide the facilities for the welfare and wellbeing of the child.
- Admission of children aged below 2 years 6 months is at the Manager's discretion.
- Eligible children wishing to take up the free entitlement only two, three and four year olds, will be offered a place for 38 weeks as per the Funding Free Early Education (FEE) 38-week term-time dates, as available during the set hours, given the above criteria. Parents/carers will be informed of the hours available when they apply to the setting. The conditions once a place has been offered at Stepping Stones Pre-school are as follows:
 - Parents/carers who do not take up a place at the agreed time may have their place withdrawn.
 - Stepping Stones Pre-school reserves the right to withdraw a child's place in the event of inappropriate parental/carer behaviour.
 - All parents/carers must adhere to all Stepping Stones Pre-school's terms and conditions and all of the setting's policies and procedures.
 - If a parent/carer wishes to appeal an admissions decision, they can write to: Chair of the Committee. We never discriminate against any child on the grounds of sex, race, religion, colour, ethnicity or disability.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Admissions

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
10.02.21	Laura Frayne	Chair	
04.09.21	Allison Brisland	Manager	
03.05.22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
08.05.23	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Allergies, Food Intolerance & Special Requirements Policy

Children with allergies and food intolerances will be closely supervised at snack-time and lunchtime.

All staff, especially new staff, students/volunteers must be made aware of any allergies and of appropriate action to take.

Staff must ensure all information is passed to the Manager who will record and disseminate it amongst staff. It is the Manager's duty to ensure that all staff are aware of any changes to children's requirements.

A list of children and their food allergies and intolerances is kept in the kitchen, inside the small wall-cupboard door. Where there is a specific food preference such as vegan diet, this will also be detailed. Details of other allergies will be kept in the child's file.

Prior to the child starting at Stepping Stones Pre-school, parents/carers must discuss in detail the nature of the allergy/intolerance and give information regarding individual dietary needs, daily routines, signs and symptoms and any required medical treatment. Unless this information is obtained the child's attendance at the setting will be delayed.

We will have a written care plan in place for any child with severe symptoms and this will be reviewed regularly.

In cases where a possible reaction may be very severe, there will be a designated member of staff (usually the child's key person) who can attend to the child's dietary needs (using colour-coded utensils and crockery if required). All staff will be made aware of this as well as the reasons why. A written record of all that the child consumes will be kept and relayed back to the parent/carer at pick up time.

All cases should be discussed with the child's parents/carers to ensure that everybody is working together in a way that benefits the child. The keyperson must seek regular updates from the parent/carer to ascertain that everybody is continuing to follow correct procedures – all communications will be shared with the Manager or Deputy.

All staff must be made aware of the emergency procedure for each child as well as symptoms and administration of any medication.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Food and Drink (Food safety) Policy which states:

- Before a child starts at the setting we find out from parents/carers their children's dietary needs, sensitivities, philosophical or religious preferences, food intolerances or allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs on their registration record which parents/carers sign
- Parents/carers will be asked to supply food for children with severe allergies, to ensure they are fully protected. These must be named and stored appropriately.
- Parents/carers are requested to regularly update us to ensure that our records are current and relevant.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff are fully informed.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and parents'/carers' wishes (in line with this policy and healthy eating recommendations).
- The member of staff handing out the snack or sitting with the child at lunchtime is responsible for ensuring they eat or drink the correct food/drink.
- We inform parents/carers of our snacks each day.
- Water or semi-skimmed pasteurised milk is offered at snack-time. We do not provide juice drinks to children and request that parents do not include juice, sugary squash or smoothies in the packed lunch from home. We recognise that where children consume these drinks at home, it is preferable that they are consumed with a meal rather than between meals.

- We provide nutritious food, aiming to avoiding large quantities of sugar and salt and limiting UPF foods where possible
- We pay particular heed to children, staff (and where appropriate, visitors) with diagnosed food allergies – in which case we request a copy of their allergy plan and take appropriate steps to ensure that they are safe at Stepping Stones. The plan is shared with all staff and we take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- Where appropriate staff may work with parents/carers and health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. Allergy action plan templates and advice are available from <https://www.bsaci.org/resources/allergy-action-plans/> . Parents are responsible for updating staff with changes and there should be ongoing exchange of information.
- Stepping Stones will ensure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the difference between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time. Advice can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/> and <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/>
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of their diet or allergy. Staff also discuss differences with children and have conversations with children around food preferences, be they philosophical, dietary or health related, to support children to understand and manage any specific considerations. For safety reasons, children with allergies may sit away from children who could potentially be consuming food which could cause an allergic reaction. This is done with support and sensitivity so that children are as fully included as possible.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to provide a healthy lunchbox and are given guidelines regarding types and amounts of food which are suitable to include. We signpost them to healthy recipes and lunchbox suggestions.
- Parents are encouraged to prepare food to avoid possible choking hazards and are consistently reminded of this. At Stepping Stones we prepare food in such a way to prevent choking and food is given to children appropriate for their stage of development (not simply relying on a child's age as an indicator of what/how to feed them). We follow the guidance available from <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/food-safety>
- Children should be seated whilst eating and not walking around.
- If a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record where and how they choked and ensure that parents/carers are made aware. Records will be reviewed periodically to identify any trends or common features that can be addressed to reduce incidents/ risk. Appropriate action should be taken to address any concerns identified..
- Sweets and fizzy drinks are not allowed to be included in the lunch box
- If lunchboxes are persistently unhealthy then the keyperson will discuss with parents/carers more suitable, healthy foods to include.

- We have fresh drinking water available at all times for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day. In addition, we explain why drinking water keeps them hydrated.
- Children should not share or swap their food with one another
- Staff must never consume hot drinks when the safety of the children could be compromised and they must ensure these are only drunk at appropriate times, for example in areas where children are not allowed.
- Whilst we welcome families bringing in special foods to share customs and celebrate festivals, these must be shop bought and with their original packaging showing the ingredients and packaging detail.
- NOTE: We do not accept CAKES and SWEET TREATS to share with the children (including shop bought cakes) EG: birthday cake. Families are encouraged to celebrate through sharing a fruit platter or a favourite book.

Nut Free Policy

- Due to the risk of allergic reaction please DO NOT send any nuts or food products containing nuts – such as peanut butter, hazelnut spread etc. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Allergies, Food Intolerance & Special Requirements

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
04.09.21	Laura Frayne	Chair	
03.05.22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
08.05.23	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Arrivals and Departure Procedure

It is the Manager's responsibility to ensure that the records kept on the children are accurate and that any arrivals and departures are recorded promptly.

A member of Staff will take a register of attendance first thing, noting number of children, staff and visitors present.

The register will be kept in an accessible place on the premises at all times.

Staff will record their arrival and departure in the Signing In book, as per the Staff Handbook.

The time of arrival of every child will be recorded by parents/carers in the Signing In book and also time of departure. In exceptional circumstances (EG: covid) a member of staff may sign children in and out.

Irrespective of the number of children in the setting, there will always be at least two staff on duty. At least one of these will be qualified to a minimum of level 3 in a senior role and have a full paediatric first aid qualification.

Outdoor Play: When going outside of the usual play area, staff must physically count the children in their care and checked by another member of staff. Staff also count, check and sign to ensure they have the correct number of children when returning into the building.

Departures: If the child is to be collected by someone other than the parent/carer, staff must be told and it should be recorded at the start of the session. The adult concerned should be named on the registration form, known to the staff and be 16 years of age or older. If an adult who isn't on the registration form arrives at the setting to pick up a child, the setting will ring the parent/carer immediately. A password system is used to identify a person not known by staff. Only with permission from the parent/carer will a child be released to an unknown person, such as a family member or friend.

The parent/carer must telephone the setting straight away if they are likely to be late collecting their child. A charge may be imposed for late collection of £5 for every fifteen minutes (or part thereof).

Staff will record when children depart from the setting and update their tally accordingly.

The attendance register will be available at all times for inspection.

The last two staff on duty must check the building is securely locked.

Staff and visitors MUST also sign in and out of the setting – including dates and times.

Absences

There will be a daily charge for any absences unless there are extenuating reasons.

Stepping Stones Pre-school will not charge for any days that are out of the parents'/ carers' control e.g. early closure of the setting.

It is at the discretion of Stepping Stones Preschool to waive these fees due to long-term sickness.

If a child is absent without explanation for more than three days, the manager (Deputy or key person) may telephone to find out the reason for the absence. Regular absence from the setting may indicate that the family is having some sort of difficulty. The manager will try to find out the cause and will offer support where necessary by linking the family with appropriate statutory agencies. Stepping Stones Pre-school staff will always try to find out the reason for any prolonged, unexplained absences.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Arrivals & Departures

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
04.09.21	Laura Frayne	Chair	
03.05.22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
08.05.23	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Attendance Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out our procedures for monitoring, recording, and following up on children's attendance. It ensures that children's welfare and safeguarding are prioritised, in line with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework 2025**.

Aims

- To promote consistent attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure absences are monitored and followed up promptly.
- To identify patterns of absence that may indicate safeguarding concerns.
- To maintain strong communication with parents/carers regarding attendance expectations.

Parental Responsibilities

- Parents/carers must inform the preschool **by phone, text, or email** on the first day of absence, providing the reason and expected duration.
- Parents/carers must ensure the preschool has **at least two emergency contact numbers** in line with safeguarding requirements. Parents should update these as necessary. If staff cannot contact parents/carers they will use emergency contacts.
- Parents/carers should notify the preschool of any planned absences (e.g. medical appointments, holidays) in advance.
- Funding does not cover planned holidays longer than 2 weeks; if parents wish to hold the sessions then they must be paid for in full or the place will be cancelled. If absence is due to a medical issue, it should be brought to the attention of the Manager who can make arrangements and provide ongoing support.

Stepping Stones' Responsibilities

- Maintain **daily registers** for all sessions, recording attendance and absence.
- Contact parents/carers **on the first day of absence** if no notification is received.
- Record the outcome of contact attempts (successful or unsuccessful).
- Monitor attendance regularly and assess patterns that may cause concern (e.g. frequent or prolonged absences, lateness).

Follow-up Procedures for Absence

1. **Day 1 of unexplained absence** – we will contact parents/carers by phone.
2. **If no response** – Staff will contact alternative emergency contacts provided.
3. **If absence continues without explanation** – we may:
 - Send a written request for explanation.
 - Carry out a home welfare visit (where appropriate and safe).
 - Refer concerns to **Children's Social Care, Early Help**, or request a **police welfare check** if there are safeguarding concerns.

Prolonged or Persistent Absence

- Any absence longer than **5 consecutive days** without medical evidence or valid reason will trigger a review with parents/carers.
- Patterns of repeated short absences will be monitored and addressed through meetings with parents/carers.
- Concerns about neglect, fabricated illness, or children being at risk will be escalated following the **Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**.

Lateness

- Parents/carers must bring children on time for the start of the session.
- Persistent lateness will be discussed with parents/carers to ensure children are accessing their full entitlement and routines are not disrupted.

Safeguarding Link

Attendance is directly linked to safeguarding. The following will be treated as safeguarding concerns:

- Repeated failure to inform the preschool of absences.
- Absence patterns inconsistent with explanations provided.
- Sudden or unexplained withdrawal from the preschool.

Recording & Reporting

- All attendance and absence records will be kept securely and shared with relevant agencies if safeguarding concerns arise.
- The Key person will report attendance concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and concerns will be documented and followed up with families.
- Concerns will be reported to the Local Authority as appropriate.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Attendance Policy

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
04.09.21	Laura Frayne	Chair	
03.05.22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
08.05.23	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Child Protection & Safeguarding

Our Commitment to Safeguarding Children:

Stepping Stones Pre-school always considers the health, development, safety, security, welfare and well-being of the children to be paramount. We recognise the fundamental importance of the bond between the child and their parent/carer and aim to provide support and assistance in strengthening this in any way we can. With this in mind, we view it as our responsibility to identify and act on any concerns for children or their parents/carers across the entire safeguarding spectrum of need, from early low-level support to targeted interventions, through to child protection.

Our primary responsibility will always be to the child, and we follow government and local guidance - ***What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education***), which all staff have awareness of. We work to the Early Years Foundation Stage, Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements and other relevant legislation, as well as advice and guidance from Gloucestershire County Council.

This safeguarding policy and accompanying child protection procedures detail our approach to safeguarding children and/or their parents/carers. This policy was updated by **Allison Brisland in August 2025** taking into account the updated EYFS safeguarding reforms applicable from September 2025. We will review this policy annually (or as required) as a reflection of our commitment to safeguarding children and their families. This will be in addition to ongoing reflection/review and updates to our practice.

In line with Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, education and skills settings, we are fully aware of the following - which are included within Stepping Stones Pre-school's other policies:

- Children's and learners' health and safety and well-being, including their mental health –
Key Person policy, Supporting Children with their Behaviour policy
- ***Safer Eating***
- Meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
Inclusion & Disability policy
- Use of reasonable force
Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, Supporting Children with their Behaviour policy
- Meeting the needs of children and learners with medical conditions or providing first aid -
First Aid, Medication and Sickness policy
- Educational visits
Visits and Outings policy
- Intimate care and emotional well-being
Nappy Policy / Key Person policy / Safe Caring
- Online safety and associated issues
Information, Communication & Technology policy, Social Networking policy, Child Protection & Safeguarding Children policy
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and learners' security, taking into account the local context
Child Protection and Safeguarding Children policy and Lockdown/Emergency Procedures policy
- ***Attendance Policy***

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The designated safeguarding lead for Stepping Stones Pre-school is: Allison Brisland; she has suitable training and expertise, which is updated at regular intervals. In her absence, the deputy designated lead is: Miranda Tyson

The key responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead are:

- to be a key point for liaison between the setting and other professional services including the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services, Local Safeguarding Partners (the local authority, the police and integrated care systems) and Ofsted;
- to develop a strategy for staff training, professional development and support in line with EYFS 2025 (Annex C).

Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers

Stepping Stones Pre-school's staff team aims to work in close partnership with parents/carers. We keep parents/carers informed of our safeguarding duties and discuss the policy with them at the time a child begins their settling-in period.

We encourage parents/carers to feel that they can openly discuss any concerns they may have regarding either their own child and wider family and/or another child or parent/carer. We are equally open to any feedback on our staff conduct. When we have concerns of a safeguarding nature, for either a child or their parent/carer, our aim will always be to provide ongoing support and advice (whether or not a referral is made to the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services or other services). In the vast majority of cases, parents/carers will be contacted before we make a referral to any service. However, if there is an immediate concern about the child's welfare or safety, including where the parent/carer appears mentally or physically unwell or incapacitated in any way, then we may need to contact the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services without the parent's/carer's knowledge, to agree how to proceed.

Concerns of a safeguarding nature will be shared within setting on a 'need to know' basis; they will however need to be shared with other professional services.

Key Responsibilities in Safeguarding Children and their Families

We are aware that we can contact the Early Help Team and their details are:

Stroud **01452328130** stroudearlyhelp@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Gloucestershire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: 01452 426565

In an emergency - call 999

GSCP Child Protection Process should be followed, this can be found at: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/>
(formerly <http://www.gsrb.org.uk/>)

These procedures should be checked as they are 'live' and subject to change. Stepping Stones has signed up to receive updates from GSCP.

FRONT DOOR:

Gloucestershire Children's Services Professional Advice Line **01452 427070** (June 2025)

(replaces Community Social Worker, ECHO & FIS advice lines)

- Understanding thresholds for Early Help & Social Care
- Queries and guidance for completing a MARF

Child Protection and Safeguarding

The setting team receives regular training in child protection and safeguarding children, and they are familiar with their legal responsibilities including the procedures to be followed should an allegation be made against either a member of the team, or of inappropriate behaviour from other adults (Whistleblowing policy). Staff update their safeguarding training every 2 years and all new members of the team (including students, agency and support educator/volunteers) are informed of their responsibilities during the induction process. Staff are trained in line with criteria set out in EYFS 2025 (Annex C).

All staff are aware of their right to invoke escalation procedures should they feel it is appropriate. If, after professional discussion with the DSL the member of staff does not feel they have achieved a satisfactory resolution, they may then make a referral to the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services themselves.

Child protection and safeguarding issues are also discussed within team meetings and one-on-one supervisions. The designated officer and deputy receive specific training biennially, in relation to their role and responsibilities within the setting.

Stepping Stones Pre-school's key responsibilities are as follows:

- Be alert to possible signs of abuse, neglect or concern for a child, parent/carer or a member of the setting team's welfare.
- Be aware of the child protection procedure and how to follow it when concerns arise.
- Report any concerns of a child protection nature to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).
- Keep clear and accurate records on child protection, safeguarding or welfare concerns (these confidential records should include clearly signed and dated entries and be stored securely).
- Discuss safeguarding and child protection within all meetings; this includes one-on-one supervision.
- Make ALL staff aware of their responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and EYFS 2025 (Annex C)
- Have regard for 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance, and awareness of Keeping Children Safe in Education (part 1) and any updates.
- Provide ongoing support and advice to parents/carers, including help in developing capacity to meet their child's needs or assistance in accessing a range of services in the area.
- Discuss safeguarding and child protection within meetings.
- Provide appropriate activities for children and their parents/carers with regard to staying safe.
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with children and their families.
- Adopt consistent safe work practices across the setting that reflect a proactive attitude towards promoting high standards in childcare and preventing allegations against staff and complaints arising.
- Record all existing injuries and/or concerns that a child has come into the setting with.
- Contact the local authority with any concerns, in accordance with reporting procedures.
- If we are concerned that a child is in immediate danger, we reserve the right not to inform the child's parents/carers especially if sexual abuse is suspected.
- Every member of staff receives a copy of these Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures.

The Registered Person makes sure that staff understand all policies and procedures via induction, staff meetings and one-on-one supervisions.

Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding encompasses many aspects including Child Protection, First Aid, Safer Recruitment, Safer Eating, Allergy awareness, Prevent, FGM, Safe Caring, Sun protection, keeping healthy, Confidentiality, amongst others.

Stepping Stones aim to provide a robust training strategy to ensure that staff are knowledgeable and secure in their ability to carry out their child protection and safeguarding responsibilities.

- Manager (DSL) & Deputy/Deputy DSL will stay abreast of Safeguarding legislation, updates, news and best practice through CPD and by signing up to Safeguarding alerts from GCC and GCC Early Years newsletters. This will be shared with all staff during team meetings or via email.
Staff and parents will be informed of updates to any policies and procedures as they arise.
- DSL & Deputy DSL will both undertake L3 Child Protection training, to be repeated every 2 years.
- All other staff undertake a minimum of L2 Child Protection training in line with Gloucestershire County Council procedures ASAP upon taking up their post, which is to be updated at least every 2 years. This includes types of abuse and possible indicators of abuse.
- All staff will have annual Child Protection refresher training which may be setting led and delivered during in-set days or team meetings. This could take the form of a Quiz, discussing different practical scenarios, sharing national & local policy updates etc.
- All staff will undertake Paediatric First Aid training which must be in line with EYFS 2025 (Annex C) and delivered by a competent body; this training will be renewed every 3 years. Refresher training may take place to ensure staff are competent and confident. Staff who do not hold a PFA certificate will not be counted in ratio.
- All new staff will receive information regarding Safeguarding upon induction to their position, including signposting to Stepping Stones policies & procedures. They will also be given a copy of the Staff Handbook, which includes a copy of this Safeguarding policy, the Whistleblowing policy and Allegations Management along with escalation procedures.
- New staff will be introduced to the DSL/Deputy DSL and signposted to telephone numbers for Children's services and LADO which are displayed prominently on the notice board.
- Child Protection & Safeguarding concerns will be shared on a need-to-know basis, but as a small setting this may include all staff. Staff will be told of the procedures for reporting concerns to a member of staff.
- Supervision, support and check-ins will take place on a regular basis to ensure staff feel supported in their role.
- A training matrix is kept to ensure that staff are up to date with key safeguarding training (including mandatory training) such as Safeguarding, Paediatric First Aid, Prevent & FGM, Food hygiene, Allergies & awareness.

Safe Caring

All staff, students and volunteers are carefully recruited, have 2 references which are verified prior to taking up employment and also have a full Enhanced DBS check or a Disclosure and Barring Service check. As a part of the induction process, principles of safe caring are also addressed to ensure the safety and security of all the children in our care include:

- being responsive, warm and nurturing towards children, including being open to children's displays of affection;
- following the setting's agreed procedure for personal care routines; (Illness or disability with eating or drinking, or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing). This is to ensure appropriate regard is given to children's dignity and personal safety, within any normal constraints that occur in an early years setting. EG: not locking toilet doors.
- Nappy changes should usually take place in the accessible toilet with the door pulled to for privacy but not closed, so that two members of staff can visibly communicate if needs be.
- Clothing changes should take place with privacy; staff should use their body to shield the child if visible to others, bearing in mind they may also be supervising other children simultaneously.
- Children will be encouraged to respect the privacy of others, creating self-awareness but not self-consciousness.
- being approachable, warm and friendly, without losing objectivity, blurring or breaching professional boundaries, e.g. educators and the wider setting team being friendly, but not friends with parents/carers;
- All staff undertake training in regard to Prevent Duty & FGM <https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/courses/fgm-training>
- refraining from entering into personal, social, romantic or sexual relationships with parents/carers or their children;
- striving to avoid the giving of 'special attention' or having 'favourite' children or parents/carers;
- ensuring that any professional discussion about a child or their parent/carer is not conducted in their presence, unless in open discussion, where they have equal opportunity to express themselves, e.g. not talking or gossiping over children's or parent's/carer's heads.

Steps Taken when a Child Protection Concern Arises

Stepping Stones Pre-school's staff team recognises that a concern for a child's and/ or parent's/carer's protection, welfare, safety and/or well-being can arise at any time during the day and can come to an educator's notice through:

- a child's behaviour, including signs of discomfort or distress
- physical signs of harm or neglect
- what a child or parent/carer might say
- information received from another party.

Having identified the concern for the child, it will be necessary to assess the level of seriousness and consider the most appropriate course of action. Such decisions should be made in consultation with the designated safeguarding lead and where the matter relates to an allegation against a member of staff, student or volunteer, the setting manager (see section below – Allegations Made Against staff, Student or Volunteer).

The Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services is available to provide advice and assistance as to whether:

- the concerns meet the threshold for referral to their service; or
- whether a referral should be made to other services as a response to a child or parent/carer 'in need', including completion of My Assessment with the parent/carer; or
- the setting should provide a package of support, including initiating the completion of My Assessment, as appropriate.

Details of the concerns for the child and/or their siblings and parents/carer will be noted as soon as possible after the observation or disclosure is made.

Written records will be signed (with printed name in brackets), dated and stored securely, separately from the child's observation records.

Existing injury:

If a child arrives into the setting with a noticeable injury the educator must sensitively ask the parent how the injury has happened. The educator must complete an existing injury form to be signed by the parent. This must be completed before the parent leaves. The manager should be informed.

If the existing injury is noticed at any time during the day, the educator must complete the form and contact the parent to explain what is observed and ask sensitively how it happened. It must be signed by the parent/carer that day.

If age appropriate the child may have said how the injury happened. Make sure not to ask the child any leading questions.

If the parent is not collecting their child that day, it should be agreed that the existing injury form must be completed as soon as possible.

If this is not possible then the form is to be emailed to the parent to sign electronically. It must be stated on the existing injury form that the parent has signed electronically.

We work in full partnership with the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services, in relation to children who are the subject of a child in need plan or child protection plan or who are looked after. These children have a robust written plan in order that we can support them effectively within the setting.

**Allegations Made Against Staff, Supply staff, Ancillary staff, Student, Volunteer or Contractor
(see also Whistleblowing Policy)**

The setting will always consider an allegation made against staff, Supply staff, Ancillary staff, Student, Volunteer or Contractor as a child protection matter in the first instance. In all cases the setting manager and Registered Person must be informed of the allegation at the earliest opportunity, as they hold both a duty of care towards all children and parents/ carers, and a legal obligation to act as a 'reasonable employer' towards the member of staff.

A referral will be made to the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and the setting manager will co-operate fully in the investigation process, as appropriate.

The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child, or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk to children. (Working Together 2018)

June 2025

For information and advice regarding procedures and forms, visit: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-young-people-and-families/the-role-of-the-lado-the-allegations-management-process/>

To report a concern about a professional working with children (Allegations Management) OR it is believed that the incident, allegation or concern appears to meet the criteria for Allegation Management involvement, then the Allegation Management Service must be contacted immediately at:

Email: amadmin@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Phone: 01452 426994

Gloucestershire LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): **Nigel Hatten** **01452 426994**
nigel.hatten@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Supported by **Jenny Kadodia**, the Allegations Management Co-Ordinator **01452 426320**
 For general Allegation Management advice, please contact Jenny on
jenny.kadodia@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Stepping Stones Pre-school's disciplinary procedure will only be initiated in agreement with the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services and the LADO. Ofsted will be informed of all allegations made against staff, students or volunteers by the setting manager and Registered Person.

Allegations made against staff, students or volunteers will not be made public knowledge within the setting. It is recognised, however, that those who need to know that a suspension has been made, if appropriate, will not need to know the nature of the suspension. This should be kept confidential.

The Independent Safeguarding Board, any appropriate professional body and the vetting and barring board will be informed, should any staff, student or volunteer be dismissed on the grounds of childcare-related misconduct. Under no circumstances will the setting allow staff, students or volunteers to be 'let go' or resign where an allegation of childcare-related misconduct has been made.

We fully adhere to the EYFS Statutory Framework and educators are informed of the signs to be aware of if they are concerned about any adult's (staff, parent, volunteer and student) behaviour.

Please remember that it is imperative the referral is completed fully and accurately. Insufficient or inaccurate information can cause delay, confusion and potentially leave a child/children at risk.

DO NOT DISCUSS THE ALLEGATION WITH THE PERSON alleged to have carried out the incident. It is important that the alleged victim and person against whom the allegation has been made are not interviewed about the concerns unless this is an agreed decision from the LADO or Allegations Management Meeting (AMM). Speaking to either party might compromise crucial evidence and contaminate a Police, Children's Social Care or organisations own internal investigation before even started.

Agreement will be required in the Allegations Management Meeting on how best to regularly inform/update the alleged victim, their birth parents or carers and also the person who is the subject of the Allegations Management process.

Throughout the Allegations Management process, the organisation to which the individual is attached must pay particular regard to their Duty of Care responsibilities to the individual as well as the individual's Right of Reply to the concerns.

When would an Internal Investigation take place?

If, in consultation with the LADO, the decision is that the situation falls below the need for Allegation Management oversight, then a senior manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should conduct an internal investigation and consult with their HR Manager. If further potential safeguarding concerns are identified a result of the internal investigation, then it is recommended you seek further advice and support from the Allegations Management Service.

It is important to understand that all participants in the Allegations Management process are likely to be expected to assist in any formal investigation process, as agreed in the initial Allegations Management Meeting.

Who should attend an Allegations Management meeting?

The initial Allegations Management Meeting should be attended by all relevant multi-agency partners. As a result of consultation with other agencies and HR, it is likely that the organisation to which the individual is attached will need to assess, monitor, review and eventually internally investigate the individual subject to the Allegations Management process.

Further Guidance:

Further guidance which may be helpful about carrying out an internal investigation in addition to consulting HR can be found here at the ACAS website: [ACAS Guidance](https://www.acas.gov.uk/guidance/what-you-must-tell-ofsted)

Reporting Incidents to Ofsted - Early years incident online form to report:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-childcare-incident#what-you-must-tell-ofsted>

As an Ofsted registered provider, we are required to notify Ofsted of any significant events or changes occurring at, or affecting our provision. *Further details about regarding when to notify Ofsted can be found in the EYFS.*

- allegations that someone living, working or looking after children on the premises has committed serious harm or abuse
- anything that might affect the suitability of someone on the premises to look after children
- a serious accident, injury or illness to a child, for example food poisoning
- a child's death



Prevent covers all forms of terrorism and extremism and some aspects of non-violent extremism. The Home Office works with local authorities, a wide range of government departments, and community organisations to deliver the Prevent strategy. The police also play a significant role in Prevent, in much the same way as they do when taking a preventative approach to other crimes.

If a member of staff is concerned a child might be at risk of extremism, they should contact the Home Office helpline. Open Monday to Friday from 9am to 6pm (excluding bank holidays).

Email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk Telephone 020 7340 7264

Information on Gloucestershire's GSCP's Prevent referral pathway:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/professional-resources/prevent/> (accessed 22.08.25)

Stepping Stones Pre-school takes the Prevent Duty Guidance extremely seriously. The Prevent duty comes under our safeguarding and child protection policy and procedure. These link the main principles of British values:

- **Democracy**
- **The rule of law**
- **Individual liberty and mutual respect**
- **Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**

We promote British values as an integral part of our EYFS curriculum. For example:

- Children learn about the principles of democracy because they are involved in decision making and have choices about where they play and what they play with.
- The rule of law features throughout our approach to supporting children's behaviour, within the resources we have, to identify people who help us such as police officers.
- We focus on building children's self-confidence and encourage their thinking skills to endorse the principles behind the value of individual liberty.
- We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and all cultures and beliefs are valued and promoted through a range of activities such as learning about different cultural festivals and proactively challenging negative attitudes and stereotypes.

These principles form an integral part of Stepping Stones Pre-school and can be seen in practice linking to the seven areas of the EYFS and three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. As with other behaviours, staff are alert to those that would be a cause for concern and have an impact on children's well-being and safety. These are:

- Staff know the procedures to take if they are concerned about a child's behaviour and are able to swiftly identify children who may be at risk of radicalization.
- Staff would record information to share, if need be, with the Police, Prevent co-ordinators, Channel Police practitioners and their Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. They would also work in close partnership with these professionals and organisations, to endeavour to safeguard children.
- In line with equality of opportunity, challenge and discuss with children negative stereotypes and attitudes – this is closely linked to children's personal, social and emotional development. All members of staff have and will include this useful online course, cross reference CPD files for further information.

https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/channel_awareness/01-welcome.html (June 2025)

Child Protection Procedure

Child abuse can manifest itself in a variety of different ways – some obvious, some not so obvious. All of Stepping Stones Pre-school's staff should be vigilant to possible clues to harm, including:

- significant changes in children's behaviour;
- deterioration in their general well-being;
- unexplained bruising, marks or repeated 'accidents' whilst in the parent's/carer's care;
- injuries to children, reported by parents/carers, that appear to be inconsistent with the explanation given;
- neglect, including untreated injuries, failure to provide appropriate medical care, suggestion of numerous 'carers' for the child etc.;
- comments a child might make, including disclosure of harm;
- observed change in the parent's/carer's coping capacity, including concern for their physical, mental and emotional health and well-being (influence of drugs/ alcohol and/or signals of domestic violence);
- any signs of harm caused to children by work colleagues or other professionals in positions of trust.

The setting will respond to concerns of a child protection nature with sensitivity and professional responsibility, in line with their legal obligations. We encourage staff to trust their professional instincts if they believe either a child or parent/carer is being harmed or is at risk of harm.

All staff should apply the following principles when there are safeguarding concerns about a child:

- Be receptive and observant to both children and parents/carers within the setting.
- Where observations are made of a concerning nature, these should be recorded as soon as possible and shared with the DSL/Deputy. Written observations must be initialled, signed and dated and given directly to the DSL/Deputy. The DSL and practitioner will discuss the next steps to take.
- The record should include exactly what was seen or heard, who was involved, any intervention made by staff and relevant observation made by colleagues. Care should be taken to distinguish between fact and opinion. It is appropriate to make professional comment, based on experience, but this must be identified as a professional view.

Where either a child or parent/carer is in conversation with a member of staff (or making a disclosure), care should be taken to:

- listen carefully to what is being said and the physical and emotional responses of the child and/or parent/carer as they are talking;
 - be non-judgemental nor give opinion about what is being said;
 - ask open-ended questions only, (who was there, how did that happen? according to the level of understanding) – a couple of questions to a child is usually enough to understand what they are telling you;
 - not make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anybody.
-
- Care should be taken to respond to such situations in a calm and reassuring way. If appropriate staff may then suggest to the child or parent/carer that they go to talk to the designated safeguarding lead together.
 - Details of the observation and/or disclosure (and accompanying record) should be taken to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible.

- The designated safeguarding lead and educator should discuss the concerns for the child and/or parent/carer and reach a decision as to the most appropriate course of action. Reference should be made to the attached sheet, which gives details on possible manifestations of harm. The Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services is available to provide advice and assistance in this.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead – actions to be taken

Where the parent/carer is still in the building, they should be asked about the harm to the child and the circumstances surrounding it. Where the parent/carer is no longer in the building, they should be contacted to gather relevant information prior to making the decision to contact the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services or not.

Where concerns relate to possible child sexual abuse, the parent should NOT be contacted. Equally, the parent(s)/carer(s) should NOT be contacted in the few cases where it is believed that this would place the child at further risk of harm – e.g. if the parent appears quite seriously mentally unwell or has been violent or threatened violence.

A referral to the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services should be made where a child has been harmed or is at risk of significant harm or impairment. This referral should be made to the borough or authority *in which the child resides*, using the appropriate referral form and attaching relevant information. All relevant information known to Stepping Stones Pre-school should be shared, including the following details:

- The child and parent's names, child's date of birth, address and details of the household.
- The ethnic origin of the child and parent/carer, their first language and any disability or specific needs.
- Detailed information about concerns that led to the referral, dates and times of observations, conversations and/or incidents, including whether these were observed by referrer or reported by another member of staff.
- Any significant known family history.
- Knowledge of any agencies, services or professionals involved with the family.
- A log of the phone calls made, including times and the name of the person spoken to, should be kept. The Chair of the Committee should be informed that a referral has been made.
- Where the threshold has not been met for a referral to the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services, consideration should be given to:
 - whether a referral should be made to other services as a response to a child or parent/carer 'in need', including completion of an Early Help Assessment with the parent/carer; or
 - whether the setting should provide a package of support, including initiating the completion of an Assessment as appropriate.
- In all cases information should be shared as appropriate with a wider network of professional services, in most cases with parental knowledge. Sensitivity should be exercised in keeping confidential information private.
- It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to ensure that feedback is received from the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services. Where it is believed that an inappropriate response has been made, this should be questioned, and a referral escalated through the higher management levels of the service as necessary.
- In circumstances where a member of staff is not satisfied that the Designated Safeguarding lead has taken appropriate action in the best interests of the child, they should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve this with the officer concerned. If professional discussion does not result in satisfactory resolution, the member of staff may then make a referral to the Safeguarding Children Team of Children's Services themselves.

Categories of Harm

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from:

- neglect
 - physical abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
 - domestic abuse
-
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Staff are vigilant and aware that peer-on-peer abuse can happen. They are knowledgeable in child development and know when children's behaviour is outside of their developmental norms and becomes a cause for concern. If they do observe and/or are informed of peer-on-peer abuse, then the appropriate procedures are to be carried out in line with these Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures.

Physical Abuse

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/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, 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, 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, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

is 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 it may involve a parent failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm and danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Domestic Abuse

- Staff are also alert to the impact of domestic violence on children and recognise that children who see, hear or experience the effects of abuse are victims and will be considered in a safeguarding context. Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, children are recognised as victims of domestic abuse.
- Staff are also mindful of other possible child protection incidents, including: witchcraft and religious or faith based practices and incidents relating to female genital mutilation. Staff also know that they must report this to the designated safeguarding lead.

Important references:

- Education Act 2002
- Keeping Children Safe in Education revised 2022
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures
- Serious Crime Act 2015 (reference female genital mutilation)
- The Childcare Act 2006
- The Children's Act 1989
- The Children's Act 2004
- The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (this includes the Prevent duty)
- The EYFS 2021
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, 2018
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Child Protection and Safeguarding Recording Devices, Cameras and Mobile Phones

Working with children can involve taking images with a range of devices. This can enhance our understanding of the child, their needs and to record or plan for the next stage of their development. Photographs are regularly shared with parents/carers and used to enhance information sharing between setting and home.

All photographs are taken with due regard for the law and the need to safeguard the child's privacy, dignity, safety and well-being.

Phones and tablets are used to take video and photos of children which may be used for their learning record, displays within the setting and agreed social media. Signed parental permission is always sought for this via child Registration Form.

No photographs will be taken for personal use.

Photos and videos will be deleted as soon as possible after uploading or downloading to the setting computer or memory device.

Any device which contains child photos or information must be both PIN / password protected and switched off when being transported.

Practitioners are responsible for the use of any device such as a tablet/USB drive if taken home for work purposes. This includes following our confidentiality policy, not letting family members use the device, not lending the device, ensuring the PIN/Password are secure and deleting material after use.

Educators have access to e-learning journeys and are aware of Stepping Stones' confidentiality policy and their obligation to not share any children's photographs outside the setting.

Personal mobile phones should be kept in the office and not in areas where children are present unless there are **exceptional circumstances**; in such circumstances permission must be sought *each time* from the Manager. The phone must be kept in view of other practitioners but out of children's reach (exceptional circumstances could include the following: waiting for important calls from Dr, or family reasons eg: children's school) the phone may be answered, but must then be taken to the office or kitchen).

Staff may use wearable technology such as Fit bit for their own personal information but must not be able to take photographs or recordings.

Social media can only be used for personal reasons during breaks, before or after work and away from ANY children.

All visitors/volunteers/students will be made aware of the above when signing the visitors book. A notice is also displayed on our notice board.

All parents/carers have the opportunity to grant or withhold the use of photographs of their child. Each child and their parent/carer may make individual requests and these will be followed without question.

On occasions group play may be photographed to show a particular area of learning and this may be added to a number of children's learning journey folders as photographic observations. This will only be permitted if the parents of all children captured have given written permission.

Parents/carers agree that under no circumstances will they copy any photos taken by Stepping Stones that depict any child other than their own, for any purposes whatsoever.

No Stepping Stones Pre-school staff member is allowed to use a personal recording device, within any areas of the setting.

All digital devices belonging to the setting are password protected, including the children's Fire tablet - so that children cannot inadvertently access the internet from a practitioner's device. Practitioners explain the need to keep ourselves safe when using digital devices through the use of passwords and appropriate relevant materials such as Digi-Duck. Parents are given information and advice relating to online safety for children and the safe use of technology in the home.

All visitors and parents will be asked not to use their mobile phones and other digital devices whilst they are in the setting. They will be informed of this when they sign the visitor's book.

Staff, students and volunteers will be asked to leave their mobile phones and other digital devices in the office.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Child Protection & Safeguarding

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
May 2020	Allison Brisland	Manager	
September 2021	Laura Frayne	Chair	
October 25 th 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
December 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2024	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Closure in the Event of an Emergency

In very exceptional cases Stepping Stones Pre-school may need to close at very short notice due to an unexpected emergency.

Such incidents could include:

- Serious weather conditions
- Structural damage
- Fire or bomb scare
- Suspected gas leak
- Death or serious injury of a child and/or a member of staff
- Serious assault on a staff member
- Serious accident or illness (including outbreaks of food poisoning or illness)
- Burst pipe
- Lack of toileting facilities

In such circumstances the manager will ensure that all staff, children and visitors are safe. Everyone must meet at a pre-arranged meeting point where a register will be taken. The assembly point is the gate at the entrance to the main walkway.

The manager will make sure that parents/carers are informed and necessary actions will be taken in relation to the cause of the closure.

All children will be supervised until they are safely collected.

Ofsted and all necessary agencies will be notified as required.

If the setting is unable to open, the staff will endeavour to contact the parents/ carers to inform them of such.

The staff will remain in post until directed by the manager to leave.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Closure in the Event of an Emergency

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Complaints Procedure

We place great value on working in partnership with parents/carers and it is our belief that this is not only good childcare practice, but also essential for the wellbeing and development of all our children.

Your views count – if things are going well, we would love to hear about it, a telephone call or a note will let us know we have got things right! If things start to go wrong, let a member of staff know straight away. If you have a worry or comment, we assure you that your views will be taken seriously.

In the first instance, you should contact your child's key person, face to face, or by telephone, email or letter. They will do their best to solve your enquiry and will assure you that all comments will be treated confidentially, and if shared this will be in line with data protection legislation.

If you are not happy with this response you should contact the setting manager, in person, email, or by telephone or letter, who will investigate the complaint.

If you still have concerns, please put the issue in writing to the Chair of the Committee, Email: steppingstoneschair@gmail.com or by letter to Stepping Stones Pre-school, School Road, Dursley, Glos, GL11 4NZ
Ofsted URN: 101730

Stepping Stones Pre-school will send you an acknowledgement by email or letter within three working days, advising you that the complaint has been received. The acknowledgement will contain the name of the employee who will be investigating the complaint and give a date by which you should receive a written response.

The complaint should be investigated, and a written response sent to you within ten working days. This exceeds statutory requirements.

The setting has a procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents/ carers and keeps a written record of complaints and their outcome.

We investigate all written complaints relating to the requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

We provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period and the action that was taken as a result of the complaint.

For advice at any time please contact PATA on 01452 541244 or info@pataglos.org.uk

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements / 3.70, 3.74, 3.75 47

If you remain dissatisfied at any time during the investigation, you may then take the issue to Ofsted: Postal Address:
Applications,
Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team,
Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester, M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquires@ofsted.gov.uk

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Complaints Procedure

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Laura Frayne	Chair	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Confidentiality Policy

Within Stepping Stones Pre-school, respecting confidentiality is of utmost importance. Due to the nature of childcare, the information that setting managers and educators hold about children and their families is quite detailed. It is vital that everyone working within our setting respects the need for confidentiality and discretion.

This policy is in line with the [UK General Data Protection Regulation \(UK GDPR\)](#) and the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) also relevant sections of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Stepping Stones Pre-school lays down strict guidelines with regard to confidentiality. Any breaches of professional practice will be dealt with severely and may lead to dismissal.

- No information about a child or their family is shared with any person outside of the setting, or within setting apart from the manager and the child's key person, unless agreed by the parent in advance, or the issue relates to a child protection concern where no parental agreement is required. Other teaching staff may be informed if it will be beneficial to the child. Students will not normally have access to such information.
- No gossip about a child or their family is shared within or outside of the setting.
- Every child, parent or staff member within the setting has their privacy respected. Any infringement will be treated seriously.
- It is not acceptable to discuss any business relating to the setting with anyone.
- Rumour and gossip is cruel and anyone employed within the setting who indulges in this unprofessional action will be disciplined.
- Where there is cause to refer to another agency due to concern about a child, especially with regard to child protection, the procedure will be carried out as per local regulations. No one outside of the 'need to know' circle will be given any information especially, if by so doing, this could prejudice the situation.

Under the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and government funding regulations we are required to collect some personal data about children and their families. We adhere to Data protection legislation which controls how this information is used and 'data protection principles' apply (unless an exemption exists).

Persons responsible for using personal data must make sure the information is:

- used fairly, lawfully and transparently
- used for specified, explicit purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and limited to only what is necessary
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept for no longer than is necessary
- handled in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unlawful or unauthorised processing, access, loss, destruction or damage

There is stronger legal protection for more sensitive information, such as:

- race
- ethnic background
- political opinions
- religious beliefs
- trade union membership
- genetics
- biometrics (where used for identification)
- health
- sex life or orientation

There are separate safeguards for personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences.

Under the legislation, you have rights in relation to your personal data, with some exceptions. These include the right to:

- be informed about how your data is being used
- access personal data
- have incorrect data updated
- have data erased
- stop or restrict the processing of your data
- data portability (allowing you to get and reuse your data for different services)
- object to how your data is processed in certain circumstances

If you're concerned about how we handle your personal data

Contact the ICO for advice or to make a complaint.

Telephone: 03031231113 Monday – Friday 9am -5 pm

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The following information is taken from the **ICO** website: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/individual-rights/individual-rights/> [accessed 22.08.2025]

Right to be informed Individuals have the right to be informed about the collection and use of their personal data.

Right of access Individuals have the right to access and receive a copy of their personal data, and other supplementary information.

Right to rectification The UK GDPR includes a right for individuals to have inaccurate personal data rectified, or completed if it is incomplete.

Right to erasure The UK GDPR introduces a right for individuals to have personal data erased.

Right to restrict processing Individuals have the right to request the restriction or suppression of their personal data.

Right to data portability The right to data portability allows individuals to obtain and reuse their personal data for their own purposes across different services.

Right to object The UK GDPR gives individuals the right to object to the processing of their personal data in certain circumstances.

Rights related to automated decision making including profiling The UK GDPR has provisions on:

- automated individual decision-making (making a decision solely by automated means without any human involvement); and
- profiling (automated processing of personal data to evaluate certain things about an individual). Profiling can be part of an automated decision-making process.

Checklist

Lawfulness

- ✓ We have identified an appropriate lawful basis (or bases) for our processing.
- ✓ If we are processing special category data or criminal offence data, we have identified a condition for processing this type of data.
- ✓ We don't do anything generally unlawful with personal data.

Fairness

- ✓ We have considered how the processing may affect the individuals concerned and can justify any adverse impact.
- ✓ We only handle people's data in ways they would reasonably expect, or we can explain why any unexpected processing is justified.
- ✓ We do not deceive or mislead people when we collect their personal data.

Transparency

- ✓ We are open and honest, and comply with the transparency obligations of the right to be informed.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Confidentiality Policy

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Laura Frayne	Chair	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Documentation & Information Policy

Stepping Stones Pre-school is aware of its obligations with regard to storing and sharing information under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It is also committed to complying with the legislation and the guidance. The manager and staff must be aware of the implications of the data protection and freedom of information legislation and of all roles and responsibilities.

The setting is committed to being open to parents/carers with regard to its policies and procedures and the information that each setting may hold on a child. Records and information will be available to parents/carers upon written request. There may be exemptions to this rule, but a letter will confirm this, stating the reason for any refusal in line with the Information Commissioner's Office.

Record Keeping

Information kept on a child will include the following:

- Birth name (and any other name by which the child is known)
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Religion
- Languages spoken
- Home address and telephone numbers
- Parent's/carer's name, who is known to the provider
- Name of parent/carer the child normally lives with
- Who is legally responsible for the child
- Parent's/carer's place of work and contact number (including emergency contact)
- Any other emergency contact names, relationship to the child and contact details
- Family doctor's name, address and telephone number
- Details of any special dietary requirements, allergies, food and drink preferences, needs of child
- List of immunisations

Any other information relating to the child that staff or parents feel is relevant.

The setting must record and submit the following to their local authority about individual children receiving the free entitlement to Early Years Provision.

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Address
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Special educational needs status
- The number of funded hours taken up during the census week
- Total number of hours (funded and unfunded) taken up at the setting.

Additionally, Parent date of birth and National Insurance number are required in order to receive free funding entitlement.

Documentation and Information Policy

Additionally, in accordance with our policies, other records will be kept and maintained by the setting:

- An up-to-date record of all staff, students and volunteers who are working at each setting including their name, address, telephone number, the number and date of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, qualifications and emergency contact name, address and telephone number.
- The attendance registers.
- An up-to-date waiting list with details of all children waiting for a place at the setting.
- Records of any medication being held by the staff for children on behalf of the parent/carer.
- Records of signed emergency treatments authorised by the parent/carer.
- A fully completed and up-to-date accident, incident book and fire book.
- An up-to-date admissions list (signing-in book or register) that will be kept nearby in case of a fire and/or other emergency.

Information on children will be kept in a locked file or office; the information will be restricted to staff on a 'need to know basis' – as a small setting this will usually include all staff where appropriate. The manager is responsible for keeping up-to-date records on the children.

All records relating to an individual child will be retained for two years from the last day the child attended Stepping Stones Pre-school.

Full details on record keeping timescales <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/data-retention-checklist-t-lf-1691419122>

Notification

Stepping Stones Pre-school recognises that it is their responsibility to notify parents/carers, Ofsted and staff of any changes to the settings. If changes are to be made to the setting, the manager will contact anyone that will be affected as soon as possible. If there are significant proposed changes, there will be consultation with anyone who is directly affected.

It is mandatory for Ofsted to be informed of:

- any change in the manager or deputy manager of the setting;
- any significant changes to the premises;
- any significant change to the operational plan of the setting;
- any event that is likely to affect the suitability of the manager or owner
- any changes to the company;
- any complaints made against the setting;
- where two or more children suffer from food poisoning;
- any allegation of abuse by a member of staff or volunteer or any abuse that has allegedly taken place on the premises;
- any significant event that is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children;
- any serious accident, illness or injury to, or death of, any child while in their care; or
- any other significant events.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Documentation & Information

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 23	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Education Policy

Philosophy

At Stepping Stones Pre-school we reflect the Early Years Foundation Stage educational programmes as well as considering latest research, best practice and a range of pedagogies. We provide an excellent early learning environment, tailored to each individual child in a safe, secure, warm and - most importantly - a happy setting. Children learn and develop at different rates and it is vital to encourage each child to reach their full potential at their own pace. Learning should be relaxed and purposeful, taking into account the individual child's abilities, interests and needs

Mission Statement

Our mission statement highlights children's holistic wellbeing alongside the more educational aspects of the EYFS:

As the **stepping stone** between home and school, children's wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do. Working in partnership with parents and carers, children's holistic development is nurtured as they are guided and educated in our warm, caring, safe, and stimulating environment.

We focus on supporting children to make the next steps in life towards becoming independent, curious, confident and motivated life-long learners.

Curriculum Planning

At Stepping Stones Pre-school we plan to provide a range of experiences, resources and activities that cover the **educational programmes** and **7 areas of learning**, both indoors and out. We ensure that the provision allows children to experience a balanced range of child-led and educator-directed activities. Alongside group activities, we use a 'blended curriculum' taking inspiration from respected pedagogies and approaches which promote both independent and guided learning - based upon our belief that children learn best when interested, motivated and engaged. We refer to the **7 key features of effective practice to support our practice**.

We focus on the 3 prime areas of learning for our younger children as these underpin children's development, and these are also key areas for our older children, as they are interwoven and support the **4 specific areas**. We recognise the need for secure foundations and solid building blocks of development and practice for children to be able to reach their full potential.

Staff build warm, nurturing relationships with their key children to assess their needs, interests, preferences and learning styles. If additional support is required then help will be sought from external agencies if needed.

During child led activities, children at Stepping Stones are able to access activities of their choosing from the resources available; through skilful support and interactions staff use the **characteristics of effective teaching and learning** to extend and consolidate children's learning *at that moment*. We place importance on consolidation and embedding learning (moving sideways) as we do for next steps in learning (moving forward). Adult led and adult guided activities are also provided to additionally support children's learning and progression - whether that is with new learning or revisiting prior learning to help children make connections and embed concepts and understanding.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Education

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Environmental Policy

Stepping Stones Pre-school is committed to improving the quality of life of both the local and wider community now, and in the future.

Our policy recognises that quality of life in the longer term is dependent on the health and quality of the local and global environment. We also recognise that improvements in the standard of living of developed countries have, in part, been achieved through wasteful use of resources and exploitation of fossil fuels across the world. This is contributing to:

- global warming and climate change through greenhouse gases emitted by burning fossil fuels;
- pollution of air, land and water; and
- loss of forests, soils, fish stocks and other resources through harvesting them more rapidly than they can regenerate.

All three of the above are acting to destroy ecosystems; the communities of interdependent plants and animals across the globe that help to regulate the environment and keep the planet fit for life. We demonstrate our commitment to the environment by ensuring our activities are designed to reduce adverse impact and to use resources increasingly efficiently over time. In practice this means:

- discussing environmental issues and bio-diversity with children
- teaching respect for our planet and living things
- recycling where possible
- reducing and monitoring waste
- Implementing a Climate Action Plan

Also, *where possible* we would prefer

- using equipment and resources that have been recycled
- our suppliers to be committed to environmental issues
- using eco-friendly products and produce.

In line with government (DfE) requirements 2025 Stepping Stones has a Climate Action plan which we endeavour to follow to support reduction of waste and environmental harm and encourage consideration and protection of our vulnerable environment.

Stepping Stones: Climate Action Plan

The Department for Education expects all educational settings, including early years, to have a sustainability lead and a completed Climate Action Plan by 2025 [GOV.UK+1](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sustainability-leadership-and-climate-action-plans-in-education). Stepping Stones' building is part of the school site which is owned and maintained by Dursley Primary Academy under the Diocese of Gloucester, therefore most of the financial responsibility for improving and implementing changes lies with the Academy and/or the Diocese. Additionally, the building is shared with Dursley Out of School Club and any changes should be agreed with both the Academy and DOOSC.

Information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sustainability-leadership-and-climate-action-plans-in-education>

Sustainability Lead & Partners

- The sustainability lead for Stepping Stones is **Rose Brisland**, who will oversee the plan of improvements within our scope.
- We aim to work together with Dursley Primary Academy and other stakeholders to improve sustainability.
- Staff will plan activities and provide resources to educate our children on the importance of sustainability, to care for the environment and to build resilience.
- Parents/carers are included in our programme of education and Trustees will support both staff and parents.

Baseline Assessment to include:

- **Energy Audit:** Review of current energy usage, lighting types, heating systems.
- **Resource Review:** Consideration of waste, water use, and recycling.
- **Climate Risks Assessment:** Consider overheating, water stress, and flood vulnerabilities.
- **Appraisal of biodiversity:** existing garden areas, plantings, outdoor features.

Goals & Targets

A. Decarbonisation

- Switch to LED lighting and energy-efficient appliances as and when possible.
- Explore renewable energy options like solar panels.

B. Adaptation & Resilience

- Install shading (e.g., awnings or outdoor planting) to reduce heat during warmer months.
- Improve insulation and draught sealing.
- Ensure water drainage is effective, especially in play areas.

C. Biodiversity & Nature

- Create a nature garden with native plants, bird feeders, and bug habitats.
- Encourage outdoor learning to deepen appreciation for nature.

D. Climate Education & Engagement

- Integrate climate awareness into the EYFS "Understanding the World" curriculum — e.g., recycling, planting, weather.
- Encourage green behaviours at home through family newsletters or eco-challenges.
- Seek support through programmes like **Climate Ambassadors** or **Let's Go Zero** [Sustainability Support for Education & National Education Union](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sustainability-leadership-and-climate-action-plans-in-education).
- <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/537/1459/7037/38508/38675/454011694.pdf>
- <https://www.eco-schools.org.uk/early-years/early-years-seven-steps/>

Action Plan Snapshot

Area	Actions
Leadership	Sustainability Lead & Working Group formed
Energy & Heating	LED bulbs, insulation, explore solar
Water & Waste	Meters, efficient fixtures, reduce single-use, enhance recycling
Climate Resilience	Install shading, review drainage, add natural cooling features
Biodiversity	Set up garden, bird/bug habitats, use Nature Park
Curriculum	Embed sustainability in daily learning and family engagement
Monitoring & Review	Track energy/water use, annual report, community updates

Monitoring & Reporting

- Monitor energy usage and waste termly.
- Review and celebrate progress at least annually.
- Share outcomes with families, staff, and local community.

Engagement & External Support

- Join **Sustainability Support for Education** for tools and templates [GOV.UK Sustainability Support for Education](https://gov.uk/sustainability-support-for-education).
- Connect with **Climate Ambassadors** for local expertise [National Education Union Sustainability Support for Education](https://national-education-union.org.uk/sustainability-support-for-education).
- Participate in local or regional sustainability webinars/events for early years [Education Essex](https://education-essex.org.uk)

Summary

By taking these concrete steps, **Stepping Stones Preschool** can meet DfE expectations, reduce its environmental footprint, build resilience, and engage both children and families in meaningful climate action.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Environment

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Laura Frayne	Chair	
May 22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 23	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Equality & Diversity Policy

Statement of Intent

Stepping Stones is an anti-racist and anti-discriminatory organisation. We take great care to treat each individual as a person in their own right, with equal rights and responsibilities to any other individual, whether they are an adult or child.

Discrimination has no place within the setting, whether due to **sex, gender, race, religion, colour, creed, marital status, ethnic or national origin, political belief or ability**. Should any person believe that this policy is not being complied with, it is everyone's duty to bring the matter to the attention of the manager at the earliest opportunity.

The staff are committed to:

- encouraging positive role models, displayed through toys, imaginary play and activities that promote non-stereotyped images – books will be selected to promote diversity and images of non stereo-typical gender bias.
- all children will be encouraged to join in activities, e.g. dressing up, shop, home corner, dolls, climbing on large apparatus, bikes, etc.;
- regularly reviewing childcare practice to ensure the policy is effective.

Staff

The setting aims to ensure that individuals are recruited, selected, trained and promoted on the basis of occupational skill requirements. In this respect, the setting will ensure that no job application or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, marital status, race, religion, colour, cultural or national origin or sexuality, which cannot be justified as being necessary for the safe and effective performance of the work.

Service Provision

No child will be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, race, religion, colour or creed.

Wherever possible those designated disabled or disadvantaged will be considered for a place, taking into account their individual circumstances and the ability of the setting to provide the necessary standard of care.

The setting will strive to ensure that all services and projects are accessible and relevant to all groups and individuals in the community within agreed targeted age groups; we will strive to promote equal and fair access to services and projects by taking practical steps, such as ensuring access for disabled people and producing material in relevant languages and media.

We encourage children and adults to value themselves, and as a consequence, see the value in others. Our intention is to support every child towards independence and autonomy.

Children who learn to think for themselves are more likely to understand that differences are as important as similarities. **We believe the uniqueness of every child and adult should be a celebration rather than something that creates suspicion and fear.**

Procedure for Dealing with Harassment

This policy considers discrimination and harassment which may be experienced due to a range of factors (such as protected characteristics), not just racism. We apply the same standards to all forms of harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

Stepping Stones Pre-school has a duty to create and implement strategies to prevent and address racism. This is in line with the Race Equality Scheme 2002. Such strategies include:

- that the setting records all racist incidents;
- that all recorded incidents are reported to the child's parents/carers and when appropriate to the relevant authority.

Parents have a right to know when racism occurs and what actions the setting will take to tackle it. In the Equality Act 2010 there is a statement of the duty *"to promote harmony and good relations"* between groups in society. We have a statutory responsibility to monitor, review and eliminate racial discrimination.

Definition of racial harassment *"Violence which may be verbal or physical and which includes attacks on property and people because of their race, nationality, ethnic origins; when the victim believes that the perpetrator was acting on racial grounds and/or there is evidence of racism"*. (Equality and Human Rights Commission).

We also apply this to discrimination and harassment which may be experienced due to other factors (such as *protected characteristics*)

Examples of racial harassment:

- Physical assault against a person or group of people
- Derogatory name calling, insults and racial jokes
- Racist graffiti and written insults
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges and insignia and the distribution of racist literature
- Threat against a person or group of people because of their colour and race
- Discriminatory comment including ridicule made in the course of discussions in class or elsewhere (EG: internet)
- Patronising words or actions

Procedure

- All staff in the setting should be aware of any harassment (racial, sexual or otherwise) taking place.
- They must intervene firmly and quickly to prevent all forms of harassment. Any allegation should be taken seriously and reported to the manager.
- Each incident should be investigated and recorded in detail as accurately as possible. This record should be available for inspection by staff, and parents where appropriate, on request.

- The manager is responsible for ensuring that incidents are handled appropriately and sensitively and entered in the manager's book. Any pattern of behaviour should be indicated. Perpetrator and victim's initials may be used in the record book, as information on individuals is confidential to the setting.
- Where an allegation is substantiated following an investigation, the parents/ carers of children who are victims should be informed of the incident and of the outcome.
- Continued harassment may lead to exclusion, but such steps should only be taken when other strategies have failed to modify behaviour.
- Adults found to be perpetrators must be reported immediately to the manager.

Setting Staff

All staff should be alert and seek to overcome ignorant or offensive behaviour based on fear or dislike of racial or other distinctions or differences that children or adults may express in the setting. An atmosphere must be created where the victims of any form of prejudice or harassment have confidence to report such behaviour and that subsequently they feel positively supported by the staff of the setting.

It is incumbent upon all members of staff to ensure that they do not express any views or comments that are racist, prejudiced or discriminatory against certain societal groups. Nor must staff appear to endorse such views by failing to counter behaviour that is prejudicial in a direct manner. A sensitive and informal approach must be used to counter any racial (or other) harassment perpetrated out of ignorance. When a member of staff violates Stepping Stones Pre-school's code of practice they will be counselled by the manager. It will be explained to them why the behaviour is unacceptable and what steps will be taken to remedy the situation. A repetition of such behaviour will lead to the normal disciplinary codes of practice for employees.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Equality & Diversity

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Equipment Policy

Statement of Intent

At Stepping Stones Pre-school we believe that high quality care is promoted by providing children with a safe and stimulating environment. The resources used to support this are clean and attractive as well as ability, age and stage appropriate.

Aim

We aim to provide children with resources and equipment that help to consolidate and also extend their knowledge, skills, interests and aptitudes within an environment that enhances their all-round skills ability.

Method

In order to achieve this aim:

- We provide play equipment and resources that are safe and, where applicable, conform to The Toys (Safety) Regulations 2011 (made under the Consumer Protection Act 1987) which prescribe Essential Safety Requirements. Toys should bear the CE or UKCA marks.
- We provide a sufficient quantity of equipment and resources for the number of children.
- The setting is adequately spacious for purpose, as well as safe and secure.
- The atmosphere and environment is welcoming to children and parents/carers.
- The manager has the responsibility to ensure that the setting is clean, well-ventilated and maintained at the appropriate temperature.
- Staff will ensure a daily risk assessment of the site is completed, to ensure that the facilities are maintained in a suitable state of repair and decoration.
- As far as possible, the premises should only be used by the children and adults concerned with the setting during the official opening hours.
- Where possible, the activities are displayed in an open-plan layout, so that the children can move freely between activities.
- The setting should have adequate storage space to store equipment safely.
- There is one toilet provided for every twelve children, and includes hot and cold running water. A separate accessible toilet is available which is also for use by adults
- The setting has a telephone for emergency use by staff, parents/ carers.
- We provide resources that promote all areas of children's learning and development, which may be child or adult led.
- We select books, equipment and resources that promote positive images of people of all races, cultures and abilities and are non-discriminatory and avoid racial and gender stereotyping.
- We provide play equipment and resources that promote continuity and progression, provide sufficient challenge and meet the needs and interests of all children.
- We provide developed, natural and re-cycled materials that are clean, in good condition and safe for the children to use.

Equipment Policy

- We provide furniture that is suitable for children and adults.
- We store and display resources and equipment where children can independently choose and select them.
- We check all resources and equipment regularly as they are set out at the beginning of each session and put away at the end of each session.
- We repair, clean or replace any unsafe, worn out or dirty/damaged equipment.
- We plan the provision of activities and appropriate resources to offer a balance of familiar equipment and resources plus new exciting challenges.

Outdoor Play

Our outdoor play area is used as part of our continuous provision. Any outdoor play will be carried out in a safe and secure place and will be supervised at all times. All outside play areas receive a daily risk assessment. Outdoor play areas must be well maintained; it is the manager's responsibility to report any problems with the outside area to the committee and deal with them accordingly. It is the setting's responsibility to keep the paths to the setting safe and clear, including free from snow or ice, litter and leaves.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Equipment Policy

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
05.09.21	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Essential Contractor / Work Policy

As far as practicable and possible any work is to be carried out during the closure of the setting, e.g. before 9am and after 2pm, bearing in mind that the building and grounds are used by another group from 7.30am – 6.30pm, alternatively work may be carried out during weekends or public/ bank holidays. For all works (excepting emergency works) the setting must have at least 24 hours' prior notice. The manager will try to arrange any works to be carried out at the most convenient time in order to accommodate the children's needs and their safety. If it is not possible to allow works at the time requested, an alternative time and date will be offered.

The manager and the contractor/work person will discuss the works required, time frame and the impact on the children's routine, with regard to the need to safeguard the child's privacy, dignity, safety and well-being. Any contractor/work person MUST report to the manager (or their deputy) in the first instance. They will then be required to sign in and out of the setting – dates and times are to be included.

Contractors/work people will undergo an induction. This will include the use of and responsibility for tools, equipment and chemicals.

Contractors/work people will be told of Stepping Stones Pre-school's policy that mobile phones are NOT allowed in any children's areas of the setting.

It is preferable for any contractor/work person to have a current DBS. If they have a relevant document, they are asked to provide the manager with a copy in order for this to be checked and record the details.

Contractors/work people must never be left alone with any children.

Contractors must operate within the guidelines Health & Safety and Confidentiality policy to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others, particularly children, is prioritised.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Contractors

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
05.09.21	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

First Aid, Medication & Sickness Policy

At all times, at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate (relevant to young children and infants) is on the premises at Stepping Stones Pre-school, it is our aim that all qualified staff hold a full and current PFA certificate.

At least one suitably qualified member of staff will also accompany all outings.

Staff will undertake Paediatric First Aid training delivered by a competent body and in line with EYFS 2025 (Annex C); this training will be renewed every 3 years. Refresher training may take place to ensure staff are competent and confident. Staff who do not hold a PFA certificate will not be counted in ratio.

The first aid qualification includes first aid training for infants and young children.

Our first aid kit:

- complies with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- is regularly checked by a designated member of staff and re-stocked etc.
- is easily accessible to adults
- is kept out of the way of children.

At the time of admission to the setting, parents'/carers' written permission for emergency medical advice or treatment is sought. Parents sign and date their written approval.

Our accident book:

- is kept safely and accessible
- is known to all staff, including how to complete it
- is reviewed at least half termly to identify any potential or actual hazards.

Ofsted is notified of any injury requiring treatment by a GP or hospital, as well as in the extremely unlikely circumstances of the death of a child or adult. Confidentiality will always be adhered to. This is a requirement of registration, from the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The procedure to report a serious childcare incident can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-childcare-incident> (accessed August 2025)

Accident Procedure

All accidents must be recorded in the appropriate book. This is to ensure legal compliance and appropriate gathering of information needed to inform all relevant persons.

Detailed records will be kept of any accidents, which will outline how the accident occurred, any injury sustained, time, treatment and follow-up process.

Parents are required to sign the entry when they arrive to collect their child.

Depending on the accident and impact on the child, parents will be informed immediately.

Sickness and Medicine Policy

If a child becomes ill whilst they are attending the setting, they will be monitored (e.g. taking the child's temperature on a regular basis), and if it is felt that it is not beneficial for them to continue with us that day, the setting manager/deputy/key person will phone the parent/carer and inform them of the situation. A thermometer does not have to be used - temperature may be taken by touch, and experienced staff can determine if a child feels excessively hot.

Parents must notify us immediately if they are aware that their child has a contagious illness, even if it has yet to be confirmed by a doctor (e.g. chickenpox). If a child has such an illness, we may request medical confirmation that they are fit to return to the setting.

Children suffering from sickness, diarrhoea, high temperature or the possibility of being infectious must refrain from attending the setting until they are clear from the symptoms for **at least 48 hours**.

If a child has been sent home from Stepping Stones Pre-school due to ill health they should not be re-admitted until the child is suitably recovered or until the GP says they can return.

The setting will only administer **prescribed** medicine (doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist), it must be clearly labelled with the child's name, medicine type, amount to be administered and the correct date. A first dose **MUST** have already been given at home and the setting informed of the time of the last dose the child was given. A specific consent form must be completed, and a record will be made of all medicines administered.

Stepping Stones do not routinely administer paracetamol as we believe that children requiring medication are better cared for at home. Should a child develop a high temperature we will attempt to reduce the temperature by gentle cooling and giving fluids – parents'/carers' attendance will be requested as soon as possible. (It is no longer recommended to cool a child with tepid sponging or by removing clothing, although removing a layer is acceptable.)

If a parent/carer wishes their child to be given paracetamol in this situation, they must have previously completed a consent form and a record will be made of all medicines administered.

Children with a fever (or whom we believe are displaying signs of a fever) will not be admitted, whether or not paracetamol has been administered. They must remain at home until the fever has subsided for 24 hours.

First Aid, Medication and Sickness Policy

If a child is taking antibiotics, they must be kept away from the setting for at least 48 hours to enable the medicine to take effect.

Parents/carers of a child who requires prescribed medicine during their time with us must complete a medicine form which must be signed by the parent/carer before the medicine will be administered.

Details of when the last dosage was given must be reported and recorded when the child arrives at the setting. However, if the medication is a long-term arrangement then a specific consent form may be used.

A risk assessment will be carried out by the setting to make sure that we can fully support any children with long-term medical conditions.

First Aid, Medication and Sickness Policy

We will work closely with parents and any other health professional to fully meet the needs of all children.

Where necessary, staff will receive extra training to support children with their medical conditions and, if appropriate, learn techniques to administer medication and specific medical procedures.

Every child with a specific medical need will have a robust medical care plan, which will be completed by the key person/manager/SENCO and parent.

Where it is age, stage and ability appropriate the child's opinion will be included within their care plan.

Children will be administered the correct dose by a senior member of staff, which will be witnessed by another member of staff. They will both sign and record the time accurately.

On collecting their child, parents/carers will be informed of the time that the medicine has been administered.

If a child has a severe allergy and requires epinephrine (epi-pen), then training must be completed by the child's key person and other staff. Unless this training is completed the child's attendance at the setting will be delayed.

Any injury to a child or parent requiring a GP or hospital visit is reported to the local office of the Health and Safety Executive and Ofsted - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-childcare-incident> (accessed August 2025)

We meet our legal requirements for the safety of our employees by complying with RIDDOR.

We report to the local office of the Health & Safety Executive (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/reporting/index.htm> - accessed August 2025)

- any accident to a member of staff requiring treatment by a GP or hospital; or
- any dangerous occurrences (e.g. an event which does not cause an accident but might have done).

Children's prescribed medicines are stored in their original containers, are clearly labelled and are not accessible to the children.

If the administered prescription requires medical knowledge, training will be provided for the relevant member of staff by a health professional, for example, the use of an EpiPen® or Insulin.

Medical Guidelines:

Please refer to public health guidelines on: Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

First Aid, Medication and Sickness Policy

Registered medical practitioners (not education staff) must report a notifiable disease to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA, previously Public Health England).

Notifiable diseases are certain infections that may present a risk to human health. Check the list of [notifiable diseases](#). (Accessed August 2025)

In the event of an outbreak of COVID, reporting will be in line with the latest guidelines according to South West Health Protection Team and UKHSA.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

First Aid, Medication & Sickness

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Food & Drink Policy

Safer Eating/ Healthy Eating/ Lunchboxes

Statement of Intent

Stepping Stones Pre-school regards mealtimes and snacks as an important part of the day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about oral health and healthy eating.

Aim

We aim to meet the full requirements of The Early Years Foundation Stage related to safer eating, oral health and healthy eating.

Staff will supervise children during meal-times and snack times (so that they are within sight and hearing) to be vigilant to their needs and safety and at least one member of staff with a valid Paediatric first aid certificate is always present whilst children are eating. Where possible staff will sit facing children whilst they eat.

At snack times, we aim to provide a variety of nutritious food, which meets children's dietary needs, providing them with some carbohydrate for energy and fruit and/or vegetables for essential vitamins and nutrients. We regularly discuss the importance of healthy eating and healthy teeth & gums; we talk about different foods that are good for us and which are not. Children are offered milk and cheese to provide protein and calcium for healthy teeth and bones. Cheese neutralises fruit acids and thus helps to protect teeth.

Oral health is an important part of our food and drink policy and we discuss it with children as part of our curriculum; we invite the Tooth Fairy (children's Oral Health Nurse) to visit us and help children learn about oral health and healthy eating through age-appropriate activities and games.

Information and advice is offered to parents regarding appropriate nutrition and oral health.

Methods

- Before a child starts at the setting we find out from parents/carers their children's dietary needs, sensitivities, philosophical or religious preferences, food intolerances or allergies.
- We record information about each child's dietary needs on their registration record which parents/carers sign
- Parents/carers will be asked to supply food for children with severe allergies, to ensure they are fully protected. These must be named and stored appropriately.
- Parents/carers are requested to regularly update us to ensure that our records are current and relevant.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff are fully informed.
- We implement systems to ensure that children receive only food and drink that is consistent with their dietary needs and parents'/carers' wishes (in line with this policy and healthy eating recommendations).
- The member of staff handing out the snack or sitting with the child at lunchtime is responsible for ensuring they eat or drink the correct food/drink.
- We inform parents/carers of our snacks each day.
- Water or semi-skimmed pasteurised milk is offered at snack-time. We do not provide juice drinks to children and request that parents do not include juice, sugary squash or smoothies in the packed lunch from home. We recognise that where children consume these drinks at home, it is preferable that they are consumed with a meal rather than between meals.

- We provide nutritious food, aiming to avoiding large quantities of sugar and salt and limiting UPF foods where possible
- We pay particular heed to children, staff (and where appropriate, visitors) with diagnosed food allergies – in which case we request a copy of their allergy plan and take appropriate steps to ensure that they are safe at Stepping Stones. The plan is shared with all staff and we take account of this information in the provision of food and drinks.
- Where appropriate staff may work with parents/carers and health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. Allergy action plan templates and advice are available from <https://www.bsaci.org/resources/allergy-action-plans/> . Parents are responsible for updating staff with changes and there should be ongoing exchange of information.
- Stepping Stones will ensure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the difference between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time. Advice can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy/> and <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/>
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of their diet or allergy. Staff also discuss differences with children and have conversations with children around food preferences, be they philosophical, dietary or health related, to support children to understand and manage any specific considerations. For safety reasons, children with allergies may sit away from children who could potentially be consuming food which could cause an allergic reaction. This is done with support and sensitivity so that children are as fully included as possible.
- We organise meal and snack times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use meal and snack times to help children develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to provide a healthy lunchbox and are given guidelines regarding types and amounts of food which are suitable to include. We signpost them to healthy recipes and lunchbox suggestions.
- Parents are encouraged to prepare food to avoid possible choking hazards and are consistently reminded of this. At Stepping Stones we prepare food in such a way to minimise risk of choking and food is given to children appropriate for their stage of development (not simply relying on a child's age as an indicator of what/how to feed them). We follow the guidance available from <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/food-safety>
- Children should be seated whilst eating and not walking around.
- If a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, we will record where and how they choked and ensure that parents/carers are made aware. Records will be reviewed periodically to identify any trends or common features that can be addressed to reduce incidents/ risk. Appropriate action should be taken to address any concerns identified..
- Sweets and fizzy drinks are not allowed to be included in the lunch box

- If lunchboxes are persistently unhealthy then the keyperson will discuss with parents/carers more suitable, healthy foods to include.
- We have fresh drinking water available at all times for the children. We inform the children about how to obtain water and that they can ask for water at any time during the day. In addition, we explain why drinking water keeps them hydrated.
- Children should not share or swap their food with one another
- Staff must never consume hot drinks when the safety of the children could be compromised and they must ensure these are only drunk at appropriate times, for example in areas where children are not allowed.
- Whilst we welcome families bringing in special foods to share customs and celebrate festivals, these must be shop bought and with their original packaging showing the ingredients and packaging detail.
- NOTE: We do not accept CAKES and SWEET TREATS to share with the children (including shop bought cakes) EG: birthday cake. Families are encouraged to celebrate through sharing a fruit platter or a favourite book.

Nut Free Policy

- Due to the risk of allergic reaction please DO NOT send any nuts or food products containing nuts – such as peanut butter, hazelnut spread etc. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Food & Drink

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
September 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Health & Safety Policy

Stepping Stones 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/carers and staff.

Aim

We aim to make children, parents/carers 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.

Methods

The person responsible for health and safety overall is the: **Chair of the Committee**, who should undertake health and safety training and keep abreast of relevant updates.

The necessary health and safety poster is displayed in: **the activity room**

Day to day responsibility lies with the Manager and Deputy Manager, with all staff committing to ensuring the environment is as safe as necessary.

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment process includes the following:

- Checking for hazards and risks indoors and outside, and in our activities and procedures.
- The assessment covers adults and children.
- Deciding which area needs attention.
- Developing a plan that specifies the action required including timescales. It also details the person responsible for the action. We keep written risk assessments and these are reviewed at least annually.

We maintain lists of health and safety issues that are checked:

- daily before the session begins
- weekly
- termly – when a full risk assessment is carried out.

Insurance Cover

We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance.

The certificate is displayed on: **the notice board**

Awareness Raising

The risk assessment process includes the following:

Our induction training for staff includes a clear explanation of health and safety issues so that all adults are able to adhere to our policy and understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. Records of induction training are kept and new staff sign the records to confirm that they have taken part.

- Stepping Stones Pre-school has a no smoking and no vaping policy.
- Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, planned activities and routines.
- Children's safety and security whilst at the setting is vitally important and is the responsibility of each staff member.
- Only people who have been checked for criminal records by an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and are registered with Ofsted as a child carer have unsupervised access to the children, including helping them with toileting.
- Adults do not normally supervise children on their own.
- All children are supervised by adults at all times.
- At least two adults are present whenever children are on the premises.
- Security Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children.
- There is also a system in place to ensure security in the outside areas of the setting.
- The times of the children's arrival and departure are recorded.
- Staff count children to ensure they are fully aware of the number of children in their care before and after outside play.
- The arrival and departure times of staff are recorded.
- Our systems prevent unauthorised access to our premises.

Doors/Gates

- Entrance to the setting will only be granted by a member of staff opening the door or by a member of staff viewing a recognised parent/carer at the entrance and buzzing them in.
- Garden gates are secure and supervised whilst children are outside.

Outside Play

It is the responsibility of each staff member to ensure outdoor play is a secure, happy and engaging learning environment.

Staff are to be deployed at key points during outside play to enhance the children's play experience, and to enable the children to participate in appropriate age/stage related activities safely.

- The outdoor area is securely fenced.
- The outdoor area is checked for safety and cleared of rubbish/foreign bodies before it is used.
- Adults and children are alerted to the dangers of poisonous plants, herbicides and pesticides.
- Where water can form a pool on equipment, it is emptied before children start playing with it.
- The outdoor sand pit is covered when not in use.
- All outdoor activities are supervised at all times.
- Parents are requested to send children with cycling helmets in order that they can play safely on balance bikes and scooters

Floors

All surfaces are checked daily to ensure they are clean and not uneven or damaged.

Any accidents that occur are recorded, monitored and assessed.

Kitchen

- Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.
- All surfaces are clean and non-porous.
- Staff wash their hands thoroughly before preparing food.
- At least one member of staff who prepares food has Food Hygiene training.
- There are separate facilities for hand washing and for washing up.
- Cleaning materials and other dangerous materials are stored out of children's reach.
- Only kitchen-appropriate cleaners are stored in this area
- When children take part in cooking activities, they are supervised at all times. They are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water and do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment.

Electrical/Gas Equipment

- All electrical equipment conforms to safety requirements and is checked regularly.
- The boiler/electrical switchgear/meter cupboard is not accessible to the children.
- Fires, heaters, 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 that children select are stored safely.
- All equipment and resources are stored or stacked safely to prevent them accidentally falling or collapsing.

Hygiene

- Our daily routines encourage the children to learn about personal hygiene.
- We have a daily cleaning routine for the setting, which includes children's rooms, kitchen, staff room, 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 and the disposal of nappies.

We implement good hygiene practices by:

- cleaning tables between activities
- checking toilets regularly
- wearing protective clothing such as aprons and disposable gloves as appropriate whilst changing nappies and helping children with personal care
- Double wrapping used nappies
- providing sets of clean clothes
- providing tissues and wipes

Activities

Before purchasing equipment and resources, the setting staff will check to ensure that they are safe for the age and stage of the children currently attending the setting.

- The layout of play equipment allows adults and children to safely and freely move between activities.

If areas become too full staff will make them safe by moving equipment and helping children to space out

- 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 who are sleeping are checked every five minutes.
- Children learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow.

Food and Drink

- Staff who prepare and handle food receive appropriate training.
- They understand and comply with food safety and hygiene regulations.
- All food and drink is stored appropriately.
- Adults do not drink hot drinks in the play areas and at no time is a hot drink placed within reach of children.
- Snack and meal times are appropriately supervised and children do not walk about with food and drink.
- Staff actively engage with children whilst they have their meals, making the meal time a positive experience.
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves food and drink as appropriate to their age/stage of development.
- Fresh drinking water is available to the children at all times.
- We operate systems to ensure that children do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic.

Outings and Visits

Stepping Stones Pre-school has agreed procedures for the safe conduct of outings:

- A risk assessment is carried out before an outing takes place.
- Parents/carers always sign consent forms before major outings and have given consent to local outings.
- Our adult to child ratio is high, normally one adult to two/three children, depending on their age.
- Children are appropriately supervised to ensure no child gets lost and that no other person has unauthorised access to them.
- For children remaining at the setting the correct ratios are maintained.

Animals

- Animals visiting the setting are free from disease, safe to be with children and do not pose a health risk.
- From time to time the setting may keep small, non-furry animals, such as fish, giant snails or stick insects. This promotes good animal husbandry and discussion regarding responsibility of care.

Fire Safety

All staff are aware of the location of all fire exits, the fire meeting point and where all the fire safety equipment is stored. All children according to their age and stage ability must be made aware of the setting's fire safety procedures. These should be discussed with new children and followed up by regular reminders. If applicable, children should be aware of the location of the safe meeting point.

- Fire doors and exits are clearly marked; not obstructed and must open easily from the inside.
- Fire exits should be closed, but never locked while people are in the building.
- Fire extinguishers and fire alarms should be tested regularly as per the fire officer's instruction.
- The manager is responsible for either arranging fire drills or appointing a fire safety officer to do so.
- Fire drills will take place every half term. Staff will be informed when this is going to happen.
- On occasion, fire drills will take place without prior notice.
- The drills may include non-exit routes to ensure a more realistic situation.
- All drills, equipment checks and fire incidents must be recorded in the fire book and available for inspection.

Fire Prevention

Stepping Stones Pre-school will take steps to prevent fires occurring. The manager and staff must ensure the following:

- That power points or sockets are not overloaded with plugs.
- That the no smoking policy is adhered to.
- That wiring is not frayed or damaged and that fuses are checked.
- That all electrical appliances are checked before use to ensure safety.
- All electrical appliances must have an annual PAT certificate.
- That flammable materials are stored safely.
- The manager will discuss with new staff, volunteers and students fire safety within their induction

In the Event of a Fire

A member of staff should raise the alarm using the whistle kept by the front door. The emergency services should be called at the earliest opportunity. Staff will check all areas of the building, collect the register and mobile phone, and immediately escort the children off the premises via the nearest safe exit. Nobody should return to the building. Children will wait at the railings next to the school playground where they will be counted. A member of staff will inform school that a fire has been reported. Having established everyone is safe and present, staff will guide children to the bandstand in the school infant playground. Here they can be closely supervised away from the building and safely out of the route of emergency vehicles. A register of the children and staff will be taken. If any person is missing from the register, the emergency services will be informed immediately. If for any reason there is no designated fire safety officer at the time of an incident, the manager will assume responsibility.

This procedure is practised at regular intervals to ensure staff are capable and children are familiar with the practise.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Health & Safety

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
March 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
December 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2024	Allison Brisland	Manager	
April 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Incident Procedure

An incident book is kept in the office at Stepping Stones Pre-school. To maintain confidentiality all logs should be recorded separately for each child. This book is to document any incidents that cannot be described as an accident.

If a child arrives at the setting with a recent injury that occurred at home (such as a cut, bump, or burn) this must be written up on an **existing injury record form** with the parents' account of the injury and the parent must be asked to sign before they leave the child. Professional discretion must be used regarding this.

If the injury is noticed when the parent has left, the parent must be called and countersign the form when they arrive.

Any incident involving one child harming another child will be documented in the incident book.

- The child who caused the incident will need to be documented in the incident book and signed by the parent/carer.
- The child who was harmed should have a record of this written up in the accident book and their parent needs to sign this.

Incidents could include biting, pinching, pulling hair, hitting, kicking, spitting etc. (this is not a definitive list).

If one child has caused an injury to another child, we will explain the nature of the injury caused and how we dealt with the incident.

We will not name the child on either form, in accordance with our confidentiality policy, and parents should not ask for this information as educators are not permitted to discuss a child with another parent.

The manager will need to sign a confirmation of the entry.

Any serious incidents need to be brought to the attention of the manager immediately and recorded in the child's file or in the incident book. For example, unreported markings on a child, a child verbalising something unusual or displaying unusual behaviour. This information is confidential, and documented information must be kept in a lockable place. If appropriate the manager will speak to the parents/carers of a child or report to the authorities.

Other examples of incidents might involve adults only, such as a person seen loitering near the premises etc. This must be detailed and if persistent or serious cause for concern, the police notified.

Intruder / Incident

If an intruder succeeds in accessing the premises then staff will immediately call for the lockdown procedure to be implemented to protect children and themselves. This procedure is known to staff and is regularly discussed along with other safeguarding issues.

See separate comprehensive Policy for Lockdown Procedure

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Incident Procedure

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Inclusion & Disabilities Policy

Stepping Stones Pre-school is committed to the integration of children with special needs. All children have the right to be educated and develop to their full potential alongside each other. It is a positive experience to be able to share the same opportunities and overcome any difficulties together.

This policy is in line with:

Children and Families Act (2014)

Outlines the importance of children with SEND and/or their parents or carers, to participate in decision-making about their care, and aims to ensure that all children are supported to achieve the best possible educational and life outcomes.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (2024)

The EYFS seeks to provide equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported. The framework also states that early years settings must follow their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010), EG: providing reasonable adjustments, such as by ensuring that all children can access outdoor areas.

Equality Act (2010)

Consolidates previous legislation and gives everyone protection from being discriminated against because of: age, disability, race, religion, sex, gender assignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy or maternity and sexual orientation. Alongside these protected characteristics, it reminds early years practitioners to be mindful of other differences between individual children and families - for example, household structure, life experiences and financial circumstances.

Special educational needs code of practice (SENCOP): 0 to 25 years (2015)

SENCOP outlines the principles that early years settings must follow when working with children who have special educational needs or disabilities:

- taking account of the views of children and families,
- enabling children and their parents /carers to participate in decision-making,
- working collaboratively with other education, health and social care professionals.

Day to day in early years and childcare settings, early years practitioners need to identify the needs of children and ensure that high-quality provision that removes barriers to learning is available for all children.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)(1992)

- With regard to equality, diversity and inclusive practice, the convention sets out that every child has the right to speak their own language and to follow their family's way of life, even if these are not shared by the majority of people where they live.
- Additionally, UNCRC states that all children have a right to an education where early years practitioners encourage children's respect for their own and other cultures.

We also understand and have regard to key local authority special needs and disability guidance and/or information that has been provided. We make sure that we adhere to local guidance and our intention is to seek support, if necessary.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-early-years-settings>

Aims

To recognise any special needs a child may have and ensure all staff are aware of the above legislation and guidance. To employ a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who is experienced in the care and assessment of children with special needs. The SENCO at Stepping Stones is **Rose Brisland**

- To assess each child's specific needs and adapt our facilities if possible.
- To liaise with other agencies including health and education authorities and seek advice, support and training.
- To make sure that at the earliest opportunity, children who need support are identified.
- To make sure good use is made of observing children and recording their development.
- To robustly track children's learning and development, to ascertain if they are progressing well.
- To make sure that each two-year-old's development has been recorded via the two-year progress check and support has been identified if need be.
- To ensure that all children are treated as equals and encouraged to take part in every aspect of the setting day.
- To promote positive images of those with special needs wherever possible.
- To monitor and record the child's progress and regularly review their changing needs.
- To provide adequate resources to support their learning.
- To provide suitable help for the child in setting whilst ensuring that they receive a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To involve parents/carers as early as possible and ask for their support in assisting the child at home.
- To build a partnership with support services for the benefit of those children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) in our setting.
- To make sure that staff are extra vigilant when working with children with special educational needs and disability, in terms of safeguarding and child protection

Access to the Curriculum

Stepping Stones Pre-school recognises that the extent to which a learning difficulty influences a child's development depends not only on the severity but also:

- the extent to which their environment supports them in coping with their difficulties;
- the child's motivation;
- appropriateness of learning resources;
- appropriateness of the setting's curriculum, content and delivery.

For these reasons our setting:

- considers the needs of children with SEND at all stages of curriculum development;
- works closely with special support agencies;
- ensures that there is an appropriate range of teaching strategies and approaches;
- investigates, with advice from specialist support agencies, the appropriateness and availability of any equipment that may be required to facilitate access to the curriculum;
- coordinates support available both from within the setting's resources and from external agencies to most effectively enable access for children with SEND.

Role of the Person Responsible for SEND

The SENCO is responsible for:

- day-to-day operations of the setting's SEND policy;
- liaising with and advising fellow members of staff;
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEND across the setting;
- maintaining a SEND register and overseeing the records of all children with special educational needs;
- liaising with external agencies e.g. portage and health visitors;
- making existing and new members of staff aware of SEND policies and procedures;
- ensuring that documents are in place, such as the education, health and care plans.

Inclusion and Disabilities Policy

Stepping Stones Pre-school believes that all children have a right to experience and develop alongside their peers. Each child's needs are unique, therefore any attempt to categorise children is inappropriate.

The setting is committed to working alongside parents/carers in the provision of their child's individual needs in order to enable us to help their child develop to their full potential.

All children with special needs/disabilities have a right to a broad and well-balanced education.

We feel it is paramount to find out as much as possible about a particular child's needs, and the way that these affect their educational needs, by:

- liaison with child's parents/carers;
- liaison with any professional agencies and specialist professional colleagues;
- reading any reports that have been prepared;
- attending any review meetings with the local authority;
- regular monitoring of observations undertaken on the child's development

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Inclusion & Disabilities

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
Allison Brisland	05.09.21	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
June 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Information Communication & Technology Policy

Stepping Stones Pre-school is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office to ensure compliance.

- The Internet will only be used by authorised individuals.
- The Internet will only be used for business purposes.
- Any computer connected to the Internet will run the latest version of anti-virus software.
- It is the responsibility of the computer user to ensure that anti-virus software is updated whenever a new release is made available.
- Users will not browse, download or send material that could be considered offensive to colleagues.
- It is the user's responsibility to ensure that any software downloaded from the Internet is adequately licensed.
- Users are reminded that the use of non-standard screen savers is not permitted.
- Staff are to be reminded of how they use social media outside of the setting for their own personal use.
- Derogatory, libellous or offensive terms must not be used in relation to any person, or anything to do with Stepping Stones.
- Failure to comply with the Internet Usage Policy will result in disciplinary action.

This policy also applies to tablets, phones and smart watches where appropriate.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Information, communication & technology

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Laura Frayne	Chair	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Involving & Consulting Children Policy

Consulting with children is good practice and is beneficial not only to the setting as a whole but also to the children and staff. Stepping Stones Pre-school's commitment stems from "listening to children" - articles 12 and 13 from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These state that:

- A child's opinion should be taken into account on anything that affects them.
- Children should have information disseminated in a way that enables them to make choices and decisions.

Children learn new skills from consultation such as, listening, negotiation, sharing and understanding. It helps them understand how decisions are made and the importance and value of their opinion; it also links to British Values. There are many benefits of approaching provision in this way. Children feel that they have some ownership in their setting, which can result in better behaviour. This is largely due to the fact children will feel that they are working in partnership and that the setting provides activities for their needs and interests. All children will be consulted and listened to on a regular basis; the consultation will be done in the following formats:

- Taking notice of what the children say in everyday conversations.
- Observing and monitoring body language and behaviour.
- Through drama and role play.
- Through play and visual aids.
- Question and answer sessions.

We actively support children to have a voice, which is age, stage and ability appropriate. Listening to children is central to our values. Included within this, children have the right to say no, and we use scenarios and discussions with children to give them the tools to protect themselves within the setting, online and outside of the setting. The type of decision and the level of involvement from the children will be assessed by the appropriateness and the maturity of the children. However, it is important to involve the children as much as possible in decision making. The consultations will be monitored and outcomes noted, so that the children can see their opinions are regularly acted upon. If consultation is seen to be inappropriate there will be an explanation as to why that has been decided.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Involving & Consulting Children

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Key Person Policy

At Stepping Stones Pre-school we understand that children are better able to reach their full potential by having good home-setting links and when feeling settled and secure. Therefore, as part of our philosophy we make sure that every child has their own key person. Our key person system enables children to relate to one special adult right from the settling-in stage. Each member of staff has particular responsibility for children in their key group.

Staff observe and notice children's individual needs and views so they can be incorporated into our curriculum. The key person also maintains links with parents/carers and outside agencies, sharing information on children's unique needs and achievements. We ensure that our procedures are flexible and aim to allocate children and their families to the most suitable member of staff. We aim to ensure ongoing ease of communication and a confident exchange of information between the parent/carer and the setting

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Key Person

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Lockdown Policy and Procedure

condensed version

Go In, Stay In, Tune In

Stepping Stones Pre-School recognises the potentially serious risks to children, staff and visitors in emergency or harmful situations. A lockdown may take place where there is a perceived risk of threat to the pre-school, its staff, children, visitors or property. Where possible, the Pre-school will act to ensure the safety of all personnel in the setting in the following situations:

- In the event that unauthorized person(s) considered dangerous, are on school grounds.
- In Instances included domestic breakdowns where estranged parties are attempting to abduct children.
- In instances where personnel, students, volunteers or staff from within the setting become a threat to the well-being of others.
- In emergency situations within the environment of the setting where there is potential risk from spills or poisonous fumes.

A lockdown will be initiated by a recognisable signal of 3 long whistle blows followed by the adult calling LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE. Lock down procedures will be practiced from time to time to ensure that staff and children are familiar with them.

Practices and Procedure - Follow the **CLOSE** Procedure:

- C** close all windows and doors.
- L** lock up.
- O** out of sight and minimise movement.
- S** stay silent and avoid drawing any attention.
- E** endure. Be aware that you may be in Lockdown for some time.

The following steps provide guidelines for staff, students and visitors in an emergency situation:

1. Three (3) long whistle blows will signal lockdown procedures to take effect immediately.
2. Staff will call LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE and repeat whistle blows / calling until all staff are aware
3. On hearing the lock down signal the Pre-School Manager and/or Deputy will call for assistance using 999.
4. Staff will lock the front outer door and door to garden.
5. A member of staff will contact the school to inform them of an incident.

In the setting:

Upon hearing the Lockdown signal, these steps will be followed:

1. Staff to guide all children into the main room if playing outside, check toilets etc
2. Do a head count immediately
3. Staff to secure all windows and doors then instruct children to move into the office and keep them calm. If anyone is outside, call them in.
4. Collect medical box, register & mobile phone.
5. Call register
6. Supervise, ensuring everyone remains out of sight and are sitting quietly.
7. No one should be allowed out of the room or safe area during a lockdown procedure.
8. Remain in lockdown until the all-clear has been given by the police.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Lockdown procedure

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2024	Allison Brisland	Manager	
April 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	
July 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Lost Child Procedure (Outings & Setting)

Outing

In the unlikely event that a child is lost during an outing whilst in the care of Stepping Stones Pre-school, the procedure is as follows:

- Immediately look for the child in the last known location, shouting their name and involving others in the search, whilst staff ensure the safety of the remaining children.
- Keep looking and calling for at least 5 minutes. If after 10 minutes the child hasn't been found then -
 - Contact the police, giving the child's description (including clothing) and advise them that the child should be wearing a badge containing the setting's details. The parents'/carers' contact details must also be given.
 - The Chair of the Committee must be informed.
 - One member of staff is to stay where the child was seen last, while the rest of the staff and children return to the setting.
- It is imperative that staff ensure that all children are wearing a setting identity badge before they leave for any outing.
- Staff should also have a list of the names of all children they are taking and their personal details.
- A full incident log will need to be recorded and Ofsted informed.
- It is helpful to take a group photograph before embarking upon outings as this could be useful to help identify a child.

Setting

If a child leaves the premises and/or is lost within the setting, the procedure is as follows:

- Staff should thoroughly check the premises and the outside area of the site, shouting their name and involving others in the search, whilst staff ensure the safety of the remaining children.
- Keep looking and calling for at least 5 minutes. If after 10 minutes the child hasn't been found then -
- Contact the police, giving the child's description (including clothing). The parents'/carers' contact details must also be given.
- Contact the parents/carers, talk to them calmly and give factual information.
- The Chair of the committee must be informed.
- Children at the setting will need to be supervised by a minimum number of staff, while the rest of the staff search the area.
- A full incident log will need to be recorded and Ofsted informed.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Lost Child Procedure

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Nappy Changing, Toileting & Personal Independence Policy

- At Stepping Stones Pre-school we recognise that strict procedures and guidelines are in place and **MUST** be adhered to when changing nappies and supervising toileting. Parents/carers **must** provide own nappies and wipes. The use of nappies over pull-up pants is encouraged during toilet training as absorbent pants give mixed messages to the child.
- Children who need personal care must have their privacy and dignity respected.
- Only staff who currently work for Stepping Stones Pre-school and hold enhanced DBS clearance are allowed to change nappies, assist with toileting or personal care routines.
- Under no circumstances should a volunteer or student be asked to provide personal care for a child unless the student is aged over 17, deemed sufficiently responsible, holds an enhanced DBS and is well known to the child.
- Nappies are changed in appropriate areas only. This is not only for hygiene reasons but to also ensure appropriate regard is given to children's dignity and personal safety within any normal constraints that occur in an early years setting. EG: not locking toilet doors.
 - Nappy changes should usually take place in the accessible toilet with the door pulled to for privacy but not closed, so that two members of staff can visibly communicate if needs be.
 - Clothing changes should take place affording child appropriate levels of privacy; staff should use their body to shield the child if visible to others, bearing in mind they may also be supervising other children simultaneously.
 - Children will be encouraged to respect the privacy of others, creating self-awareness but not self-consciousness.
- Staff should wear appropriate PPE including apron and disposable gloves (wearing of gloves is optional for wet changes). PPE (Apron AND Gloves) must be worn when changing soiled nappies or pants
- The changing mat is wiped after each nappy change, using an anti-bacterial cleaner
- All items are double wrapped and disposed of in the outside bin.
- The member of staff should wash their hands after each routine is carried out.
- Babies and young children are cleaned using warm water and cotton wool only and/or wipes.
- Proprietary creams may only be used when provided by the parent/carer.
- With regard to older children, the educator will ensure that their personal independence skills are promoted, with supervision if required. .
- All routines are prominently displayed in appropriate areas.
- A record is maintained of all nappies changed for the younger children and toileting accidents/changes for the older children.
- The nappy area is regularly risk assessed.
- All educators should be aware that lifting and handling is part of their daily duties. It is the responsibility of a trained person to instruct any untrained staff of the correct procedures in this area.
- A risk assessment must be written when a child needs lifting because of their toileting needs. Educators should follow the risk assessment appropriately. This will prevent injuries to both the educator and child.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Nappy Changing, Toileting & Personal Independence

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Operational Policy

At Stepping Stones Pre-school it is our aim to provide care and an early learning environment, which is tailored to each individual child's needs, in safe, secure, happy and relaxed surroundings. We adhere to The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework 2024.

We provide a place for a child to develop a strong sense of belonging and to build their self-esteem and confidence through encouragement to reach their full potential socially, physically and intellectually.

It is our aim to employ Early Years educators who are qualified in Early Years and have a high regard to their own professionalism, who wish to continue their personal development through CPD courses and to continually update their skills and keep abreast of new ideas and developments. Any unqualified staff will be strongly encouraged to undertake an appropriate qualification.

We carry out annual appraisals and regular performance reviews, which enable us to identify ongoing training requirements.

Our staff are deployed to cover the correct ratios in each area of the setting. This ensures that the children's needs are fully met as their safety and security is of paramount importance.

Our setting is organised to cater for children's needs with appropriate equipment and facilities to promote independence, confidence and intellectual growth.

We regularly evaluate our practices and make adjustments where necessary.

We consider parents/carers as partners and have an open-door policy; the child's parent/carer can phone, visit or stay at any time.

Each child is allocated a key person. The key person will build a positive and secure relationship with each child.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Operational Policy

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Pandemic Procedures:

Post Covid-19

Stepping Stones will continue to follow advice given by government and the UKHSA on how to manage in a pandemic and with contagious or other common respiratory illnesses.

Our priority throughout the pandemic and going forward, is to support children's wellbeing, and we recognise the need for children to receive face-to-face, high-quality education and childcare to support their achievements, life chances and mental and physical health. It has been highlighted that children are at a greater risk to wider harms caused through missed education rather than from covid.

Whether or not symptoms are present, young children should not be requested to test unless directed by a Health professional.

To minimise the risk of transmission and to protect the vulnerable, UKHSA recommends the following baseline measures which Stepping Stones support -

- Individuals take up the full course of vaccination offered
- Engage in regular handwashing and improved hygiene practices (catch it, kill it, bin it)
- Ensure good ventilation when inside
- In education and care settings, the need to enforce cleaning regimes.

In practice we will reinforce baseline measures to help prevent transmission and infection so that face to face education can remain a priority. Use of resources such as *E-bug* will support our education of young children to understand covid and mitigate the risks.

However, it is important that we take the following common sense measures:

- People with symptoms of a respiratory infection (including covid 19) and a high temperature, OR who feel unwell, should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people until they feel well enough to resume normal activities AND NO LONGER have a high temperature.
- We request that anyone with a positive, or possible positive covid-19 test result should try to stay at home and avoid contact with Stepping Stones for 3 days.
- Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They can go back to setting when they no longer have a high temperature and are well enough to attend.

Stepping Stones can reasonably refuse children if we feel it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19 or other communicable illnesses.

Risk Assessment & Identifying harm

We will continue to assess the risks for children in our care who have EHC plans or additional needs and ensure they are safely cared for whether in setting or at home. We will continue to work together with local agencies and services

In the case of a local outbreak, we will seek advice from UKHSA.

Control measures: We will -

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, using standard products such as detergents.
3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone

- ✓ *Hand hygiene* - Frequent and thorough hand cleaning will continue as our regular practice. We will continue to ensure that children clean their hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water or hand sanitiser.
- ✓ *Respiratory hygiene* – Our ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach continues as good practice.
- ✓ We refer to <https://e-bug.eu/home> for resources and materials to encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene.
- ✓ *Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)* - Most staff in settings will not require PPE beyond that which is normally needed for their work.

It is important for staff to recognise the need to educate young children in preventative and hygienic measures which should be embedded into their thinking and daily lives.

2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes

We have a thorough cleaning schedule in place, which includes regular cleaning of areas and equipment with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces. We use standard products such as detergents and a fogger to sanitise non-wipeable items. We refer to latest gov.uk guidance (June 2022) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19>

3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

We will keep the building well-ventilated whilst in use and between different groups. We will try to balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature, but children may need extra clothing on cold days.

Prioritising early years places

In the uncommon event of high levels of workforce absence may mean we need to restrict attendance (for example, if we are unable to operate at full capacity) we will give priority to:

- children of critical workers, and vulnerable children – some children may be vulnerable who are not officially in statutory systems and we would seek to support any children who we believe may have challenging circumstances at home
- then 3- and 4-year-olds, in particular those who will be transitioning to Reception
- followed by younger age groups

Admitting children back to the setting

In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a child with symptoms should not attend the setting; if a parent or carer insists on a child attending our setting, we can take the reasonable decision to refuse the child if we feel it is in their best interests or the interests of the other children. The setting's decision is final.

Staying in touch with parents or carers whose child is at home

If appropriate we will:

- continue to support the learning of children who cannot attend - including maintaining contact with their key person and peers
- parents and carers can be supported to provide a positive learning environment at home. Resources for home learning can be found at:
 - ✓ [Hungry Little Minds](#) - provides simple fun, activities for kids aged 0 to 5 for parents to do at home with children to support their early learning
 - ✓ [BBC Tiny Happy People](#) - activities for babies, toddlers and children
 - ✓ [Words for Life](#)



Wellbeing and support

It is possible to experience a variety of emotions in response to a pandemic or other serious illness - such as anxiety, stress or low mood. We will liaise with families and monitor individual children for issues where we may need to provide more focused support. The same applies to staff and we will support members of staff with their wellbeing and mental health.

It is important that all staff have regular opportunities to discuss any concerns and issues with management. Wellbeing interviews will continue to be conducted with staff where they have been absent due to serious illness or because of closure due to a pandemic. All staff have received information and signposting to useful wellbeing resources. Further useful info from MindEd can be accessed at [coronavirus staff resilience tips](#) with advice and tips for frontline staff. Regular supervision meetings enable staff to discuss any concerns or issues relating to mental health and well-being.

There will be no charge for children unable to take up their place due to any pandemic related reasons

Public liability insurance

We have appropriate insurance with Morton Michel.

Review Checklist for Policy for: Pandemic Procedures

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
February 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
April 22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
December 22	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Parents as Partners Policy

The Stepping Stones Pre-school team will work with parents/carers as partners, ensuring we provide the most appropriate care and education for their children. We believe that children benefit most from the setting when parents/carers and staff work together in partnership.

We will ensure that we recognise and support parents/carers as their children's first educators and are committed to an ongoing dialogue with parents/carers to improve our knowledge of the individual needs of children.

We develop a partnership with parents/carers based on shared responsibility, understanding, mutual respect and honest dialogue.

- All parents/carers are welcome to visit the setting at any time.
- We welcome parents/carers to share their skills and talents with us, for example, reading a story in their first language.
- We will inform parents/carers of any relevant training or workshops to support their own professional development.
- Parents/carers have access to their child's records at all times and are consulted in respect of the care given. They will be informed of their child's progress on a regular basis and will have constant access to their child's learning journey.
- Information about setting activities and events is regularly distributed.
- In compliance with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements we ensure that all the required policies are in place.
- Parents/carers are able to inspect all policies and procedures of the setting at any time and these are available on our website.
- We encourage parents to share what they know about their child and use this information to inform our provision.
- Parents/carers have access to and will be informed of the systems for complaints procedures.
- We ensure that parents are fully involved in any changes that occur and are encouraged to contribute any ideas and suggestions.
- We recruit parents/carers views through annual questionnaires and through provision of a prominently displayed suggestion box. Parents are encouraged to join the Committee to enable them to give their views and to help shape the group.

Change of Details

Parents/carers are required to notify the setting as soon as possible in writing of any change of address, phone numbers, allergies and doctor's details. It is in the child's interest that all details are kept up to date at all times.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Parents as Partners

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Payment & Fees Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Contract.

At Stepping Stones Pre-school we endeavour to be flexible, however in order to maintain high standards the following must be adhered to:

GENERAL ADMISSIONS

- Sending your child to Stepping Stones is an agreement to abide by our policies and procedures and to pay all fees due promptly. Late payment will incur an Admin fee.
- Fees are payable promptly **in advance**. You will receive an invoice each month.
- Please pay fees via BACS payment where possible. We also accept cheque, cash or childcare vouchers. We are signed up to Tax free childcare. Please speak to a member of staff for more information.
- Fees are payable for each complete session a child is enrolled to attend. The rate is subject to an annual review and as from September 2025 is £35 per day or £20 for a morning session (9-12)
- A full calendar month's notice is required to reduce sessions or remove a child from the setting; alternatively, one month's fees are required.
- Fees are payable for Term Time only but do not include bank holidays or staff inset days.
- Any fees outstanding when a child leaves, will require payment in full. If this is not forthcoming the payment will be pursued through the county court if necessary.
- Fees are payable during periods of absence, including sickness and family holidays.
- Fees are reviewed and adjusted as necessary. Parents/carers are informed at least one month in advance of any increase.
- No session can be swapped for another. Extra sessions, if available, will be charged for at the full day rate.
- We reserve the right to charge a late collection fee of £5 per 15 minutes or part thereof, after the expected collection time, with a flat fee of £30 after 45 minutes plus a further £10 for every 15 minutes thereafter.
- A child will be eligible for universal free entitlement the term following their third birthday. All hours exceeding the free entitlement will be charged at the hourly rate.
- Stepping Stones Pre-school operates a 38-week term, with closures of two weeks at Christmas, two weeks at Easter and six weeks in the summer, with 3 half-term breaks of a week. Exact dates are available on request. A further week is added on to one of the longer holidays to achieve 38 weeks. Please note, the primary school year is 39 weeks.
- A term's notice is required to change sessions.
- Session times are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 9-2pm & Weds 9-12 noon

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Fees & Payment

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
December 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
26.08.25	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Safer Recruitment Policy

New staff will be employed in line with Safer Recruitment guidelines and EYFS requirements 2025

Before any staff recruitment, at least one member of the interview panel will have been properly trained in Safer Recruitment.

At Stepping Stones Pre-school we understand and respect the importance of safeguarding children and that part of our duty of care is to ensure we appoint staff who are the most suitable.

We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.

We ensure that every prospective employee's DBS disclosures and references are checked before they start work to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

- All educational and ancillary staff will have a defined job description, which is made available to applicants prior to completing an application form.
- Whilst a CV is a useful tool in assessing suitability, a full application form must be completed prior to interview.
- Verbal references may be sought prior to interview, or if the candidate has been asked for a supervised stay and play session;
- once Stepping Stones select a suitable candidate for a position, this will be subject to 2 satisfactory written references from previous employers **before** employment with Stepping Stones can commence.
- All references must be completed by a senior person with appropriate authority.
- Open references, e.g: *to whom it may concern* are not acceptable.
- If the candidate is not currently working with children, we will secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children.
- Where a candidate has never worked with children then a reference must be from current employer, training provider or education setting, along with a personal written testimony (not from a family member).
- Candidates should not supply their own references
- References should be verified and personal references followed up via telephone call.
- Compare information on reference with application form and probe any discrepancies with candidate
- All gaps in employment history will be scrutinised and rigorously explored.
- Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post
- Ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- Probing questions (value based) will be asked of the candidate in order to best judge their views and opinions. In addition, site-specific questions will also be asked of the candidate.
- Recent updates to KCSIE state that online and social media checks should be conducted as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates, unless there is good reason not to.
- All appointments will be carried out by a minimum of two members of the management team.
- All prospective and current staff are informed that they have to disclose convictions, etc. before and during employment.
- Confidential records are kept on staff qualification, identity checks, DBS.
- It is good practice for potential employees to be seen at least two to three times prior to taking up a position with the nursery. All staff are employed on a three-month probation period to ensure they maintain high standards of care and support to children. We provide staff with a handbook and induction training in the first week of employment. This induction includes our health and safety policy and safeguarding children procedures. Other policies and procedures will be introduced within an induction plan.

- Where staff are being promoted within the organisation, this should be subject to suitability interview with Manager/Committee, approval from Ofsted (where needed) and holding of appropriate qualifications and current enhanced DBS. New references are not required.

- requiring 2 suitable *verified* references and employment checks before an offer of employment is made. (Suitable means do not accept open references, e.g: *to whom it may concern*)
- *Not rely on applicants to obtain their own reference*
- *Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer, training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority*
- *Not accept references from a family member*
- *Obtain verification of the individuals most recent relevant period of employment where not currently employed*
- *Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children). If the applicant has never worked with children then reference must be from current employer, training provider or education setting*
- *Compare information on reference with application form and probe any discrepancies with candidate*
- *Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post*
- *Ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.*

- CV's are not accepted without a completed Application form and any gaps in employment are probed.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Safer Recruitment

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
June 2024	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Settling in Policy

We understand that children are unique, and the amount of time they take to settle at Stepping Stones Pre-school may differ. It is our responsibility to make children feel welcome, safe and secure. Please see the key person policy for our commitment to child - educator relationships and keeping children emotionally and physically safe.

The setting staff will work in partnership with parents/carers to help settle the child into the setting environment.

- When the setting accepts a child, arrangements will be made for a 'Visit' session where the child can familiarise him/herself with the setting with a parent/carer present. During this visit the parent/carer will be requested to complete regulatory paperwork which is required before any child can be left at Stepping Stones. After the paperwork has been completed parents/carers are welcome to stay until they feel their son/daughter is feeling happy and secure, then leave for a short time before returning. This is different for all children and we do not operate a one size fits all policy.
- When a child stays by themselves for the first time, Staff will telephone the parent/carer of new children to give an update and reassure parents.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Settling in

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol & Drugs Policy

All staff should be made aware of the provisions of this policy in their induction, including the importance of setting a positive example for children. Any contravention of this policy will lead to disciplinary action.

Drugs or Alcohol

Staff, visitors, students or volunteers who arrive at Stepping Stones Pre-school clearly under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be asked to leave immediately and disciplinary procedures will be implemented. If staff are found in possession of illegal drugs or alcohol disciplinary procedures will be put in place.

In cases where staff are taking prescribed drugs, which may affect their working efficiency, the staff member must inform the manager as soon as possible. Staff medication will be stored safely in a suitable place, outside of children's reach.

If a member of staff has a good reason to suspect a parent/carer is under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they drop off or collect their child they have a duty to inform the manager. In such circumstances the manager must decide the best course of action to safeguard the child. Where an illegal act is suspected to have taken place the police will be called.

Smoking and Vaping

Smoking and vaping is not allowed on the premises. Staff cannot smoke in the vicinity of the setting and not in uniform. On entering the setting, they must wash their hands thoroughly. Staff, visitors, volunteers and students must never smoke directly in front of the children. Staff are not permitted to smoke when they are on a trip or outing.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol & Drugs

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Social Networking Policy

In light of recent high-profile cases and with regard to safeguarding all the children in our care the Stepping Stones Pre-school management team has decided to issue the following guidelines.

With regard to the use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and similar, whilst employed by the setting (including maternity leave) staff, including students and volunteers, MUST be VERY aware of what they are posting and that inappropriate matter will result in disciplinary proceedings including termination of employment in some cases. This also includes supporting unsuitable posts and/or comments.

All staff, including students and volunteers, employed by the setting have a duty of confidentiality at all times. They represent their setting community and as such could inadvertently post unsuitable comments or, for example, staff photos from nights out that could be misrepresented or display the setting in an unfavourable way. Thus, staff, including students and volunteers, must not post anything on these sites that may offend any other member of staff, parent/carer or child. They must not post anything on to a social networking site that refers to their employment at the setting or working in the Early Years profession. They must ensure that their level of security inhibits access to anyone other than accepted contacts.

Staff, including students and volunteers, must remember that social networking sites are highly visible.

Staff, including students and volunteers, employed by the setting are professional and must ensure they keep their home life and work life separate. Any of the above points not adhered to will result in the staff member in question facing disciplinary action and/or the termination of their contract with the setting.

Parents who are contacts of staff on social network sites must be directed to contact Stepping Stones directly if they have any questions about the setting or sessions.

Staff must not privately message parents or carers regarding Stepping Stones issues. Should a parent / carer message a member of staff regarding Stepping Stones issues then they must be redirected to our website, Facebook page or requested to email or telephone. This is to ensure that the information given is correct and consistent.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Social Networking

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Staff Babysitting Policy

If a parent has an arrangement whereby a staff member looks after a child outside the setting hours, this is a private arrangement undertaken by the parent and the staff member concerned. As such, Stepping Stones Pre-school's confidentiality MUST be maintained at all times. Failure to do so could lead to the staff member's dismissal.

Stepping Stones takes no responsibility in any form for this private arrangement and Parents are responsible for undertaking their own due diligence when sourcing any babysitter, including a member of Stepping Stones' staff.

If the staff member is to take a child out of the setting at the end of their session, the manager needs written parental permission before this occurs.

The staff member and child will not be covered under the setting insurance for any private arrangements and the setting takes no responsibility for this arrangement.

However, if a member of staff is concerned about the child at any time (child protection/safeguarding), they must without delay contact the local children's services.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Babysitting

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Staffing, Disciplinary & Employment Policy

Staffing

Stepping Stones Pre-school provides a staff: child ratio to ensure that all children have sufficient individual care and attention, and to guarantee care and education of a high quality.

Staff are appropriately qualified, with a sector specific qualification deemed to be full and relevant. Staff must hold a current enhanced DBS check in accordance with Ofsted's requirements, and following EYFS 2025 safeguarding requirements they must hold a current Paediatric first aid certificate in order to be counted in the staff ratio.

Aim

To ensure that children and their parents are offered high quality Early Years education.

Methods To meet this aim

We use the following ratios of adult to child:

- Children aged two to three years of age: One adult to five children.
- Children aged three to five plus years of age: One adult to eight children.

- Minimum of two staff/adults are on duty at any one time.
- We use a key person system to ensure each child has a particular member of staff for discussion and consultation.
- We hold regular staff meetings and team meetings to review the efficacy of the curriculum and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any difficulties, which may arise from time to time.
- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All of our staff have received a job description, which sets out their roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, regardless of marital status, age, gender, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. We do not place applicants at a disadvantage by imposing conditions which are not justifiable.
- Staff are employed on a three-month probation period to ensure they maintain high standards of care and support to children or to carry out their terms of work. This probation period may be extended for further periods of time if deemed to be required.
- Where applicable staff hold Early Years qualifications in line with the *Regulated Qualifications Framework* (2015) (qualifications can be searched at <https://www.gov.uk/find-a-regulated-qualification>) [accessed August 2025]
- New staff will be employed in line with Safer Recruitment guidelines and EYFS requirements 2025
 - requiring 2 suitable *verified* references and employment checks before an offer of employment is made. (Suitable means do not accept open references, e.g: *to whom it may concern*)
 - *Not rely on applicants to obtain their own reference*
 - *Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer, training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority*
 - *Not accept references from a family member*
 - *Obtain verification of the individuals most recent relevant period of employment where not currently employed*
 - *Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children). If the applicant has never worked with children then reference must be from current employer, training provider or education setting*
 - *Compare information on reference with application form and probe any discrepancies with candidate*
 - *Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post*
 - *Ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.*

- CV's are not accepted without a completed Application form and any gaps in employment are probed.
- This does not apply to internal promotion as staff suitability and DBS checks are subject to continuous appraisal
- The setting allocates resources to training and we provide regular in-service training to all staff.
- We provide staff induction training in the first week of employment. This induction includes our health and safety policy and safeguarding children procedures (more details can be found in these policies)
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervisions and appraisals.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- Stepping Stones Pre-school aims to encourage all staff in various ways to promote good attendance, conduct and to evaluate their own performance. Staff are encouraged to be involved in the running of the setting and feel that they are part of a team.

Disciplinary Procedure At Stepping Stones Pre-school

We recognise that employment law can change rapidly and as such we will always follow the latest legislation. All staff are issued with an employee handbook and should refer to this as necessary.

Intent

It is our intent to deal with all disciplinary matters quickly and fairly for all parties. All matters will be recorded and both parties will have copies.

Procedure

The procedure is designed to establish facts quickly and to deal consistently with disciplinary issues. No disciplinary action will be taken until the matter has been fully investigated.

- At every stage the staff member will be advised of the nature of the complaint or concern.
- The staff member will be given the opportunity to state his or her own case, and be represented or accompanied by a fellow employee of their choice. A staff member will not be dismissed for a first breach of discipline, except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will normally be dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice.
- A staff member has the right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them. The procedure may be implemented at any stage if the alleged misconduct warrants such action. The manager will make every effort to resolve the matter informally, only where this fails will disciplinary action be taken. Disciplinary action will take the form of a pre-disciplinary meeting where all parties can put their points across; the staff member may be accompanied by a colleague. If the matter can still not be resolved, then the partners will take the next step in the disciplinary procedure to issue a written warning.

Written Warning

This will state the reason/s for the written warning and note that if there is no improvement after a given period (e.g. four weeks or three months), a final written warning will be given. It will also state the right to appeal. A copy of this first written warning will be kept on file for six months and then removed if the company is satisfied with subsequent conduct and/or performance.

Final Written Warning

This will be issued if the matter is still not resolved, or attendance or performance has not improved. The final written warning will be given making it clear that any recurrence of the offence or other serious misconduct within a period of three months will result in dismissal. A copy of this final written warning will be kept on file for 12 months, subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance.

Dismissal

Where there is no satisfactory improvement or if further serious misconduct occurs, the staff member will be dismissed.

Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct includes the following offences:

- Any action relating to the care of a child which in the opinion of the manager or deputy has put the child in danger or breached our duty of care to the child. This would include consistently shouting at a child or group of children, which whilst clearly not a potential cause of danger can cause both emotional and psychological distress, is not acceptable within the setting and as such is considered gross misconduct. Where appropriate, the LADO will be contacted in matters relating to staff conduct towards children.
- Theft, fraud, deliberate falsification of company documents.
- Fighting, assaulting another person.
- Deliberate damage to company property.
- Sexual or racial harassment.
- Being unfit for work through alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Gross negligence.
- Gross insubordination.

This list is an example only. While the alleged gross misconduct is being investigated, the staff member may be suspended, during which time the normal hourly rate will be paid. Such suspension is not to be regarded as a form of disciplinary action and will be for as short a period as possible. Any decision to dismiss will be taken only after a full investigation. If it is found that an act of gross misconduct has been committed, the staff member will be dismissed without notice or payment in lieu. Any appeal against a disciplinary decision must be in writing within five working days of the decision being communicated.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Staffing, Disciplinary & Employment

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
June 2024	Dale Richards	Committee secretary	
June 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Students & Volunteers Policy

Stepping Stones Pre-school recognises that the quality of care and activities we offer make an ideal place for students on placement, whether from schools or college childcare courses. We welcome students under the following conditions:

- Students and volunteers will only be offered a place following discussion with a tutor from their place of learning.
- All students and volunteers need to undergo induction training upon starting at the setting.
- All students and volunteers will need to have up-to-date clearance from the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS).
- The manager will need to understand the requirements of the course that the student is taking, as far as possible, in order to provide the opportunity to experience the most relevant aspects of setting life.
- The manager will complete reports and assist the student in achieving their target.
- Students will undergo an induction with the manager to ensure they are aware of Stepping Stones Pre-school's high professional expectations. The manager will enter into a formal written agreement with students and volunteers at the start of the placement agreeing hours of work, dress code and expected behaviour within the setting. Students and volunteers must read and sign the conditions before making a commitment to voluntary work.
- Students and volunteers must never be left alone with any children. All activities will be supervised by a member of staff.
- Any information gained by the student or volunteers either verbally or written must remain confidential.
- Written parental permission must be sought before an observation or child study occurs.
- Stepping Stones can take a maximum of two students or volunteers at a time.
- Students and volunteers on placement should not be counted within the staff to children ratio, **with the exception of** suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) who may be included in the ratios at the level below their level of study, if the we are satisfied that they are competent and responsible and if they hold a valid and current PFA qualification.
- Students and volunteers are encouraged to ask if they have any queries about the setting, its policies and practices.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Students & Volunteers

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Sun Protection Policy

At Stepping Stones, we understand the dangers posed to children and staff from over-exposure to the sun and we want everyone to enjoy the sun safely. All children are at risk from the harmful rays which cause skin cancer, regardless of skin type or how easily they burn. This policy explains the steps we take to ensure sun safety.

Please note: We are required to keep children safe and prevent harm to them.

Stepping Stones' policy is that during sunny weather:

- Parents/carers **MUST** put sun cream on their child before they arrive at the setting, as it needs to be applied at least 20 minutes before exposure to the sun.
- Sun cream should be *at least* Factor 30 with 4 stars of UVA protection in line with NHS recommendations. (Factor 50 with 5 stars for UVA & UVB protection is best). We will assume that ALL children come into the setting protected with sun cream at the start of their session.
- Additionally, staff will apply sun cream to the children as necessary later in the day to ensure their protection.
Parents/carers must supply their own sun cream, this is for the sole use of their child and should be clearly named (in a named plastic bag if necessary).
- You must give written permission if you would like us to do this.
- It is a good idea to encourage more capable and older children to begin to do this for themselves.
- Parents/carers are also reminded that their child will be required to wear a suitable sun hat before going outdoors – preferably with additional protection for the neck. We do have some spare hats that are available to give to children who do not have their own but they may not cover the neck. To set a good example, Staff are encouraged to wear hats when sunny outside.

In exceptional circumstances, if this policy is not followed children will only be able to play outdoors if they are wearing clothes which cover most of their skin – EG: light clothing with long sleeves and long trousers.

In hot weather staff will ensure there is plenty of drinking water available both inside and outside. Children will be encouraged to drink water frequently. Staff should ensure that there are also shady areas in the outdoor area.

Staff will discuss the importance of sun protection with all children at the beginning of the summer term and repeat as appropriate.

Staff will make sure that the time is limited for children to be outside during peak times during hot periods.

NHS states (<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>) [accessed June 2025]

Take extra care to protect babies and children. Their skin is much more sensitive than adult skin, and damage caused by repeated exposure to sunlight could lead to skin cancer developing in later life. From March to October in the UK, children should:

- cover up with suitable clothing
- spend time in the shade, particularly from 11am to 3pm
- wear at least SPF30 sunscreen

Apply sunscreen to areas not protected by clothing, such as the face, ears, feet and backs of hands.

To ensure they get enough vitamin D, all [children under 5 are advised to take vitamin D supplements](#). (June 2025)

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Sun Protection

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2024	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Supervision Policy

Statement of Intent

At Stepping Stones Pre-school we recognise that supporting staff is essential to their well-being and to their long-term personal and professional development. We wholeheartedly agree with the Plymouth Review and the following recommendations:

- 6.4 Encourage open discussions amongst the staff group about good and poor practice and facilitate constructive challenge of each other
- 8.15 All Early Years teams to have regular supervision which always includes a safeguarding element

During staff supervision as well as in more general situations the following is discussed sensitively, openly and professionally:

- Workload (amount, time, duties etc.)
- Concerns/team issues (worker relationships, well-being in work and out of work, rotas, new ideas, areas of work, safeguarding, children and families).

We make sure to discuss within Supervision, as stated within the EYFS;

- Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being, including child protection concerns
- Identify solutions to address issues as they arise
- Receive coaching to improve

Supervision can take place in many forms, such as coaching, training, support or 'checking-in'. We recognise the value of regular, face-to-face, personal supervision of staff by the manager. Therefore, staff will have face-to-face supervision sessions, the frequency and length determined by how long they have been in post, their qualifications, experience and whether there are any personal or professional concerns that need to be discussed. Managers must discuss safeguarding and staff well-being during the one-to-one supervision sessions. The manager and the staff member will record and date any actions which will be kept in the staff members' file.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Supervision

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Supporting Children with their Behaviour Policy

We recognise that children's behaviour is a form of communication. We also recognise that children need the skills to manage and self-regulate their behaviour. At Stepping Stones Pre-school we aim to support children to regulate their feelings and behaviour - in line with their personal, social and emotional development - until they are able to self-regulate. This strongly links to British values.

Children's behaviour is supported through daily activities, experiences, routines and boundaries - for example ensuring that children are sat down when eating, and also by providing suitable equipment and resources.

We use carpet time and circle time to discuss how children are feeling and to help children to vocalise boundaries within the setting.

We treat every child's behaviour based on their age, stage and ability. With this in mind, educators have a sound grasp of child development, which helps them ascertain how to respond to children and their behaviour.

The Manager, together with the SENCO (Rose Brisland) are responsible for children's behaviour.

The manager or deputy shall ensure that the parents/carers are fully informed about the support that the setting has given their child.

Corporal punishment (slapping, smacking, or shaking) will never be acceptable practices and will not be used, neither will shaming or humiliating a child.

It may be necessary, on very rare occasions, to use restraining actions to prevent personal injury or serious damage, for example, in an emergency. These incidents will be recorded and shared with the child or children's parents/carers, who will countersign. Ofsted will be notified of serious incidents. Parents/carers should feel free to discuss any concerns they may have with the manager. All matters will be treated in the strictest confidence.

If we are concerned about a child's behaviour, we will reference our safeguarding and child protection policy and inclusion and disabilities policy, to make sure that we are fully supporting every child. We will carry out robust observations of the child throughout the day, identifying any triggers, which will be recorded and shared with parents/carers. This will help educators to further support the child. Depending on the behaviour, we use a range of strategies.

Inappropriate language/swearing:

- Explain that the language should not be used in the setting.
- Model / Describe positively with the children the language that they should use.
- Make use of key person time to discuss appropriate language.
- Record and speak to parents if need be.

Gun play and superhero

- Support children with this and have discussions on 'safe play'.
- Support children to give them the 'language' they need to discuss with other children if they do not want to be included.

Sharing and conflict

Stepping Stones has the motto *sharing and caring*. We regularly discuss the notion of sharing and taking turns and remind children to communicate respectfully with each other. We discuss *kind hands, kind hearts and kind thoughts*. Alongside this, staff use observation and skilful intervention to reduce conflict, for example an intervention may take the following process:

- 1: Approach quickly and calmly stopping any hurtful behaviour
- 2: Acknowledge feelings
- 3: Gather information
- 4: Restate the problem
- 5: Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together
- 6: Give follow-up support

Other points to consider:

The educator should role model appropriate language and describe acceptable behaviour -

- Describe the situation.
- I like the way that you are sitting.
- I have noticed that you walked over to the sand tray and put back the shovel.
- You look sad, would you like to tell me what the matter is?

Self regulation

Children are taught calming and breathing techniques through practices such as Yoga, and also to find a safe space in which they can calm themselves. Other techniques to support desired behaviour include giving children a choice in everyday activities: For example: Would you like an apple or a banana?

Self-protection and assertiveness:

We support children to protect themselves, linking with the setting's safeguarding and child protection policy.

- Please stop touching my hair, I don't like it.
- Please can I have my jumper back?

Uncooperative children:

- Listening to children.
- Warning that an activity or experience will change is helpful (how many minutes/ egg timers help).
- Identify children and give support to those who find change difficult.

Biting:

- Firmly say stop.
- Staff will take into consideration the age, stage and ability of the child.
- Pay full attention to the child who has been bitten.
- Give appropriate first aid.
- Record as an incident.
- Use one-on-one time and key person time to show gentle behaviour.

Melt down/tantrums:

- It is important to note that children who are experiencing a meltdown are supported safely and that they cannot harm themselves or others. Try not to reason with the child at this stage.
- Offer a cuddle.
- Once the child has calmed down and if there has been destructiveness, gently discuss with the child how they may help to clear up.

Upset and distressed children:

- Be mindful of children who are settling, experiencing separation and/or a personal family issue as these can affect children's well-being and/or behaviour.
- Key person to be aware and offer appropriate attention and TLC if need be. Discuss with parents' strategies or personal items that offer comfort. Identify the needs of the child and what might help the child. Communication between parents and setting can be helpful in addressing the child's needs.

ABC approach:

We use the ABC approach to identify triggers:

- Antecedents • Behaviour • Consequences

The key person will observe and record children's behaviour in a variety of situations if there is a concern, and share with parents/carers, the colleague who is responsible for behaviour and other professionals if appropriate.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Stepping Stones Pre-school regards bullying of any description as a unique issue. Within this policy for the setting, we expect that everyone will regard each other with respect, whether the individuals are staff, parents/carers or children. Bullying takes many forms, some of which are indicated below, all of which will be challenged and dealt with in an appropriate manner:

- Actual physical assault
- Threatening physical assault
- Criticism and making derogatory comments
- Ostracising individuals
- Keeping silent when an individual approaches
- On-line abuse / cyber bullying
- Prejudice based and/or discriminatory bullying

KCSiE (updated annually) specifically mentions sexual harassment and although this is rare in early years settings, we nevertheless have regard and due vigilance for it. It also remains a potential issue between staff and adults.

Supporting Children With Their Behaviour

Where a child or children are the instigators of bullying, the setting should make use of the **“behavioural statements”** approach. This depends on the age and level of emotional understanding of the children involved. Children respond more to factual information rather than an adult assuming they understand how someone else feels. Making a statement such as: “You hit Joshua”. “He is hurt”. “He is crying because he is hurt” will have more impact because it is a matter of fact, rather than asking the child how they would feel if it happened to them. Children need to understand that any behaviour has a consequence. Naming emotions helps children to understand their feelings and supporting self-regulation helps children to control unwanted behaviour.

If bullying takes the form of criticism or making fun of an individual, again, the behaviour will be challenged and dealt with in a similar manner as physical threats. Stepping Stones Pre-school takes any kind of bullying seriously and all staff will be trained to identify and challenge it appropriately. The long-term consequences of bullying on the self-esteem and confidence of children and adults *is* serious and will be treated as such.

At no time will a child:

- receive any form of corporal punishment
- be shouted at or intimidated
- be made to appear foolish
- be made to feel bad or devalued
- be deprived of drink or food
- be isolated away from the group or be on their own.

There will be no naughty chair or place in the setting. We do not use ‘time out’ and use a ‘time in’ approach. If a child is continuously disruptive this should be brought to the attention of the manager who will meet the parent/carer and agree a plan of action whereby everyone works in partnership to encourage positive behaviour.

Behaviour towards Staff

Staff should not feel scared or intimidated whilst carrying out their work. It is expected that parents and visitors will be respectful towards staff and offensive, rude or inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. The setting also takes a very serious view of any adult who threatens staff (verbally, or in writing) or actually carries out a physical assault on another person.

Where offensive, rude, or threatening behaviour or assault takes place

- A member of staff will be instantly dismissed if they are the instigator.
- A parent/carer will be informed that they are no longer welcome at the setting and that another person must be named to drop off and collect their child
- If the situation persists or staff are concerned, then at the Manager's discretion, the parent/carer will be informed that they may no longer use the setting for their child's care. In the event of physical assault then the police will be informed.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Supporting children with their behaviour

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
October 9 th 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Uncollected Child Procedure

Stepping Stones Pre-school puts the safety of the children first, from the moment they arrive to the moment they leave. At the end each session the setting will make sure that each child is collected by a responsible adult as permitted on the child's registration form.

If any children are not collected at the end of the session the following procedure will be put into place:

The manager should contact the parent/carer, or other designated adult, and use the emergency contact details on the child's form. The manager should leave messages on any answer-phones asking the person to get in contact with the setting immediately, leaving the setting's telephone number. While waiting to be collected the child must be supervised by staff who should support and reassure the child. If contact with a designated adult has not been achieved within one hour, the duty social worker should be contacted

on: 01452 426565 (Children & Families Front door desk)

Out of hours: 01452 614194. (leave message & someone will call back)

A child left uncollected at the setting remains in the charge of the Manager or appointed member of staff. That responsibility can only be discharged by passing the child into the care of another appropriate adult or into the care of the local social services. The statutory responsibility for the child at risk rests with the Children's Services Department. The response of Children's Services in an emergency will vary, depending on the details of each case. If it is not possible to secure practical assistance within a reasonable period, the police should be contacted. The police should be able to offer support, but not take charge of the child.

If the setting building ceases to be available, the parent/carer or alternative carer and social services should be made aware that the child and a member of staff will be waiting at the local police station.

One member of staff must stay with the child until an authorised adult arrives at the police station to collect him/her. The manager should then attempt to leave a phone message with the parents/ carers if the child has been taken to a child protection agency or to the police station.

A note should be left on the door of the building informing the parent/carer in case they turn up.

Under no circumstances must a member of staff take a child to their own home, or leave the site with a child (unless taking the child to the police station). Incidents of late collection will be recorded by the manager in the incident book, and reported to the committee. The manager must discuss the lateness with the parent/carer and highlight the fact that continued lateness could result in the loss of their child's place at the setting,

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Uncollected child

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Visits & Outings Procedure

Walks within the local environment may occasionally take place as a learning experience and parents/carers will be informed of these. Permission for such trips is given on the Registration form when children enrol.

Prior to a visit outside of the local area, a member of staff will carry out an exploratory visit of the proposed destination to evaluate any potential difficulties. The manager will ensure that a thorough risk assessment for the outing is completed and signed at the very least 1 week before the outing is to take place. This should take into consideration the journey and transport involved.

Staff will involve children, when possible, in the planning of outings. Staff will explain to the children the objectives of the event and what is expected of them on the outing.

It is a good idea to take a group photograph of the children before leaving the premises as this could aid in any identification if necessary

Parental Consent

The manager or appointed member of staff is responsible for collecting parental consent forms for each child who will be attending the outing. The parents/carers will be given information on the cost, where the outing is going, what the children will be doing when they get there, the mode of transport being used, any special clothing needed and the times of the trip.

Children will be asked to wear Stepping Stones uniform on that day, if they do not have their own then Stepping Stones may request that the parent/carer allows their child to borrow uniform from our stores. This will be returned to us after the trip.

Parental consents are required for any activity where the children have to leave the setting and parents/carers have the absolute right to withhold consent for a proposed visit or outing. Parent/carer Contact Details for the day of the outing will be written and these will be taken on the day by the member of staff in charge.

Morning of Outing

Prior to the commencement of the outing all children will wear a name identity badge on which the name of the setting, address and telephone number are clearly written.

The children should have a pre-outing talk (age and stage appropriate), which should include the following topics:

- Which member of staff is in charge of which children.
- How to behave and what to do on different types of transport.
- Behaviour while out on the visit.
- To always stay with their member of staff and not to wander off.

The manager must nominate a member of staff to be in charge of the trip.

All members of staff on the trip must be informed of the names of all children for whom they have direct responsibility.

The manager should also discuss the following issues with staff prior to the outing:

- In cases of incidents, the setting (manager and/or senior person) should be contacted first and then parents/carers.
- Staff should make sure that children are secure and safe on various modes of transport.
- How to keep the children safe when walking to a venue.
- To return to the setting if a venue appears unsafe.
- Toilet issues.

The person in charge of the trip should ensure that the names of all the children and their parent contact details are listed on the outing form, along with staff details. The staff must have adequate funds for emergencies and phone calls. The setting mobile phone will be taken by the member of staff in charge and parents will be reminded of the phone number in writing.

Children must have all that they need for the outing e.g. packed lunch boxes, coats etc.

The staff must all have the relevant paperwork for the children.

One member of staff is to be responsible for the first aid box.

Outing logs include:

- Who is the leader of the outing.
- Manager or deputy must give signed permission for the outing.
- Time and date of departure, estimated return time, time and date of actual return.
- Names of staff and children.
- Brief description of what the children are wearing.
- Setting identity badge.
- Mobile phone.
- Named paediatric first aiders.
- First aid kit and evaluation.
- Action of outing.

During Visits and Outings

- Children will remain under close supervision at all times.
- The person in charge will ensure that they have a full first aid kit that complies with the Health and Safety Policy.
- Two designated members of staff will have their mobile phones with them in case there is no signal on the staff mobile. Their numbers must also be left with the manager in case of the need for emergency contact.
- A register must be taken at the beginning, middle and end of the outing, with regular head counts throughout the day.

On visits and outings the number of staff required will be as follows:

Outings considered a low risk:

This category includes visits to the theatre, museum or other educational or cultural centres, such as historic buildings where there are no physical activities or proximity to water and where travel will be on foot or by hired or public transport. Minimum of two staff per outing – and according to required ratios.

Outings considered a high risk (involving hazardous activities):

This category includes visits to recreational and educational activity centres, such as farms, theme parks, fun fairs and seaside. Minimum of three staff per outing. When on a visit to the seaside it is recommended that unless the ratio of adult to child is one to one, no child should be allowed to paddle (up to the child's ankle) in the sea. Under no circumstances should children be allowed to swim in the sea.

Travel Arrangements for Outings

The adult-child ratio will be determined by the mode of transport e.g. bus, train or coach and by the activity to be undertaken at the destination. 'Outings considered being a low and high risk' should be referred to.

If the manager is in doubt as to the ratio that should be used for a specific outing, they should discuss the situation with all staff and the Chair of the committee .

It is recommended to complete an 'Outings Evaluation' at the end of the outing, stating how it went and any issues that need to be considered for future reference.

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Visits & Outings

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Whistle Blowing Policy

This policy and the procedure applies to Staff, Students and Volunteers (although legislation only refers to 'workers').

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, commonly called the Whistleblowing Act, provides protection for staff who disclose information on wrongdoing at work that might otherwise be seen as confidential.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will faithfully serve his or her employer and not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. However, where an individual discovers information that is believed to show malpractice or wrongdoing within Stepping Stones Pre-school, then this information should be disclosed without fear of reprisal and may be made independently of line management and the setting. Staff are made aware of this during their induction and a copy of this policy is included in the staff handbook.

If staff have concerns, they can contact Ofsted

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted/about/complaints-procedure>

It should be emphasised that this policy is intended to assist individuals who believe they have discovered malpractice or impropriety. It is not designed for the questioning of financial or business decisions taken by the setting, nor may it be used to reconsider any matters that have already been addressed under harassment, complaint or disciplinary procedures. **It is expected that staff will use this policy rather than air their complaints outside the setting.**

The setting will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the individual making the allegation may be kept confidential as long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the evidence required. This policy encourages individuals to put their name to any disclosures they make. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered at the discretion of the setting owner.

Procedures for Making a Disclosure

The individual should usually make the disclosure to their designated manager or deputy. If the concern is in regard to either of the above, then the disclosure should be made to the Chair of the Committee. This person will consider the information made available to them and decide on the form of investigation to be undertaken. Normally the person making this decision will take into account the views of at least one other member of staff. The decision may be:

- to investigate the matter internally
- to refer the matter to the police.

If the decision is that investigations should be conducted by more than one of these means, the designated person should be satisfied that such a course of action is warranted, the possibility of double jeopardy notwithstanding. Investigations should not be carried out by the person who will have to reach a decision on the matter. Any investigation will be conducted as sensitively and speedily as possible.

As a result of this investigation other internal procedures may be invoked, such as:

- Disciplinary
- Grievance or complaints
- Harassment
- Or it might form the basis of a special investigation.

In some instances, it might be necessary to refer the matter to an external authority for further investigation. In particular, cases alleging fraud. The designated person will inform the individual making the disclosure what action, if any, is to be taken. If no action is to be taken then the individual concerned should be informed of the reason for this and allowed the opportunity to remake the disclosure to another appropriate person. The person or persons against whom a disclosure is made will be told of it, the evidence supporting it and will be allowed to comment before any investigation is concluded or further action commenced. A report of all disclosures and any subsequent actions taken will be made by the designated person, who will retain such reports for a specified period of time. We are aware of the NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line for professionals <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/> or telephone 08000280285 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9-6 Sat/Sun

All staff are provided with a copy of the Whistleblowing Policy in the Staff Handbook and reminded that it is available under the *Policies* section of the Stepping Stones website.

If staff believe that involvement from local authority designated officer (LADO) is required, information can be sought from <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-young-people-and-families/the-role-of-the-lado-the-allegations-management-process/> [accessed August 2025]

Review Checklist for Policy for:

Whistleblowing

Review Date	Name	Position	Signature
September 2021	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
December 2022	Allison Brisland	Manager	
May 2023	Allison Brisland	Manager	
August 2025	Allison Brisland	Manager	

Extended version: Lockdown Procedure

Go In, Stay In, Tune In

Stepping Stones Pre-School recognises the potentially serious risks to children, staff and visitors in emergency or harmful situations. A lockdown may take place where there is a perceived risk of threat to the pre-school, its staff, children, visitors or property. Where possible, the Pre-school will act to ensure the safety of all personnel in the setting in the following situations:

- In the event that unauthorized person(s) considered dangerous, are on school grounds.
- In Instances included domestic breakdowns where estranged parties are attempting to abduct children.
- In instances where personnel, students, volunteers or staff from within the setting become a threat to the well-being of others.
- In emergency situations within the environment of the setting where there is potential risk from spills or poisonous fumes.

A lockdown will be initiated by a recognisable signal of 3 long whistle blows followed by the adult calling LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE. Lock down procedures will be practiced from time to time to ensure that staff and children are familiar with them.

Practices and Procedure - Follow the **CLOSE** Procedure:

- C** close all windows and doors.
- L** lock up.
- O** out of sight and minimise movement.
- S** stay silent and avoid drawing any attention.
- E** endure. Be aware that you may be in Lockdown for some time.

The following steps provide guidelines for staff, students and visitors in an emergency situation:

1. Three (3) long whistle blows will signal lockdown procedures to take effect immediately.
2. Staff will call LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE and repeat whistle blows / calling until all staff are aware
3. On hearing the lock down signal the Pre-School Manager and/or Deputy will call for assistance using 999.
4. Staff will lock the front outer door and door to garden.
5. A member of staff will contact the school to inform them of an incident.

In the setting:

Upon hearing the Lockdown signal, these steps will be followed:

9. Staff to guide all children into the main room if playing outside, check toilets etc
10. Do a head count immediately
11. Staff to secure all windows and doors then instruct children to move into the office and keep them calm. If anyone is outside, call them in.
12. Collect medical box, register & mobile phone.
13. Call register
14. Supervise, ensuring everyone remains out of sight and are sitting quietly.
15. No one should be allowed out of the room or safe area during a lockdown procedure.
16. Remain in lockdown until the all-clear has been given by the police.

1. Preparation and Drills

Planning - Responsibilities within the setting are planned and clear.

- Fire/evacuation procedures are clearly displayed.
- Plans are made for invacuation and lockdown using the form in **Section 5**, kept up to date, and reviewed at least annually.
- Ideally, a lockdown area will have a lockable door, no outside doors or windows, and a separate means of escape.
- Settings on a shared site (e.g. a school) are aware of procedures for the whole site, and act in accordance with those procedures as far as reasonable.
- An emergency kit is assembled as outlined in **Section 7**, kept in an accessible place, and reviewed at least annually.
- Children with special medical/educational needs or disabilities have personal evacuation, invacuation and lockdown plans. A copy is included in their file, and in the emergency kit.
- Staff are familiar with the policy, procedures and safety precautions.
- Staff maintain vigilance and report any concerns to the setting manager.
- Risk assessments for fire and protective security are carried out once a year and reviewed after any drill or incident.
- Parents/carers of all children are given a copy of the Major Incident Information/Guidance for Parents in **Section 8**.

Drills

Drills may be announced or unannounced.

- **Evacuation** - drill should take place at least once every half term (rotating the day of the week).
- **Invacuation** and / or **Lockdown** – drills should take place at least once every full term (rotating the day of the week), and more often if necessary e.g. if there is a high intake of children or heightened security risk.

Alarms for the different emergency procedures

- **Evacuation** – 3 blasts on the whistle or the school Fire alarm will sound
- **Invacuation** - word of mouth
- **Lockdown** Agreed signal - 5 rapid bursts of a bell or whistle, staff shouts Lockdown and repeats procedure until everyone is aware

Responsibilities During a Drill

- Responsibility for initial action at the setting rests with the setting manager, or the most senior member of staff present.
- Staff co-operate with the member of staff in charge and follow their advice at all times.
- Personal action plans are followed.
- Children are kept calm, reassured and occupied as much as possible.

After a Drill

- Parents are informed via whiteboard or verbally at pickup time after any drill.
- In addition, they are emailed after an evacuation/lockdown drill with feedback and a reminder of Stepping Stones' *'Information/guidance for parents'*.
- Information and feedback are provided to children and parents in a calm and appropriate way.
- Staff ensure that children and parents are given the opportunity to ask questions.
- Staff are alert for signs of distress among children.
- Risk assessments and procedures are reviewed after all drills.

2. Evacuation – leaving the building

Incident Procedure

If you discover a fire:

- Sound the alarm – 3 blasts on the whistle
- Dial 999 to call the Fire Brigade.
- If possible and you are confident to do so, tackle the fire using appliances provided but do not endanger yourself or anyone else in doing so.
- Once the alarm has been sounded, the setting manager or most senior member of staff present issues all further instructions.

On hearing the fire alarm: Follow the specific procedures for the building you are in. These may include:

- Leave the building by the nearest available exit.
- Close all doors and windows behind you.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- Report to the person in charge at the assembly point.
- Do not re-enter the building for any reason unless authorised to do so.
- Follow the advice of emergency service staff at all times.
- Personal action plans are followed.

Responsibilities During an Evacuation

- Responsibility for initial action at a setting rests with the setting manager, or the most senior member of staff present.
- A register is taken, and the setting manager informed of any missing child.
- Where necessary, emergency services are contacted as soon as possible.
- Committee is contacted as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Staff invoke the Emergency Plan and care for children.
- Staff notify and liaise with parents, within the limits of the situation.
- Staff co-operate with emergency service staff and follow their advice at all times.
- Mobile phones are not used unless it is safe to do so, and phone lines are kept clear.
- No comments are made to the press without advice from emergency services or Head Office.
- Children are kept calm, reassured and occupied as much as possible.

Co-operation with Emergency Services

- Their first tasks will be to deal with the immediate threat, and to prevent/treat casualties, and this may take some time.
- They will not know who anybody is, and they may treat people firmly, question them or issue orders.
- Staff cooperate fully with emergency service staff, and ensure that children do the same.

Search

- Following a major incident, the building is only searched as advised by the emergency services.
- If a threat is assessed as being implausible or a hoax, a proportionate search of the setting may be considered with advice from the emergency services.

After an Evacuation

- Parents are informed verbally at pickup time.
- In addition, they are emailed with feedback and a reminder of Stepping Stones' *information/guidance for parents*.
- Information and feedback are provided to children and parents in a calm and appropriate way.
- Staff ensure that children and parents are given the opportunity to ask questions.
Staff are alert for signs of distress among children.

Review

- Risk assessments and procedures are reviewed after all incidents.
- Following an incident staff and children's mental wellbeing is supported as necessary.

3. Invacuation –

Staying inside the building

When there is a potential threat but no immediate danger from outside to people or the building. Examples: unusual weather, a dog in the grounds, a nearby public order incident, air pollution. Everyone is moved to a safe place inside the setting building, and kept away from external windows and walls as far as possible.

Doors and windows are secured.

Incident Procedure

- Invacuation may be implemented by word of mouth.
- One member of staff informs all rooms.
- All children and staff are brought inside, and doors and windows secured.
- In the event of a chemical accident or threat, doors to any rooms with open ventilation (e.g. toilets, kitchen) are sealed with airtight tape if possible.
- Personal action plans are followed.
- A register is taken, and the setting manager informed of any missing child.
- Normal indoor activities may continue.
- Emergency services are informed if necessary.
- Invacuation ends when advised by the setting manager or emergency services.

Responsibilities During an Invacuation

Responsibility for initial action rests with the setting manager, or the most senior member of staff present.

- Where necessary, emergency services are contacted as soon as possible.
- School is contacted as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Staff invoke the Emergency Plan and staff to care for children.
- Staff notify and liaise with parents, within the limits of the situation.
- Staff co-operate with emergency service staff and follow their advice at all times.
- Mobile phones are not used unless it is safe to do so, and phone lines are kept clear.
- No comments are made to the press without advice from emergency services or Head Office.
- Children are kept calm, reassured and occupied as much as possible.

Co-operation with Emergency Services

- If emergency services are involved, their first tasks will be to deal with the immediate threat, and to prevent/treat casualties, and this may take some time.
- They will not know who anybody is, and they may treat people firmly, question them or issue orders.
- Staff cooperate fully with emergency service staff and ensure that children do the same.

After an Invacuation

- Parents are informed at pickup time and emailed after an emergency invacuation.
- In addition, they are emailed with feedback and a reminder of Stepping Stones' *information/guidance for parents*.
- Information and feedback are provided to children and parents in a calm and appropriate way.
- Staff ensure that children and parents are given the opportunity to ask questions.
- Staff are alert for signs of distress among children.

Review

- Risk assessments and procedures are reviewed after all incidents.
- Following an incident staff and children's mental wellbeing is supported as necessary.

4. Lockdown – securing the building and hiding inside

When there is imminent danger from outside to people or the building.

Examples: an armed or violent person trying to gain access, a serious pollution or chemical risk.

- Everyone is moved to a secure place where they cannot be seen from outside the building.
- Doors and windows are locked and barricaded if possible.
- Phones are muted and vibration turned off.

Incident Procedure

In the event of an attack, staff will use the **Run-Hide-Tell** strategy

(see Section 12)

- The lockdown alarm is sounded.
- As far as possible, all staff and children are moved into the most appropriate lockdown area identified on the Invacuation/Lockdown Planning Form.
- Personal action plans are followed.
- If children are outside, the most senior member of staff with them assesses the situation and decides on the safest course of action. This may be moving to the lockdown area in the building, finding the most sheltered place away from the building, or leaving the site and presenting to the emergency services in charge of the situation.
- All doors, windows and blinds are closed and secured.
- Doors are barricaded if appropriate.
- In the event of a chemical accident or threat, doors to any rooms with open ventilation (e.g. toilets, kitchen) are sealed with airtight tape if possible.
- A register is taken, and the setting manager informed of any missing child.
- Mobile phones are kept on silent, and vibration turned off.
- Children are reassured and kept as quiet as possible.
- Everyone stays in the lockdown area until the all-clear is given by emergency service staff or the setting manager.

Overriding events Some events may override a lockdown. These include:

- A confirmed fire (note that an intruder may sound the fire alarm in order to try to force an evacuation).
- Damage to the building.
- An intruder within a room where there are children.

In such a case the external evacuation procedure will be followed.

Responsibilities During a Lockdown

- Responsibility for initial action at a setting rests with the setting manager, or the most senior member of staff present.
- Staff co-operate with the member of staff in charge and follow their advice at all times.
- Emergency services are called as soon as possible. If it is not safe to speak, staff will stay silent and listen to instructions, which may include pressing 55 to indicate the call needs attention.
- School and Committee is contacted as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Staff invoke the Emergency Plan, staff care for children.
- Staff notify and liaise with parents, within the limits of the situation.
- Staff co-operate with emergency service staff and follow their advice at all times.
- Mobile phones are not used unless it is safe to do so, and phone lines are kept clear.
- No comments are made to the press without advice from emergency services.
- Children are kept calm, reassured and occupied as much as possible.

Co-operation with Emergency Services

- When emergency service staff attend a serious incident, they may be armed or dressed differently to normal, depending on their function.
- Their first tasks will be to deal with the immediate threat, and to prevent/treat casualties, and this may take a long time.
- They will not know who anybody is, and they may treat people firmly, question them or issue orders.
- Staff cooperate fully with emergency service staff, and ensure that children do the same.
 - Avoid sudden movements or gestures that may be perceived as a threat.
 - Stay calm and quiet, don't shout or wave.
 - Keep hands visible at all times so it is clear you are unarmed.

Search

- Following a major incident, the building is only searched as advised by the emergency services.
- If a threat is assessed as being implausible or a hoax, a proportionate search of the setting may be considered with advice from the emergency services.

After a Lockdown

- Stepping Stones will take all care to ensure that staff, children and parents have the information and support they need, in accordance with the Emergency Plan.
- Information and feedback are provided to children and parents in a calm and appropriate way.
- Staff ensure that children and parents are given the opportunity to ask questions.
- Staff are alert for signs of distress among children. Review
- Risk assessments and procedures are reviewed after all incidents.
- Following an incident staff and children's mental wellbeing is supported as necessary.

Invacuation / Lockdown Planning Form

SECTION 5: Invacuation / Lockdown Planning Form	
Lockdown signal	
Preferred safe space for invacuation / lockdown	
Back up safe space	
Second back up safe space	
Location of emergency kit	
How will the space be made safe? E.G. where to sit, what equipment to use	
How will children be cared for? Cushions, blankets, stories, games	
TASK	MEMBER/S OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE
Move/care for children	
Collect and check register	
Collect emergency kit and medication	
Allocate personal action plans	
Close/secure doors/windows	
Liaise with emergency services	
Liaise with Head Office (school)	
Children with personal action plans	Key Person
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
Signed:	
Name:	Role:
Date:	

Emergency Personal Action Plan

Emergency Personal Action Plan		
Name	Child/staff?	
Key Person		
Emergency Contact		
Emergency contact phone number		
Medication/special equipment		
Reason/s for plan		
Help needed during evacuation		
Help needed during invacuation		
Help needed during lockdown		
Risks/concerns/special action needed		
Signed:		Date:
Name:		
Role:		

Emergency Kit List

SECTION 7: Emergency Kit List		
Essential – in Kit	✓	Comments
Major Incident Policy and Procedures		
Current completed Invacuation/Lockdown Planning Form		
Personal Action Plans for each child in the setting who has one		
First aid kit		
Nappies, potty		
Airtight sealing tape		
Essential – Readily available	✓	Location
Register		
Signing in sheets / pen		
Children’s medical supplies and paperwork		
Mobile phone		
Other – as required	✓	Comments
Torch and batteries		
Pad and pen		
Bottled water		
Plastic cups		
Snacks with long date eg. Dried fruit, biscuits		
Wet wipes / tissues / sanitiser		
Hi vis jackets		
Emergency blankets		
Books & Games		
Signed:	Date:	
Name:		
Role:		

SECTION 8: Major Incident Information/Guidance for Parents

Stepping Stones takes security of our setting very seriously and we have a policy to help us prepare for the possibility of a local or national major incident i.e. any significant threat or dangerous event which has an immediate impact on everyone in the setting. We hope that such a situation will never arise, but we also recognise the need to be prepared.

Basic Principles

Our main priority is the safety of children and staff in our care, and all actions will be taken with this in mind. We will do everything we can to keep your child safe and calm, to comfort and reassure them, and to protect them from distressing situations and information. We also understand how distressing it would be for you to know that your child is involved in a major incident at the setting, or to be involved in a major incident themselves. We will do our best to keep you informed of the situation and our actions using all available means of communication, but also ask you to understand that this may not be possible. We will always comply with the advice of the emergency services.

We have procedures in place for:

- **Evacuation** leaving the building e.g. in case of fire
- **Invacuation** staying inside the building e.g. in case of unusual weather, air pollution or a loose dog
- **Lockdown** securing the building and hiding inside e.g. in case of an armed intruder or attack

Stepping Stones' Major Incident Policy and Procedures are available for parents to read.

Drills

- Evacuation/invacuation/lockdown drills are practised regularly, rotating the day of the week.
- Drills will be carried out in a manner appropriate to your child's age, and staff will explain to the children what is happening and why.
- We will tell you when we have carried out an emergency drill in case you or your child have any questions or concerns.
- We recognise that these procedures may cause alarm, and we will be alert for any signs of anxiety afterwards.

Emergency situation involving your child at the setting

- Our procedure is to notify emergency services and the school as soon as possible of any emergency at the setting. Staff will do their best to contact you directly and keep you informed.
- Please do not try to contact the setting by phone. Staff will be busy trying to resolve the situation, and if telephone networks are available, they will need to be kept clear.
- Please remember that we will be doing everything we can to resolve the situation and trust the training and commitment of our staff to keep your child safe.
- Please do not attempt to collect your child until you are told it is safe to do so. This may endanger them and/or yourself.

Emergency situation involving you away from the setting

- If you are caught up in an emergency situation away from the setting, we will look after your child until you are able to collect them or arrange for someone else to collect them.
- If, due to emergency circumstances, your child should need overnight care we will discuss this with you or a contact approved by you. Social Services will also be informed.
- We ask you to keep in touch with us as far as possible, but recognise this may be difficult.

9. Dealing with Suspicious Items

Suspicious packages can be assessed according to the following acronym:

H = Hidden is the package hidden or does it appear to be simply left behind as lost property?

O = Obviously Suspicious does it have batteries, wire, tape etc. visible?

T = Typical is it typical of items found in the environment?

Handling suspicious items

- Do not touch suspicious items.
- Move away to a safe distance:
 - o 100m for small items e.g. rucksacks or briefcases
 - o 200m for medium items e.g. suitcases, wheelie bins or cars
 - o 400m for large items e.g. vans or lorries.
- Prevent others from approaching.
- Communicate safely to staff, children, visitors and the public.
- Do not use mobile phones in the immediate vicinity, but only out of line of sight and behind hard cover, e.g. wall or door.
- Notify the police by dialling 999. The setting manager, with advice from the police where possible, will decide whether to implement external evacuation, internal evacuation or lockdown

10. Dealing with Bomb Threats Preparation

- The Bomb Threat Form will be immediately available near the phone at all times (Section 11)
- In the event of a threat, the form must be completed as fully as possible.
- Any bomb threat is a criminal offence and must be reported to the police by dialling 999.
- Police advice must be followed at all times.

Dealing with specific bomb threat communications

Telephone threats:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Try to obtain as much information as possible.
- If practical, keep the caller talking and alert a colleague to dial 999. • If displayed on your phone, note the number of the caller, otherwise, dial 1471 to obtain the number once the call has ended.
- If the threat is a recorded message write down as much detail as possible.

Text messages:

- Do not reply to, forward or delete the message
- Note the number of the sender.

Face to face threats:

- Try to remember as many distinguishing characteristics of the threat-maker as possible.

Written notes, letters or graffiti:

- Treat as police evidence and stop other people touching the item.

Email or social media application:

- Do not reply to, forward or delete the message.
- Note the sender's email address or username/user ID for social media applications.
- Preserve all web-log files for your organisation to help the police investigation (as a guide, 7 days prior to the threat message and 48 hours after).

Assessing the credibility of a bomb threat

- The vast majority of bomb threats are hoaxes designed to cause alarm and disruption, but any threat must be taken seriously. The setting manager, with advice from the police where possible, will consider the following factors when assessing the threat:
- Is the threat part of a series? If so, what has happened elsewhere or previously?
- Can the location of the claimed bomb(s) be known with precision? If so, is a bomb visible at the location identified?
- Considering the threat-maker's desire to influence behaviour, is there any reason to believe their words?
- If the threat is imprecise, could an external evacuation inadvertently move people closer to the hazard?
- Is a suspicious device visible? Deciding what action to take The setting manager, with advice from the police where possible, will decide whether to implement external or internal evacuation or a search.

Section 11 : Bomb Threat Form (3 pages)

From www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF A BOMB THREAT

1. Remain calm and talk to the caller.
2. Note the caller's number if displayed on your phone.
3. If the threat has been sent via email or social media see appropriate section below.
4. If you are able to, record the call.
5. Write down the exact wording of the threat:

(When/Where/What/How/Who/Why/Time)

ASK THESE QUESTIONS & RECORD ANSWERS AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE:

1. Where exactly is the bomb right now?	
2. When is it going to explode?	
3. What does it look like?	
4. What does the bomb contain?	
5. How will it be detonated?	
6. Did you place the bomb? If not you, who did?	
7. What is your name?	
8. What is your address?	
9. What is your telephone number?	
10. Do you represent a group or are you acting alone?	
11. Why have you placed the bomb?	
TIME call completed:	
INFORM SCHOOL:	01453 542304
Name of person informed	
DIAL 999 AND INFORM POLICE	TIME

This part should be completed once the caller has hung up and police/school have been informed

Date and time of call		Telephone number that received the call	
Duration of call			
About the Caller:	Male / Female	Nationality?	Age?

Threat Language:

Well spoken Irrational Pre-recorded/ automated Foul Incoherent

Caller's Voice:

Calm	Crying	Clearing throat	Angry	Nasal	Excited
Slurred	Stutter	Disguised	Slow	Lisp	Accent
Rapid	Deep	Familiar	Laughter	Hoarse	Other

What accent did the caller have

If the voice sounded familiar, who did it sound like?

Background sounds:

Street noises	House noises	Animal noises	Crockery	Motor	None
Voice	Static	PA system	Booth	Factory machinery	
Office machinery	Other				

Remarks	
Additional Notes	
Signature	
Print Name	
Date	

Actions to be taken on receipt of a bomb threat sent via email or social media

1. DO NOT reply to, forward or delete the message.
2. If sent via email note the address.
3. If sent via social media what application has been used and what is the username/ID?
4. Dial 999 and follow police guidance.
5. Preserve all web log files for your organisation to help the police investigation (as a guide, 7 days prior to the threat message and 48 hours after).

Signature

Date:

Print Name

SECTION 12: Run-Hide-Tell

Firearms or Weapons Attack

RUN Escape to a place of safety if you can. This is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate, but only if it won't put you in greater danger.

- Is there a safe route? Don't run if it will expose you to greater danger, or if it is safer to wait for the attacker to move away.
- If you can identify a safe route, run.
- Insist others leave with you, but don't let their indecision slow you down.
- Leave belongings behind.
- Get as far away from the danger area as possible.

If you can't RUN, then . . . HIDE It's better to hide than confront.

- Find cover in a place that is as strong and secure as possible. Bullets can go through glass, brick, wood and metal.
- If you can see the attacker, they may be able to see you.
- Be aware of your exits.
- Be quiet, silence your phone and turn off vibrate.
- Lock or barricade yourself in.
- Move away from the door.

Finally, and only when it is safe to do so

Tell

- Dial 999 and ask for the police.
- If you cannot speak or make a noise, listen to the instructions given to you by the call taker.
- If you can, tell them
 - o Location of you and the attackers
 - o Descriptions of the attackers, their clothing and weapons
 - o Information about casualties and building access.
- Stop other people entering the building if it is safe to do so.

Armed Police Response

- Be aware that officers may not initially be able to distinguish you from the attacker. They may treat you firmly, question you, or point guns at you.
- Follow officers' instructions.
- Remain calm.
- Avoid sudden movements that may be considered a threat.
- Keep your hands in view.

13. Additional Resources

Preparing for Emergencies

- Government advice:
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-emergencies/preparing-for-emergencies>
- Department of Education advice: Protective security and preparedness for education settings - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Gloucestershire Local Resilience Forum advice: <https://www.glosprepared.co.uk/> Red Cross advice: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/prepare-foremergencies#How%20to%20prepare%20for%20emergencies>

Protective Security and Counter Terrorism Government advice:

Provided by the Counter Terrorism Alliance, a joint partnership between the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), the Home Office, and Pool Reinsurance who provide funding.

Their website, *ProtectUK*, includes current information, guidance and online training, including details of Run Hide Tell. <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/>

Awareness of threat:

The ProtectUK website shows the current national threat level -

- low an attack is highly unlikely
- moderate an attack is possible but not likely
- substantial an attack is likely
- severe an attack is highly likely
- critical an attack is highly likely in the near future

Additional police advice:

- Counter Terrorism Policing is a collaboration of UK police forces who work with the UK intelligence community to prevent, deter and investigate terrorist activity. Their website also includes safety advice, and information about how to help counter terrorism <https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/>
- Their input forms part of the government's Action Counters Terrorism campaign (ACT) <https://act.campaign.gov.uk/>