



## **Safeguarding Children Policy**

S11 Children Act 2004, together with S175 Education Act 2002 for schools, require all organisations and individuals working in services related to children to '*discharge their functions with a view to safeguarding children*'. This includes:

- having child protection procedures including designated people in place,
- understanding accountability for child protection
- having reporting mechanisms in place and understood
- recruiting staff (including volunteers) safely,
- having all staff trained in child protection
- staff understanding and operating safer working practices

This policy references the new statutory guidance for adults working with children and families in England: Working together to Safeguard Children: A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (H.M Government 2013)

### **Child Protection Procedures**

As we are a group providing childcare that is registered with Social Services, we are required to follow the Child Protection procedures agreed through Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board, (ref [www.wiltshirescb.org.uk](http://www.wiltshirescb.org.uk)). This body and ten others in the south-west form the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures Group ref [www.swcpp.org.uk/](http://www.swcpp.org.uk/))

#### Accountability

Safeguarding does not recognize hierarchy; everyone working at Stepping Stones has a responsibility for safeguarding and ensuring the safety and well being of children in our care.

The Management Committee is responsible for ensuring Stepping Stones meets its responsibilities regarding the safeguarding of children.

Debbie Wickham, the Setting Manager is the named person responsible for managing and co-ordinating Child Protection matters within Stepping Stones and liaising with other agencies when required.

Judy Hennessey, Playroom Manager is responsible for child protection matters if Debbie is unavailable.

All staff members and volunteers are responsible for ensuring the safety and well being of children in our care. Understanding accountability and how our policies and procedures are implemented and reviewed is included in our Induction programme.

Ongoing access to Safeguarding training for each team member/volunteer is reviewed as part of our Appraisal process and Safeguarding Audit

As a setting involved in the care of children we will at all times share with parents/carers any concerns we may have. However, we do have a duty to refer to Social Services if we suspect that child abuse may be an issue. Our first concern will always be the welfare of the child.

## Reporting mechanism

Whenever a member of staff has a suspicion or has knowledge that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, that member of staff must urgently inform the Setting Manager.

Usually the Setting Manager will discuss with the parents/carers the concerns raised and explain our duty to report any suspected abuse and to keep a written record. If this is felt to put the child in further danger, if the concern involves possible or actual sexual abuse, if it is possible that evidence could be tampered with or where parents/carers are not contactable within a reasonable time period a contact with the MASH Team (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) will go ahead without contact with parents/carers.

The Setting Manager will initially contact the duty MASH to discuss. If it is agreed that a referral should be made, this will be processed by telephone, following up in writing by fax, secure email, letter or their referral form.

### **Social Care:**

#### **MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)**

**Tel: 0300 456 0108**

**Out of Hours – Emergency Duty Team : 0845 6070 888**

If a decision has been taken not to inform the parents/carers or if this was not possible the Setting Manager and the duty Social Worker must agree who is to be informed, when and by whom.

A copy of the form will be securely held by the Setting Manager

The Setting Manager will make every effort to ensure that parents/carers are kept informed and involved throughout the process and offered necessary support.

This policy is reviewed and updated in line with the annual child protection audit and Local Safeguarding Children's Board – <http://www.wiltshirelscb.org/>

### **Safer Working Practices**

Our Safeguarding staffing and Employment policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through effective safer working practices re:

- Recruiting staff safely
- Staff training

Additional Policies relating to safer working practices

- E-safety awareness policy
- Mobile phone policy
- Lone Worker policy

Reviewed October 2016