

1st Step Pre-school Ltd: Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Our Commitment

At 1st Step Pre-school Ltd, the welfare of children is our highest priority. We are committed to creating a culture of vigilance where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and know they will be listened to.

Safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of health or development
- Ensuring children grow up in safe, effective care
- Taking action to enable the best outcomes

Child protection refers specifically to the procedures to protect children suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm.

“Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.”

Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- Children Acts 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- The Prevent Duty (2015)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) & Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Education Act (2002)
- Counter-Terrorism & Security Act (2015)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act (2019)
- Data Protection Act (2018) & UK GDPR
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures

Roles & Responsibilities

- Company Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Ryan McMillan
- Company Deputy DSLs: Hannah Lazenby / Emma Miller
- The Setting DSLs and Deputy DSL are as follows:
 - Blyth DSL: Danielle Yavuz Deputy: Jeanette Gallagher
 - Delaval DSL: Heather Kemp Deputy: Sophie Pegg
 - Mowbray DSL: Jenny Brown Deputy: Chloe Young
- A DSL/Deputy is always available during operational hours
 - DSLs are trained every 2 years, with annual updates
- All staff must report concerns immediately to the DSL/Deputy
- All staff receive safeguarding and Prevent awareness training on induction and regular updates as per EYFS Annex C.

Types of Abuse

We recognise the four main categories of abuse:

Physical abuse – hitting, shaking, poisoning, burns/scalds

Emotional abuse – persistent ill-treatment, rejection, exposure to domestic abuse

Sexual abuse – inappropriate touching, sexualised behaviour/language, exploitation

Neglect – failure to meet basic needs (food, clothing, supervision, medical care)

We also recognise:

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation & County Lines
- Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – mandatory duty to report directly to Police and Onecall
- Child-on-child abuse, including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and upskirting
- Domestic Abuse
- Honour-Based Violence (HBV) & Forced Marriage
- Radicalisation & Extremism (Prevent Duty)
- Children Missing Education (CME)
- Faith-based abuse (e.g. witchcraft, spirit possession)

Prevent Duty – Safeguarding Against Radicalisation & Extremism

In line with the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 and the Prevent Duty Guidance (England & Wales 2023), 1st Step Pre-school Ltd has due regard to preventing children from being drawn into terrorism.

We acknowledge that while direct radicalisation is rare in the early years, young children can be exposed to extremist or prejudiced views. Early identification and partnership working are key.

Our responsibilities include:

- Creating a safe and inclusive environment that promotes positive relationships, respect for others and resilience to harmful influence.
- Training all staff to recognise vulnerabilities and indicators of radicalisation or extremist behaviour and to respond appropriately.
- Reporting concerns immediately to the DSL/Deputy following safeguarding procedures (record → report → refer).
- Maintaining proportionate risk assessments that consider local context, online access and community factors.
- Supervising children's online use and maintaining filtering systems on all devices.
- Working with parents and community partners to promote shared understanding and early support.

All Prevent concerns are treated as safeguarding matters and managed confidentially. Staff can seek further advice from the Local Authority Prevent Lead or national helpline 0800 011 3764.

Procedures for Staff

If concerned a child is at risk of harm:

- Record – note exact words, time, date, injuries/observations
- Report – pass to DSL/Deputy immediately
- Refer – DSL will contact Onecall (01670 536400), Police, or other agencies
- Do not investigate – never question the child further or contact alleged abuser

If a child makes a disclosure:

- Listen calmly, without interruption
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Reassure the child they were right to tell
- Record their exact words and explain next steps
- Share with DSL without delay
- In an emergency, call 999

Confidentiality & Record Keeping

- Concerns are logged in secure safeguarding records, separate from child files
- Records are factual, dated, signed, and shared only with those who need to know
- Parents/carers are informed unless doing so places the child at greater risk
- Information sharing follows UK GDPR, but safeguarding overrides data protection

Early Help & Multi-Agency Working

- We support Early Help interventions to prevent escalation of concerns
- We contribute to Child Protection Conferences, CIN Plans, Early Help Assessments, and liaise with Social Care, Police, and Health professionals as required

Looked-After Children (LAC)

- LAC receive targeted support to promote stability and resilience
- The DSL liaises with Virtual School Head, social workers, and ensures Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place

Use of Technology & Images

Mobile Phones & Smart Devices

- Staff must keep personal phones switched off/silent and stored in lockers/staff areas
- Personal phones may only be used on breaks in child-free areas
- Smart watches of any kind are not permitted during contact hours
- Parents/visitors must not use phones in children's areas; visitors leave devices in the office
- The pre-school mobile phone is used for outings and emergencies

Cameras & Photographs

- Only pre-school devices (tablets/cameras) may be used
- Devices are password-protected and stored securely
- Photographs are taken only with signed parental consent and for educational purposes
- Images are stored securely and cleared regularly
- Staff must never use personal devices to capture images

Internet & Online Safety

- Screens are limited, supervised, and used only for age-appropriate learning
- Filtering/monitoring systems are in place
- Staff and children are supported to develop awareness of online safety risks

Social Media

- Staff must not share personal contact details with parents or children
- Staff must not post anything that could damage the pre-school's reputation or breach confidentiality
- Only Directors/Area Managers may post on official pre-school social media accounts
- Photos/names of children are only shared with signed parental consent

Breaches & Monitoring

- Any misuse of phones, devices, or cameras will be treated as a disciplinary matter
- The DSL/Area Manager may inspect devices if there are safeguarding concerns and escalate to LADO/Police if necessary

Supporting Families

- We aim to work in partnership with parents while always prioritising the child's safety
- Families will be treated with respect and support, even where safeguarding concerns are raised
- Children will continue to be welcomed into the setting during ongoing investigations
- For staff safety and conduct, see our linked policies: Safer People Policy, Whistle-Blowing Policy, and Safer Eating Policy

Key Contacts

Onecall (concerns/referrals):	01670 536400
Police (emergency):	999
Police (non-emergency):	101
Out of Hours Social Care:	0345 600 5252
Ofsted:	0300 123 1231
NSPCC Helpline:	0808 800 5000
Childline:	0800 1111
Local Authority Designated Officer:	07500 606 174