



Safeguarding Policy

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Safeguarding Policy

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This policy will be reviewed every year.

Core safeguarding principles

Little Steps Staffing acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements. All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

This policy applies to all internal staff at Little Steps Staffing as well temporary workers, candidates and contractors. Little Steps Staffing is fully compliant with Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2016. We are committed to ensuring their work is consistent with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. All candidates placed by Little Steps Staffing are expected to take all reasonable steps to ensure they are alert to possible child abuse and neglect, and to familiarise themselves with arrangements for safeguarding children in the schools where they are placed.

Safeguarding Aims and Objectives

This policy is designed to meet the above principles by ensuring that:

- Those who are known to be unsuitable do not gain access to children or vulnerable adults.
- Those who become unsuitable are detected at the earliest stage and prevented from continuing to work with children and vulnerable adults.
- Those who intend to do harm are prevented at every possible stage from entering the workforce.
- It is as simple as possible for an individual to report that they are being harmed or feel at risk of being harmed.
- Clear procedures will be implemented where child protection issues arise.
- Effective management is provided for staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors through support and training.
- All necessary checks are made on staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors.
- Little Steps Staffing stays up to date with developments on safeguarding best practice, reporting and auditing our safeguarding activities annually and reviewing and updating our policies and practices every 12 months.
- Those who are identified as being at risk of abuse are afforded every practicable protection by Little Steps Staffing and our subcontractors/partners.
- Little Steps Staffing will report any concerns regarding any individual, or any potential safeguarding situation that it becomes aware of as soon as practicable to the appropriate authority.
- Those we discover are being abused are afforded the relevant protection and assistance by the relevant bodies as soon as practicably possible.

- At an individual and collective level employees are involved in ensuring Safeguarding is embedded across our services to ensure a whole organisation approach so that individuals are adequately covered by this policy

Recruitment and Selection Process

Little Steps Staffing are also committed to protecting children and vulnerable adults through a careful recruitment and selection process, a whistle blowing policy and guidance on appropriate behaviour. Little Steps Staffing's rigorous procedures ensure that any candidate found to have a history of unacceptable conduct or practice, will not be placed.

As part of our safeguarding policy Little Steps Staffing will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure all candidates undergo a full compliance process.
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern.
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- Prevent the engagement of unsuitable individuals.
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.
- This policy will be widely promoted and is mandatory for everyone involved in Little Steps Staffing. Failure to comply with this policy and the company's safeguarding procedures will be addressed without delay and may result in disciplinary action.

Legislation

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- Working together to safeguard Children 2015
- The Children Act 1989
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002:
- The Children act 2004
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (2015)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (inc. the 'Prevent Duty')
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998

Definitions

'Safeguarding' - is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and/or vulnerable adults wherever possible. In contrast, child and adult protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

‘Abuse’ - Keeping children safe in education September 2016 defines abuse and neglect and gives four clear categories of abuse as:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

‘Child’ – is used to define anyone under the age of 18 (Children Act, 1989).

‘Young people’ are children who are 16 to 17 years old.

‘Age of consent’ (the legal age to have sex) in the UK is 16 years old*.

‘Vulnerable adult’ is a person who has attained the age of 18 and for a range of reasons may be, either temporarily or permanently and in different situations, potentially vulnerable.

This may include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless

Little Steps Staffing conducts the following safeguarding checks and has sight of all original documents before supplying a candidate into an education/social work establishment.

- Face to face interview
- Registration form completed by the candidate with the relevant legislations signed
- Entitlement to work in the UK
- Proof of identify
- Written professional references covering a 24 month period
- Written personal references covering gaps on unemployment (where applicable)
- Enhanced DBS disclosure with a formal explanation of any cautions/convictions (where applicable)
- 2 proof of addresses dated within 3 months
- Proof of National Insurance number
- CV covering 10-years employment history
- Original qualification certificates including QTS certificates
- NARIC certificate (where applicable)
- Teacher regulation agency (formerly NCTL) sanction/prohibited check
- Teacher regulation agency (formerly NCTL) QTS check
- Barred list check (list 99)
- DBS update service check (every 12 weeks)
- BRP check (where applicable)
- Overseas police check (where applicable)

Warning Signs of Abuse & Neglect

The signs of child abuse and neglect aren't always obvious, and a child might not tell anyone what's happening to them.

Children might be scared that the abuser will find out, and worried that the abuse and neglect will get worse. Or they might think that there's no-one they can tell or that they won't be believed. Sometimes, children don't even realise that what's happening is abuse or neglect.

We ask our candidates to look out for any obvious signs of abuse and neglect including:

- Large bruises (especially on the face, neck, arms, back and thighs)
- Distinctive marks such as hand prints or fingerprints
- Outbursts of angry and aggressive behaviour
- Sudden unexplained personality changes, mood swings and seeming insecure
- Weight loss
- Changes in eating habits
- Lack of trust and trouble making friends (anti-social behaviour)
- Untreated illnesses
- Hygiene
- Self-harm marks (especially on the wrist, forearm and thighs)
- Lack of concentration
- Smell of alcohol or drugs
- Not achieving the results (grades) that they previous did

If you come across any of these signs whilst working in a regulated activity or if a child discloses any information to you, you are not responsible to investigate further. We insist that you raise the concern with the designated safeguarding officer at the school immediately.

Responsibilities

All staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors placed on assignment are responsible for supporting safe behaviour and have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures. We expect all staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors to promote good practice by being an excellent role model; contributing to discussions about safeguarding; and to positively involving people in developing safe practices. All staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors should:

- Read, understand, accept and act in accordance with this policy.
- Be vigilant and follow professional codes of conduct to maintain professional boundaries.
- Report any concerns or disclosures related to the protection and safety of children and vulnerable adults
- Undertake mandatory child protection and vulnerable adult training and awareness sessions where provided.
- Help educate learners, including children, young people and adults in matters of keeping safe, and acting as a good role model.

All staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors working through Little Steps Staffing are expected to keep children safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe learning environment.
- Identifying children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and taking the appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe at home and in the education setting.

- Making a note and reporting to the designated member of staff any major incident, or signals which give cause for suspicion or concern. It is the candidate's responsibility to adhere to the specific guidelines set out in each Client's own safeguarding policy.
- Under no circumstance should a candidate intervene on his or her own.

Reporting and barring referrals

The process outlined below details the stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns at Little Steps Staffing.

In an emergency, if you consider a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of immediate harm call the police on 999.

Please contact the safeguarding officer with details of your concern. You will be asked to complete a safeguarding referral form which will ask you the following information:

Information about the person being referred, including:

- Name
- Address
- Date of birth
- Contact details
- Is the child's parents aware of this report being submitted?
- Has the child's parents consented to the report?
- Has the child consented to the report?
- Will contacting the child's parents directly place them at risk?
- Does the child require support?

Your details, including:

- Name
- Relationship to victim
- Contact details

Details of alleged abuser/suspect:

- Name
- Address
- Relationship to victim
- Organisation (if appropriate)
- Role within Organisation (if appropriate)
- Is the alleged abuser a vulnerable adult?
- Does the alleged abuser have capacity to understand implications of their actions?

Information about your concerns:

- Has this been reported to the police? Crime number? (if available)
- Does anyone else know a referral is being made?
- Does the alleged abuser/suspect know of the referral?
- Place of abuse
- Date/time of incident
- In depth description of the concern

Please provide as much evidence as you can to support your concern. A full investigation will be carried out with all parties involved to establish if the concern has enough foundation to be referred to the barring service. We also ask any witnesses to step forward and provide a statement of the event. The

person who is being referred will be immediately removed from working in a regulated activity until the investigation is closed. Little Steps Staffing will ask for permission to escalate the concern to MASH (Multi Agency Safe-guarding Hub) and LADO within 24 hours from when the incident was reported.

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

In accordance with Working Together (2015), where an organisation has received an allegation that a volunteer or member of staff who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

A referral should be sent to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day, giving as much detail as possible.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was developed by the police, Local Authorities and other agencies to co-locate safeguarding agencies and their data into a secure, research and decision making unit.

MASH is the single point of entry for all referrals regarding concerns for a child or young person, or where it is felt they would benefit from additional support. Referrals will cover all thresholds of need from child protection to early help. Core agencies include the police public protection desk, children's social care, health and education, with representatives attending from CAHMS, adult services, substance misuse, the early intervention services, probation, housing and others.

MASH is a screening, information and co-ordinating process only. It is not a case holding team.

Duty to make a referral to the DBS

Where there is evidence that anyone has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult, there is a legal duty on Little Steps Staffing to report that person to the Disclosure and Barring Service using their guidance. Available here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs>. The DBS has statutory authority to bar a person from working in regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable adults in the UK.

Referral to the DBS will also be made if the person resigns prior to an investigation being carried out or reaching its conclusion. If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide their services, this should not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with this guidance.

Little Steps Staffing will not make any compromise/settlement agreement in the case of a person deemed unsuitable to work with children. Any such agreement which contained a condition of not referring the case to the DBS would constitute a criminal offence.

Anyone who is concerned about a child's or vulnerable adult's welfare or who believe that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of abuse should pass any information to the DBS or other appropriate authority as soon as possible and no longer than 24 hours after the initial concern.

The DBS referral form can be found here -

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/673546/DBS Referral Form v5 0 August 2017 PDF .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/673546/DBS_Referral_Form_v5_0_August_2017_PDF_.pdf)

Whistle Blowing

All staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors should bring matters of concern to the attention of Little Steps Staffing and concerns can be reported directly to the LADO. Once you have shared your concerns you should submit them in writing giving names, date and places where appropriate. No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded but was raised in good faith. All staff, workers, candidates and contractors should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. Include concern raised and not acted upon by the safeguarding leads. Allegations that are made frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain will lead to termination.

Once a disclosure against anyone has been made, Little Steps Staffing will consider whether the allegation should be reported to the LADO. Only after notifying and consulting with the LADO (or, in the most serious cases, the police) will Little Steps Staffing undertake an investigation.

Summary

Little Steps Staffing includes a copy of the Safeguarding Policy in the 'Welcome Pack' we provide to our candidates during the registration process. We make the clients aware of where to find our safeguarding policy online, and we also send them a copy if requested.

All staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other recruitment firms in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need to know basis only, as judged by Little Steps Staffing.