**Strides Mentoring –**

**Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Policy**

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| **This policy has been adopted by the Management Team on:** |  **August 2025** |
| **Signed:** | **Alex Breeze & Sian Breeze**  |
| **Next review due:** |  **August 2026** |

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| DSL | Sian Breeze | breezesian@gmail.com |
| DDSL | Alex Breeze | abreeze887@gmail.com |
| Gloucestershire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) |  | 01452 426565 (during office hours)101 (after office hours) |
| Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)(Gloucestershire) | Nigel Hatten | 01452 426994 Ornigel.hatten@gloucestershire.gov.uk |
| Children and Families Front Door Service |  | 01452 426565 |

**Aims**

Strides aims to ensure that all children and young people are kept safe by ensuring;

• Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare

• All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities with respect to safeguarding

 • Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues and are aware of the process to raise concerns

* Young people feel safe in our environment

In our provision we have a professional duty to ensure that children and young people are kept safe and that their wellbeing is paramount. To achieve this:

* All staff are required to undergo Safeguarding training, FGM awareness training, Trauma informed care and Prevent Duty training during their induction.
* All staff must read, understand and follow this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
* Regular, ongoing training is accessed by all staff and DSL & Deputy DSLs receive formal training which is refreshed every year.
* All staff will have annual Safeguarding and Child Protection refresher training and receive regular updates throughout the year via monthly in-house staff training days.

At Strides we understand that child abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. We are committed to identifying and monitoring vulnerable children and young people.

* everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people.
* we will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation
* We recognise that Some children are particularly vulnerable to abuse due to past experiences and trauma, disabilities and additional needs, and other vulnerable characteristics.
* Should any staff have cause for concern regarding a child in our care, we will report it, following the Gloucestershire / South Gloucestershire / Bristol Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and/or the police.

All information and records are confidential and will only be shared with other professionals, in circumstances where child protection issues require it, compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR.

A child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child (Working Together 2023); therefore we keep the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and work in partnership with them, their families and surrounding professionals.

At Strides we work together in partnership with children, parents/carers and professionals to:

* Create an environment where children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected.
* Ensure that children feel that they are able to speak up with any concerns
* Ensure our children are equipped with the skills they need to keep themselves safe.
* Ensure that we remain vigilant to potential safeguarding concerns and risks and that we are able to investigate with professional curiosity where appropriate.
* Establish and maintain an environment where staff are encouraged to share information and are listened to when they have concerns about the safety and well-being of a child.
* Ensure staff are aware of all procedures for reporting a concern or making a child protection referral and that staff are well equipped to spot signs of abuse or a child in need of early help for a variety of reasons.
* Ensure that all staff are prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help.
* Contribute to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of children as well as other key aspects of a young person’s well-being (being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being).
* Ensure that we have suitable staff by adhering stringently to Part 3’s of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) safer recruitment processes, for example by ensuring at least 1 member of the interview panel holds a Safer Recruitment training certificate, conducting rigorous pre-appointment vetting checks, enhanced DBS & Children’s Barred list checks on all staff, right to work, fitness to work, overseas checks where applicable and Teaching Qualification checks.
* Ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed quickly referring to the Staff Behaviour & Disciplinary Policy. If a harm-test has been identified, ensuring quick referral to the LADO.
* Follow Guidance on Gloucestershire / South Glos / Bristol Safeguarding Children Protection Procedures. The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Procedure states that all those who work with children, (including staff in children’s centres, day nurseries, pre-schools, out-of-school and crèche provision), have a responsibility to safeguard children’s welfare and protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**Staff at Strides should remain vigilant to recognising the signs of abuse.**

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child’s life include:

* unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
* becoming withdrawn
* seeming anxious
* becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
* lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
* poor bond or relationship with a parent
* knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
* running away or going missing
* always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

(NSPCC 2025)

**Disclosures:**

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

* reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to speak out
* listen to the child but not question them
* give reassurance that the staff member will take action
* record the incident as soon as possible (see procedure for reporting a safeguarding concern below)

Where Staff are concerned that abuse or neglect has taken place:

* Staff should report all concerns to the DSL
* For concerns about child abuse, the DSL will the Children and Families Front Door Service on 01452 426565 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm). The DSL will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Social Care directly.
* For concerns regarding radicalisation, the DSL will contact Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire or Bristol Safeguarding Children’s Partnership. For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 01452 426565 during office hours and 101 Police on the non-emergency number ,or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 32
* If required, Ofsted will be notified of any incidents or concerns surrounding child protection, welfare or safety investigations.
* All concerns will be recorded and acted upon in a manner which is secure and compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR.
* Staff to refer to document: What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused Advice for practitioners (March 2015).

**Child-on-child abuse**

Children are vulnerable to abuse by other children and young people. Child-on-child abuse is taken seriously by staff and will be subject to the same child protection procedures as other forms of abuse. Staff are aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Staff will not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people. The presence of one or more of the following in relationships between children should always trigger concern about the possibility of child-on-child abuse:

* Sexual activity (in primary school-aged children) of any kind, including sexting.
* One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other (e.g. much older)
* One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (e.g. in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength)
* There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to ensure compliance or secrecy.

**If child-on-child abuse is suspected or disclosed;**

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

**Extremism and radicalisation**

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation, e.g.:

• feeling alienated or alone

• seeking a sense of identity or individuality

• suffering from mental health issues such as depression

• desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause

• associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

**Signs of radicalisation**

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

• changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive

• claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified

• viewing violent extremist material online

• possessing or sharing violent extremist material

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations onto CPOMS and refer the matter to the DSL.