

Stepping Stones of Scawby

(Ofsted Number - 2649585)

Parents & Caregivers Policies and Procedures

Our Mission

We aim to provide the highest quality care for all of our children. We aim to welcome and enrich each unique, individual child and their family and to provide a warm, nurturing, safe environment where children can learn and develop as they play. We are here to support the family unit as much as the children.

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting at any time. Our ethos demonstrates this;

'Happy Team, Happy Children, Happy Families'

Stepping Stones of Scawby

The Pre-School/Out of School Club and the team are committed to the principle of involving and consulting parents/carers and children whenever decisions are to be made within Pre-School/Out of School Club that affect them.

Stepping Stones of Scawby believes that actively promoting the participation of parents/carers and children in the decision making process is beneficial to the children, staff and Pre-School as a whole.

For children, involvement and consultation helps them to develop new skills such as negotiating, sharing and understanding the perspectives of others. It helps them to understand how decisions are made, and to recognise that their opinions are important.

For both staff at the Pre-School and Out of School Club, there are multiple benefits of such an approach, such as improved behaviour, a relationship between staff and children based on partnership, a more cohesive environment, and activities and decisions that the children feel a sense of ownership over.

All children will be listened to and consulted actively. This will take a number of forms, including:

1. Listening to what they say through speech and language, and other forms of communication.
2. Observing body language and behaviour.
3. Through play, creative expressions and the use of visual aids.
4. Notice boards that carry important information about Pre-School as well as keeping families up to date with information on famly.
5. A Key Person system is in place to support the child's individual needs.

Age, maturity and the type of decisions being made will determine the extent and nature of children's involvement. However, the emphasis should always be strongly in favour of involving children.

Parents/Carers will be invited to various events throughout the academic year which will strengthen the parent partnership within the setting.

There will also be opportunities to arrange appointments with the child's key worker to enable parents/carers to discuss their child's progress. As well as through our open door policy where management or a member of the team are always available to discuss any queries and answer any questions.

Safeguarding Policy

(Throughout this policy, references to parents also include any adult with parental responsibility or local authority responsibility for a child.)

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. All concerns, allegations, disclosures, or suspicions of abuse, including those involving staff, volunteers, students, or visitors, will be taken seriously and acted upon promptly in line with EYFS requirements and North Lincolnshire Children's MARS procedures.

All staff, students, volunteers and committee members will receive safeguarding information during induction and regular refresher training. They must read, understand and follow this policy at all times.

Safeguarding Coordinator (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is **Courtney Piercy**.

The Deputy DSL is **Beth Bowen**.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL, who will follow local safeguarding procedures and provide support and guidance to staff.

Training

The DSL and Deputy DSL will complete approved safeguarding training every two years and update their knowledge at least annually. All staff, students, volunteers and committee members will receive safeguarding training during induction and regular updates throughout the year. Staff knowledge and understanding will be monitored through supervision, staff meetings and ongoing professional discussions.

Recruitment

We follow safer recruitment procedures in line with the EYFS and Children's MARS guidance.

Before working unsupervised with children, all staff must:

6. Complete an enhanced DBS check.
7. Provide satisfactory references (normally two, including their most recent employer). These should be in place before appointment commences.
8. Meet suitability requirements for working with children.

Records of suitability checks will be maintained and made available to Ofsted if required.All staff will receive safeguarding training, have access to relevant safeguarding guidance and be expected to keep their knowledge up to date.

Use of Mobile Phones, Cameras and Electronic Devices

Images and videos may be taken to support children's learning and development, with parental consent.

1. Images will only be used for agreed purposes.
2. Devices used to store photographs will be password protected and securely stored.
3. Images will not be stored longer than necessary.
4. Staff must never use personal phones or devices to take photographs of children.
5. Images must never be transferred to personal devices.

Personal mobile phones are not permitted in childcare areas and must be stored in the designated staff area. Visitors are not permitted to take photographs of children.Failure to follow these procedures may result in disciplinary action.

The provision is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Please see http://www.ico.org.uk for further information.

Online Safety

We provide a safe online environment by ensuring appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.Staff and parents will receive regular online safety guidance, including information about emerging risks. Screen use will be purposeful, limited, and support children's learning and development. Screens will not be used with children under two years of age.

Safe Eating and Weaning

Children will always be supervised while eating and remain within sight and hearing of a responsible adult. At least one member of staff with a valid paediatric first aid certificate will be present during mealtimes. Dietary requirements and allergies will be recorded, reviewed regularly and followed at all times.

Fresh drinking water will always be available.

Toileting

Children's dignity, privacy and safety will be maintained during all intimate care routines. Support will be provided sensitively and respectfully, promoting children's independence wherever possible.

Safe Sleeping

Babies and children will sleep in accordance with current EYFS, NHS and Lullaby Trust guidance.

Each child's individual sleep needs and wellbeing will be prioritised. While parents' wishes will be considered, children will not be prevented from sleeping when tired or routinely woken from necessary sleep, as decisions will always be based on the child's health, wellbeing and developmental needs.

Attendance

Attendance will be monitored and unexplained absences followed up promptly in line with our Attendance Policy. Patterns of absence will be reviewed and concerns shared with appropriate agencies where necessary. Where possible, three emergency contacts will be held for each child.

Lockdown Procedure

We maintain a lockdown procedure to protect children and staff in the event of an unexpected threat or unauthorised person entering the premises.

Banned and Dangerous Dogs

To protect children and staff, banned dog breeds, as defined by UK legislation, are not permitted on the premises or permitted to have contact with children in our care.

Any concerns regarding ownership of, or exposure to, banned dog breeds will be discussed with parents and managed in line with this safeguarding policy.

Early Help and Supporting Families

We recognise the importance of working in partnership with families and providing support at the earliest opportunity.

We are aware of North Lincolnshire Council's One Family Approach and will work in partnership with other agencies to provide early help, preventative support and targeted intervention where needed.

We can signpost families to **NL Family** and local **Family Hubs** for additional information, advice and support.

Safeguarding Children Procedures

Dealing with Concerns Regarding Children in Our Care

We have a duty to safeguard all children and follow the EYFS, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, *Prevent Duty Guidance*, and North Lincolnshire Children's MARS procedures.

Any concerns about a child's welfare or safety must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL. Advice can be sought from North Lincolnshire Children's Services Single Point of Contact (SPOC) before making a referral where appropriate.

The Voice of the Child

Listening to and understanding the voice of the child is central to effective safeguarding. Staff will consider both verbal and non-verbal communication and ensure children feel heard, respected and supported.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

We recognise that positive mental health and emotional wellbeing are essential to children's learning, development and welfare. We provide a nurturing environment where children feel safe, valued and able to express their feelings. Where concerns arise, we will work in partnership with families and relevant agencies to provide appropriate support.

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

All staff are responsible for safeguarding children. If there are concerns about a child's welfare, a disclosure of abuse, or concerns raised by a third party, staff must:

- Report the concern immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- Record the concern accurately, including dates, times, observations and any statements made.
- The DSL will decide whether a referral to SPOC is required.
- Where appropriate, parents will be informed unless doing so could place the child at greater risk.
- Referrals to SPOC will be made without delay and followed up in writing within required timescales.
- All records will be kept secure, confidential, signed and dated.

If a Child Makes a Disclosure

Staff should:

- Listen carefully.
- Stay calm and reassuring.

- Avoid asking leading questions.
- Not make promises of confidentiality.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking out.
- Record the child's words as accurately as possible.

All disclosures must be reported to the DSL immediately.

Dealing with Concerns and Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers or Students

Any allegation or concern that a member of staff, volunteer, student or other adult working with children has harmed, may have harmed, or may pose a risk to a child must be taken seriously and reported immediately.

The designated lead for managing allegations is **Courtney Piercy**.

Deputy contact: **Beth Bowen**

The designated lead will:

- Seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Share information with relevant agencies.
- Attend strategy meetings where required.
- Ensure all actions are recorded appropriately.

Ofsted will be notified of any allegation of serious harm or abuse in line with EYFS requirements and within 14 days at the latest.

Non-Collection of Children Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

Our setting has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care – from the moment they arrive to the moment that they leave. In the event of a child not being collected at the end of a Pre-school or Out of School Club session, the Manager or Out of School Club Supervisor and staff wish to cause as little distress as possible to the child and to the family. At the same time, the Management need to ensure the health and safety of the child is not put at risk.

If a child is to be collected by another person, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the setting as soon as possible on **01652 655580** or in person. Parents/carers should inform staff of the name of the person to collect the child and supply a password (if not already been supplied previously). A record of all passwords is then kept in a confidential file and/or stored on the child's famly account. Please note: Even the person collecting has been before, they may still be asked for a password if not recognised by a member of staff. If an unauthorised person comes to collect a child, even if the parent/carer is late, the child will not be released. Staff will then attempt to contact the child's parent/carer. Parents/carers should ensure that they can be contacted and give additional contact information where necessary if not at home or the usual place of work.

Procedures

The following procedures will be advised to all parents when a child starts at the setting and will be followed in the event of a child not being collected. The manager will ensure that parents/carers of children starting at the setting supply specific information on the registration form, as follows:

For the parents/carers

- Mobile telephone number
- Work telephone number (if applicable).

Emergency contact numbers

Names and contact telephone numbers of people who might regularly collect the child from the setting, (i.e. grandparents, childminder), or can be a named person who can be contacted in the case of an emergency where the parental contacts are unavailable.

- If a child is not collected at the end of the session, the procedure will be as follows:
- Any forms of communication will be checked for any information regarding collection of the child, e.g. famly, emails and communication book.
- If no information is available, attempts will be made to contact parents/carers at home or work as appropriate.
- If the above is unsuccessful, attempts will be made to contact the emergency numbers on the registration form.

Staff will not allow the child to leave the setting with anyone other than those named on the registration form or in the communications book. If staff are in any doubt about the safety of the child, the child should remain in the care of the setting.

If no contact is made then following will apply:

- 30 minutes after the preschool session has lapsed Children's Services will be contacted, for the Out of School Club after 30 minutes after the booked session or closing time Children's Services will be called.

- Incidents of late collection will be recorded by management and discussed with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. We will charge £20.00 for late pick up if no warning has been given.

Health and Safety Policy

Our Pre-School and Out Of School Club take the maintenance of health and safety extremely seriously as a matter of both legal and moral importance. All staff will be familiarised with the provisions contained in this policy as part of their induction and be expected to act in accordance with them at all times.

The Pre-School and Out of School Club aims to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff, children, visitors and others who may be affected by the setting's activities and existence. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and their associated Approved Code of Practice will be complied with at all times. We will always strive to go beyond the minimum statutory standards to ensure that health and safety remains the first priority.

The steps below will be actioned as a matter of course:

- Create an environment that is safe and without risk to health.
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Use, maintain and store equipment safely.
- Ensure that all staff are competent in the work in which they are engaged.

Responsibilities of the Trustees of Stepping Stones of Scawby, Manager and Staff.

The identification, assessment and control of hazards within the Pre-School and Out of School Club are vital in reducing accidents and incidents. All staff members are responsible for assessing risks to health and safety arising out of the activities in Stepping Stones of Scawby and introducing suitable steps to eliminate or control any such risk identified.

It is vital to ensure that health and safety matters are taken seriously by all members of staff and other persons who are affected by the Pre-School and Out of School Club activities. Staff who have been found to have blatantly disregarded safety instructions or recognised safe practices will be subject to the procedures laid out in the Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

The Manager will ensure that adequate arrangements exist for the following:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the Health and Safety policy and authorising any necessary revisions to its provisions.
- Providing adequate resources, including financial, as is necessary to meet the Pre-School and Out of School Clubs health and safety responsibilities.
- Providing adequate health and safety training for all staff.
- Ensuring that all accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences are adequately reported and recorded (including informing the Health and Safety Executive, and Ofsted, where appropriate).
- Reviewing all reported accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences, and the Management's response, to enable corrective measures to be implemented.
- Ensuring that all staff, students, volunteers and any other adult who come into unsupervised contact with children at the Pre-School/Out of School Club have appropriate and up to date Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Only persons who have an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service and are registered with Ofsted as child carers have unsupervised access to the children, including helping them with toileting.

The Manager is responsible for the day to day implementation, management and monitoring of the Health and Safety Policy. The Manager is required to report any matter of concern regarding the Health and Safety Policy to the Executive Head of Scawby Academy.

The Manager will ensure that:

1. An additional designated member of staff is made jointly responsible with them for the health and safety and risk assessment provisions at Pre-School and Out of School Club, as set out in this and other policies.
2. Regular safety inspections are carried out and the reports accurately logged.
3. Any action required as a result of a health and safety inspection is taken as rapidly as possible.
4. Information received on health and safety matters is distributed to all members of staff, the Executive Head of Scawby Academy and the Board of Trustees.
5. An investigation is carried out on all reported accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences.
6. Staff are adequately trained to fulfil their role within the Health and Safety policy.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the Health and Safety policy are adhered to at all times. As such, they are required to:

1. Have regard for the Health and Safety policy and their responsibilities under it.
2. Have regard for any health and safety guidance issued by the Manager/Health & Safety Co-ordinator or the designated member of staff, and act upon it whenever appropriate.
3. Take reasonable care for their own health and safety as well as of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
4. Take all reasonable care to see that the equipment and premises that are used by children, and the activities that are carried out at Pre-School and Out of School Club, are safe.
5. Report any accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences that have led to, or may in the future be likely to lead to, injury or damage, and assist in the investigation of any such events.
6. Undergo relevant health and safety training when instructed to do so by the Management team.

Strategy for reporting Accidents to Government Agencies.

Anything that is dangerous must be made safe as soon as possible. However, care should be taken to avoid disturbing the accident scene as far as possible (in case of subsequent criminal investigation).

Also you need to check whether the accident needs to be reported. See Appendix A -North Lincolnshire Council-accidents in the workplace for guidance and contact information.

1. Under the reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations 1995. If the accident is reportable, then the report must be made without delay to either the incident contact centre (http://www.riddor.gov.uk) or the environmental health department North Lincolnshire council.
2. To Ofsted- if the accident is serious as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event, within 14 days
3. Details of the accident must be recorded in the accident book (on the day of the incident) at Stepping Stones of Scawby and the parents of any injured child asked to sign the entry. The names of any witnesses to the accident should be taken.

4. Stepping Stones Insurance Company (Early Years Alliance - RSA) to be informed immediately, in case of a personal injury claim is made.
5. In the days following a serious accident, an internal investigation should be undertaken and statements taken from members of staff involved followed by:

    - Review Stepping Stones risk assessments and working procedures and revise if necessary.
    - Communicate any changes to staff
    - Review training and provide additional training if needed
    - Consider whether disciplinary action is warranted.

Insurance

The Children Act 1989 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, place a number of legal responsibilities on Stepping Stones of Scawby. Therefore, Pre-School and Out Of School Club have insurance cover appropriate to its duties under this legislation, including Employer' Liability Insurance. Responsibility will, in most cases, rest with Stepping Stones of Scawby, but staff will take reasonable care, both for themselves and other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. If Stepping Stones of Scawby is held responsible for any incident that may occur, public liability insurance will cover compensation.

Specific tasks will be undertaken and regulations adhered to in order to ensure the Health and Safety of all staff, visitors and children in Pre-School and the Out of School Club. These are as follows;

Setting Protocol

1. There are always at least 2 adults present whenever children are on the premises. All children are supervised by adults at all times and will always be within sight of an adult. There will always be sufficient adults to maintain appropriate ratios for staff and children. (1 adult : 8 children aged 3+, 1 adult : 4 children aged under 3 and 1 adult : 3 children under the age of 2 on Pre-School premises and 1 adult : 3 children on outings)

2. A register of both adults and children is completed as people arrive and leave, as per the Arrivals and Departures Policy to ensure an accurate and complete record of all those present is available in case of any emergency.

3. The accident and incident books are available at all sessions for the reporting of any incidents and accidents via famly. All entries will need to be acknowledged by parents as appropriate. This will be checked on a regular basis by the Manager. Where appropriate and particularly if action needs to be taken these incidents will be reported to the Executive Head of Scawby Academy.

4. Safety checks on premises, both indoor and outdoor, are made before every session.

5. The main blue door will be locked at all times.

6. Children will be allowed to leave the group only with an authorised adult, a member of staff will be at the door during arrival and departure times.

7. The premises are checked before locking up at the end of the day/ session.

8. A full Risk Assessment of the building will take place annually, or if appropriate to meet the specific needs of a child.

9. Outdoor space, when available, needs to be secure.

10. Heaters/electrical points/wires and leads are adequately guarded.

11. Low level glass will be covered with protective film, or replaced by safety glass.

12. Fire doors are never obstructed.

13. Fire drills are held at least once each term.

14. Children are **not** allowed into the kitchen unless involved in a cooking activity under staff supervision for which a Risk Assessment has been completed.

15. All dangerous materials are stored out of the reach of children.

16. Adults must not wander around with hot drinks, and must ensure that they are placed out of the reach of children.

17. Adults must not eat foods containing allergens that affect children within the setting.

18. There is no smoking in the building/premises.

19. The first aid box is checked regularly and restocked as appropriate.

20. Equipment is checked regularly and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded. Equipment offered will be developmentally appropriate, recognising that equipment suitable for older children may pose a risk to younger/less mature children.

Stepping Stones of Scawby's full responsibilities and procedures in respect of Health and Safety are contained in this policy.

Toilet training Policy

Whilst we support all children with their toileting needs at Stepping Stones of Scawby, we do have a "three accidents" policy where we will then put a child back into a pull up or nappy.

We understand this may be frustrating but due to staff ratios and the best interests of the child we have decided this is best for practice.

All accidents will be dealt with calmly and sensitively to ensure children feel safe and want to carry on with their toileting journey.

Sickness Policy

-We are unable to administer Infant Paracetamol at Stepping Stones of Scawby. Should your child develop a temperature you will be contacted to collect and asked for permission to administer emergency calpol while we wait for collection. Should your child be Calpol dependent they will have to be kept at home until well enough to return.

-Please remember that any children who have sickness or diarrhea must be 48 hours clear before they can return to nursery.

-Conjunctivitis is highly contagious and children should remain at home until they have had 24 hours of prescribed treatment or their eyes are no longer weeping.

-For other common childhood illnesses (such as hand, foot and mouth and chicken pox) children should remain at home until all blisters have scabbed over.

-For any illnesses which require antibiotics we request an absence period of 24 hours in case of a reaction to medication. After this period we can administer the medicine at nursery. We can only administer prescribed medication unless your child has a temperature above 39 degrees and at risk of febrile convulsion.

Attendance Policy

Parents/carers must inform Stepping Stones as soon as possible if their child will not be attending their scheduled session.

Notification should be made by telephone to provide us with a reason for the absence.

If a child is absent and no notification has been received, the setting will make reasonable attempts to contact the parent/carer to establish the reason for the absence and ensure the child's welfare. This may include telephone calls or a message on Famly.

Where contact cannot be made, or there are concerns regarding a child's welfare, the setting will follow its safeguarding procedures, which may include carrying out a welfare check or seeking advice from relevant agencies.

Equality of Opportunities Policy

Stepping Stones of Scawby and all staff, management, volunteers and students will provide a welcoming and caring environment that promotes and reflects cultural and social diversity and is equally accessible to all families. We do not discriminate against staff/parent or stakeholders regardless of Disability, Gender reassignment, race, religion, or belief, sex, age, marriage, pregnancy and maternity, civil partnership or sexual orientation. All children have an equal right to be listened to and valued while at Stepping Stones of Scawby.

The legal frameworks for this policy include:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Childcare Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 1996
- Special Education Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Children Act 1989
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

This policy applies to all people, whether using or working in the setting.

We will not discriminate, whether directly or indirectly, in the treatment of any persons on the grounds of gender, race, culture, disability, religion, sexual orientation, marital status or for financial reasons.

Acts of unlawful discrimination will be challenged and the person concerned helped to understand why this is not acceptable. Stepping Stones of Scawby is open to all members of the community and everyone will be made welcome – please refer to our admissions policy.

Admission Arrangements

We welcome all children and aim to respond appropriately to each child's differing experiences and individual needs. We encourage parents to meet with the manager at the earliest opportunity if they have any concerns surrounding their child's need as they begin their pre-school journey with us.

We are flexible as possible with admission arrangements for those children with special educational needs / disabilities. Negotiations will take place on an individual basis in order to enable a smooth transition from home to the pre-school environment. Risk assessments and care plans (if applicable) will be conducted for each individual child with Special Educational Needs.

In order to promote equality and diversity we will:

- Ensure that all parents are made aware of our policy.
- Offer equality and choice for all.
- Access additional funding where necessary and available.
- Reflect the diversity of members of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
- Ensure our admissions policy promotes equality for all families.

- Not discriminate against a family or prevent entry to our setting on any grounds.
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to contribute to their child's care and education.
- Use funding from within the Pre-School budget, where possible and as the budget allows, to use for Special Educational Needs including training.

We aim to encourage children to develop positive attitudes about themselves and other people. We will do this by:

- Listening to children and ensuring each child feels included, safe, valued and respected.
- Ensuring that all children have equal access to activities, resources and learning opportunities
- Making appropriate provision to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities and recognise different learning styles.
- Providing play materials/resources and activities that demonstrates diversity of background and ability, and help to develop positive attitudes to differences of race, culture, language, gender and ability.
- Promoting children's awareness of their own culture and beliefs and those of other people.
- Ensuring the differentiation of activities to include the needs of all children.
- Working in partnership with key professionals to ensure that individuals with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities can participate fully in all aspects of the provision.
- Avoiding stereotypical images in equipment, resources and activities.
- Using positive non-discriminatory language with all children.
- Valuing the home background of all children.
- Ensuring any discriminatory language or practice is challenged appropriately.

English as an Additional Language

Information, whether written or spoken will be available in as many languages as necessary to meet the needs of individuals within the group.

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset to the group and their languages will be valued, recognised and respected.

Inclusion

- The staff will ensure that there are positive attitudes to diversity and difference so that every child is included and not disadvantaged.
- Children will be supported to learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.
- Staff will work with parents/carers and other professionals to make reasonable adjustment to the environment as required by both the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act to accommodate and meet the needs of a child with identified learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities.
- Staff will focus on each child's individual learning, development and care needs by:
- Removing or helping to overcome barriers for children where these already exist.
- Being alert to the early signs of needs that could lead to later difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as necessary.
- Stretching and challenging all children.

- All children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulty or disability, gender or ability will have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

Staff training

We have the opportunity to access termly training and updates from the Early Years Team.

- Staff will be encouraged to attend training opportunities to support their awareness and understanding of equality and diversity.
- The setting SENCO will attend training around special educational needs and the code of practice.
- Staff will have equal access to identified training to ensure professional development.
- Funding will be made available (where possible) from within the pre-school budget to allow staff to access training.

Payment of Fees Policy

Fees

The following policy has been drawn to help everyone understand how all issues relating to money are dealt with. Stepping Stones of Scawby has a Manager in place who deals with all income and expenditure. Famly is an online cashless system which we use for all payments. When joining the setting, the manager will create you an account and can answer any further questions you may have.

Monthly Fees (Pre-School)

Invoices will be issued at the beginning of each month, All fees should be paid in full by 28th of the month (e.g. September bill will be due on 28th September). If you are experiencing difficulty with this then reasons must be discussed strictly in the first week with the Manager and consideration will be given to alternative payment arrangements. Payments can be made directly through famly, via bank transfer or childcare vouchers as well as government funding.

Monthly Fees (Out of School Club/Holiday Club)

Invoices will be issued at the beginning of each month, All fees should be paid in full by 28th of the month (e.g. September bill will be due on 28th September). If you are experiencing difficulty with this then reasons must be discussed strictly in the first week with the Manager and consideration will be given to alternative payment arrangements. Payments can be made directly through famly, via bank transfer or childcare vouchers.

If you wish to cancel any sessions, this must be done in writing, either through famly or by email no later than the 1st of the month for any cancellations or amendments in that month, e.g. no later than 1st September for any cancellations or amendments in September. In such instances, balance adjustments will be made to your famly account so please ensure the figures are checked before payment is made as balance adjustments to not always show on the pdf version of the invoice.

Late Payment of Fees

If payment is not received by the date stated on the invoice, or alternative arrangements have not been met, a **reminder** will be sent to you **(with a £20.00 late payment fee included)**. If a 2nd reminder needs to be sent a week after the payment due date then you will receive a letter informing you that your child will no longer be allowed to attend the setting, until full payment is received.

Late pick up fees

After 6:00pm parents will be charged **£20.00** up to 6:30pm. Staff will notify Children's Services at **6:30pm** if no contact has been sought.

If a Pre-School child is not collected at the end of their pre-booked session the parent/carer will be charged the full cost of the next session. This is to cover the cost of additional staff required to ensure staff: children ratio is adhered to.

Termination Letter

This letter will be sent to inform you that due to the fact your child/children's fees have not been paid, and that no attempt has been made to pay them, the child's place at Stepping Stones has been terminated. It will also advise the parent/carer that we will formally proceed with a claim against them via the Small Claims Court.

Government Funding

There is funding available to cover the cost of childcare for Under 5's, this includes government-funded childcare and early education for children through universal and working-parent schemes. These include:

- **9 Months to 2-Year-Olds (Working Families):** Up to 30 hours of free childcare/early education per week during term time (or stretched annually) for eligible working families and foster carers.
- **2-Year-Olds (Disadvantaged Families):** 15 hours a week of free early education if you receive extra support such as Universal Credit, Disability Living Allowance, or similar benefits.
- **3 and 4-Year-Olds (Universal):** 15 hours per week (570 hours a year) of free early education for all children starting the term after their third birthday.
- **3 and 4-Year-Olds (Working Parents):** An additional 15 hours per week, making a total of 30 hours per week for eligible working families.
- **Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP):** Extra funding paid to early years providers for eligible children to support their learning and development.
- **Disability Access Fund (DAF):** Support for children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance who take up free early education

It is the responsibility of the child's parent/carers to apply for any relevant funding based on their personal circumstances and eligibility. After any funding has been applied for, parents/carers may be given a code.This code along with the parents national insurance number needs to be given to the setting as soon as possible. At the setting, parents and families use various forms of payment, funding and grants therefore it is important you communicate with the setting how you are planning to pay/fund your child's place. As much as the setting are here to help and assist with any funding questions or queries, it is also the responsibility of the parents/carers to provide any funding codes and relevant funding information to the setting.

Parents need to apply for the funding the term before their child is due to start in order to be able to be eligible for the following term, e.g. September starters need to apply by 31st Aug, January starters need to apply by 31st Dec, April starters need to apply by 31st March.

Alternatively, we also accept Tax Free Childcare. More information about funding and if you are eligible can be found at www.gov.uk/get-childcare

Complaints Procedures

Making concerns known

1. A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provision should first of all talk over any worries and anxieties with their child's key person.

2. If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns to the Manager, Mrs Courtney Piercy. If the parent feels that again the problem has not been resolved then they must request a meeting with the manager in order to look for a resolution. If the meeting does not find a solution a second meeting with the Executive Head of Scawby Academy, Mrs Zoe Birchall will be arranged. Finally if no solution has been found then the parent must put their concerns/complaint in writing to the Board of Directors of St Hybald's Trust. They must provide you with an account of the findings of the investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint if your child is in the Early Years age group and your provider is only on the early years register.

   Stepping Stones of Scawby will tell you about any action they have taken or intend to take as a result of their findings verbally and in writing, and a record will be kept of the whole process.

   You can consult with Ofsted at any stage about concerns you may have with Stepping Stones of Scawby provisions where they fall within the remit of our registration. If at any time you are unsure you can contact Ofsted /Citizens advice or Early Years Team at North Lincolnshire Council.

3. Both parents and the staff member may wish to have a trade union representative/colleague with them and an agreed record of the discussion will be made. This record should be signed by all parties present and each will receive a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure was concluded and the complaint satisfied.

4. What if you have a Concern and feel the matter isn't resolved as a parent/carer.

   Most complaints should be resolved informally or at this initial stage.

5. If the matter is still not sorted out to the parent's satisfaction, the parent should again contact the Board of Directors.

If parent and group cannot reach agreement, it might be helpful to invite an external mediator, one who is acceptable to both parties, to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to clarify the situation.

The mediator will keep all discussions confidential. She/he will meet with the group if requested and will keep an agreed written record of any meeting that are held and of any advice she/he has given.

The Role of the Registering Authority

In some circumstances, it will be necessary to bring in OFSTED who have a duty to ensure complaints are dealt with accordingly. They can be contacted on 0300 1231231 or through their Email: enquires@ofsted.gov.uk. In these cases both parent and the Out of School Club/Pre-school would be informed and would work with OFSTED to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint followed by appropriate action.

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the Out of School Club/Pre-School and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.