**Parents Information**

**Child**

**Contact Centre: Learning Steps Day Nursery Ltd contact centre**

**117, Soho Hill, Hockley**

**Birmingham**

**B19 1ay**

**Tel:0121** **5230088**

**Email:**

**info@learningstepsdaynursery.co.uk**

**National Association of Child Contact Centre**

**Promoting safe child contact within a national framework of Child Contact Centres**

This Child Contact Centre is a member of the National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC).

**Learning steps** holds the following values:

* Ensuring safety.
* Child-centred within the family.
* Promoting equality, celebrating diversity.
* Independent and impartial.
* Respecting individuals, preserving confidentiality.
* Valuing and supporting voluntary service.
* Sharing skills and expertise to achieve better outcomes for children and their families.

**Learning steps** member Child Contact Centre have an endorsed accreditation process which shows that all **Learning steps** Child Contact Centre work to agreed and approved national standards, which ensure that families using the Child Contact Centre are safe and well cared for.

* **Equal opportunities and diversity**

We aim to offer an equal service, regardless of race, skin colour, ethnic origin, cultural beliefs, nationality, gender, age, HIV/AIDS, disability, sexual orientation or religion, and to anyone who is disadvantaged by conditions or

requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

* **What is a Child Contact Centre?**

A Child Contact Centre is a safe, friendly and neutral place where children of separated families can spend time with one or both parents, and sometimes other family members. It is a child centred environment that puts the needs of the children first.

We offer supported contact in our centre which is usually run by trained and checked out volunteers who will try to give everyone a warm welcome and to make the visit as beneficial and enjoyable as possible for the children and the adults. They can also help out with handover arrangements.

**Learning Steps Supported Centre** is suitable for families where no significant risk to the child or others has been identified. A fee may be charged. The basic elements of a Supported Centre (as confirmed by the NACCC website) are

* Impartiality
* Staff and volunteers are available for assistance but there is no monitoring or evaluation of individual contacts/conversations.
* Several families may be using the same room together at the Centre
* Families will be encouraged to develop mutual trust
* **NO** detailed reports are made unless there is a risk of harm
* Anyone can apply to use Learning Steps Centre or they may be helped by their mediator, solicitor, CAFCASS officer or social worker. The particular circumstances of a situation and any possible risks will be fully assessed by the Centre before setting up any arrangements to start using the Centre.
* **What is it like at a Child Contact Ce**

The most important people in the Child Contact Centre are the children. We aim to create a warm, sociable atmosphere where you and your children can relax and enjoy yourselves. The Centre has an area with a variety of games, toys and books for children of all ages. Tea, coffee and other refreshments are provided. You may want to bring along some favourite toys, special drinks, or other things you might need such as nappies.

The Child Contact Centre is run by fully trained volunteers or staff. They are impartial, so they do not take sides. They work to a strict confidentiality policy and have all been through an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check.

* **How are the visits arranged?**

Visits are by referral. The referral can be made by a social worker, solicitor, family mediator, CAFCASS officer (formerly known as a court family welfare officer), or by a court order. The person making the referral fills out a referral form and sends it to the Centre Co-ordinator. How often you come to the Centre depends on you and when the Centre is open.

It is advisable for you (the parent) and your child or children to come and see the Centre before your first arranged visit. This will help you get to know the Centre and the staff, and make your first visit easier.

* **Do I have to meet my ex-partner**

Not if you don’t want to. Parents are responsible for their children at all times while at the Centre so you will have to wait with your child until your ex-partner arrives. However, the Centre staff can deal with the handover of your child so you don’t need to meet your ex-partner.

* **What happens if I can’t come at a t**

Let your ex-partner and the Centre Co-ordinator know as soon as you can.

* **Does the Centre make any repor**

A Child Contact Centre is independent of the courts, social services or any statutory agency. We do not make verbal or written reports about visits, apart from the dates and times of attendance. The only exception to this is if we believe that a child is at risk, or if a member of staff, volunteer or Centre user is at risk of harm.

* **Is there anything I need to do?**

As this is a special time for children to spend with the parent they no longer live with, we ask that new partners do not attend the Centre. Also, please keep disagreements out of the Child Contact Centre. Remember that your child is hurting too.

Make this a happy time for them.

* **Are there any rules?**

As few as possible! However, the Centre is used by several families at the same time, so we have to ensure the safety of everyone and consideration for others:

* Parents are responsible for the safety and supervision of their children at all times while at the Centre. No child may be left without a parent in attendance.
* You must provide a contact telephone number when leaving children at the Centre.
* A child may only be taken from the Centre during a visit if this is stated on the referral form, or with the written consent of both parents.
* Relatives or friends can only attend if they are named on the referral form.
* There must be no arguing in front of any of the children. Abusive or aggressive behaviour and racist or other offensive remarks will not be tolerated. Any visitor acting in such a way will be asked to leave.



* Our safety procedures such as fire evacuation are clearly displayed around the centre’s and must be adhered to at all times.
* The use of the centre is time limited so if either party are late this means that the session could potentially be cut short as it may not be possible for a supervisor/room to be available for the outstanding time however, full payment will be taken prior to contact commencing as the room/supervisors are booked and were available at the agreed and correct times.
* If contact is cancelled under 48 hours’ notice then they will still incur a charge. If the resident parent/carer cancels during this period they may also be liable to make this payment. All cancellation fees are subject to the managers discretion and you may be requested to provide a doctor’s letter if cancelling due to illness.
* We do try to confirm your contact session with you the day before they are due out of courtesy but sometimes this is not possible and I would like to remind you that it is also your responsibility to organise and keep track of your contact sessions, if you do not hear from us prior your session and you are unsure if it is going to be going ahead then please call us on 0121 5230088
* If there are any changes regarding your details, such as telephone numbers, email addresses or court orders etc then please notify us as soon as possible
* Some of our toilets are communal at Learning Steps Contact Centre so if you would like to use our toilets or leave the waiting room at any point then please speak to a member of our office staff who will be able to assist you whilst you do this to ensure that you and the other party do not meet
* Payment must be made prior to contact taking place in full, if this is not done then we reserve the right to cancel the contact session and will not book any further sessions until the outstanding fee is received.
* The centre will not get involved in anything outside of contact and this includes the passing of personal items.
* Anyone under the influence of or carrying alcohol or drugs will not be allowed on the premises.
* Mobile phones are not to be used whilst contact is taking place so that full attention is given to the children.
* Video or still photography is only permitted with the permission of the resident parent and under the direction of the Coordinator or Team Leader, of your child only. Any video or still photography recorded at the Centre must not be uploaded or published to any social media website such as Facebook. No other child or adult may be photographed at the Centre at any time.
* Please advise us of any changes to your mobile number for emergency contact. An emergency contact number (mobile number) MUST be given to the centre and you must be contactable during the time your child is in contact.
* All contacts will be reviewed every six months u n less stated otherwise. This will enable all parties to view what progress is being made.
* Rooms are to be kept clean and tidy at all times.
* Any breakages must be reported to centre staff.
* No food is allowed unless given permission prior to contact.
* Please be considerate to other service users who may also be having contact in another room.
* Although the centre has a confidentiality policy if there is risk or harm to a child then this will be disclosed to the manager.
* Finally, please: No smoking in the Centre. Switch off your mobile phone while you’re with your child. Don’t bring any pets. No taking photographs, video filming, or use of portable computers unless the other party and the Coordinator or Team Leader have given their permission. Alcohol, drugs, or anyone under the influence of these will not be allowed onto the premises.
* **Booking in Contact Centre**

When you first come to the contact centre your referral states the frequency of contact, we will automatically book your contact in on the day that contact falls on, at the regularity requested or as close to as we can. We will continue to book these contacts in until we are told otherwise, these are chargeable contacts and should you cancel them under 48 hours you will incur the fee. With notice you can move your contact to a different week, day or time (subject to availability and with consent from the other party). All contact days and times are subject to availability.

* **Confirming Contact**

If you have a contact on a Saturday or Sunday then it is likely that you will receive a call on the Thursday or Friday to confirm your contact. This is a courtesy call **only** and is not guaranteed. You are responsible for your own contact should know when it takes place and are responsible for making sure you attend on the correct day at the correct time.  Bookings are provisional if booked by ourselves, in order to have a slot available for you on your specified day and frequency. Bookings are subject to time change by ourselves if/when necessary.

We advise you ring the head office prior to contact to get confirmation.

* **Cancelling Contact**

If contact is court ordered then it must take place unless good reason is provided. This policy is to prevent contacts being cancelled unduly and to ensure that any sessions missed are replaced. If contact is not court ordered then an agreement has been reached in regards to child contact therefore, it must take place to provide consistency. Cancellations will only be accepted with good reason provided and adequate evidence if necessary.

All contacts must take place unless good reason or adequate evidence is provided.

If contact is cancelled under 48 hours’ notice then the charge will be incurred. The person that cancels the contact is liable for the charge. If the resident parent/carer cancels during the 48-hour notice period they will be liable to make this payment, this is regardless of who usually pays for contact. All cancellation fees are subject to the managers discretion and you may be requested to provide a doctor’s letter if cancelling due to illness.

If the child is unwell, we will accept a doctor’s note as long as it is relating to the date in question and in this case the fee would no longer apply.

If the resident parent/carer is unwell or has a problem travelling the child to contact it is their responsibility to make other arrangements to ensure the child/children get to contact. If they are unable to do this and contact cancels due to their illness or due to transport issues then the fee will apply.

If the person having contact is unwell, the same rules apply as the child being unwell. They will need to provide a doctor’s note, in which case the fee will not apply but if a doctor’s note is not provided the fee applies.

If multiple children attend contact and one is ill, then the others will be required to be made available. If the resident parent/carer is unable to do this then the fee will apply to the resident parent/ carer as alternative arrangements should be made.

The charge is expected to be paid prior to the next due session taking place in full.

If for any reason the incurred charge is not paid then no contact can be booked in until the fee is received in full.

Failing to receive payment by the next due appointment all parties will be informed and would expect payment to be received within 7 days. If payment is not received by this time then the file will be closed and archived. No bookings will be accepted and a new referral would be required if the contact is reinstated following Little Angels Contact Centre receiving the outstanding fee in full.

* **Money Owed and Doctor's Notes**

If there is a cancellation due to illness of the child then a doctor’s note needs to be brought to the next contact. If the doctors note is not brought to contact then the resident carer will need to pay the outstanding fee for the contact that was cancelled. If they do not bring the fee or the doctors note to the next contact then no further contacts will be booked in until this is done.

If there is outstanding money owed then no contact will be booked until this is settled. It is the person who cancelled contact responsibility to settle the fee, however the other party can settle it if they want to to enable contact to continue.

If a contact is cancelled under 48 hours for any other reason, other than illness, then the fee for that contact needs to be paid before any other contact is booked in. Only cancellations due to illness will be given the opportunity to bring the doctors note or fee to the next contact as we understand that they require time to collect the doctors note.

* **Room Hire Also Available!!**

We also hire out our contact rooms. They can be used for CAFCASS meetings, Social Services contacts or meetings with Social Workers as well as many other uses.

 All rooms are equipped with toys, tables and chairs and in some venue, there are sofas.

You are welcome to bring your own toys, food, activities or any additional things you may need.

For more information and prices please contact the Head Office.

**We look forward to welcoming you and your family.**

**If you would like to find out more about the National Association of Child Contact Centres, please contact:**

**Tel: 0845 4500 280 (local rate) email: contact@naccc.org.uk www.naccc.org.uk**

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Registered Charity Number: 1078636

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**… so that parenting needn’t end when a partnership does**