

# The Local Offer

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Name of Setting: First Steps Playgroup

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Email: firststeps@live.co.uk

Name of person to contact: Alison Blackery

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## *My child has SEND. I would like to look around. What do I need to do?*

First Steps welcomes parents /carers along with their child if they are looking for an early years setting. We can be contacted by telephone, text, facebook or email. Our setting's policies and procedures, Parents information booklets, most recent Ofsted report and staff details are available on our website. First Steps has an open door policy and so we welcome visitors and parents to our setting at anytime during sessions. On arrival you will greeted by a member of staff and shown around our wonderful setting.

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## *How will my child and I be made to feel welcome and how will you get ready for my child coming?*

Our friendly staff team welcome all children at First Steps. If required we will provide a picture of your child's key person and the setting layout. Our SENCO ( special educational needs coordinators) Alison Blackery and Rachel Raines will liaise with parents and other professionals in identify children's needs and ensuring additional support/equipment needs are in place prior to them commencing the Playgroup. Our booklet `all about me` is given to parents to allow you to share your children's interests, likes/dislikes, comforters your child may have, the other agencies involved with your child, as well as sharing your family structure. We offer a `stay and play` session prior to your child beginning playgroup to meet the staff and become familiar with the setting and liaising / sharing information. We use pictorial signs throughout the setting and children's coat pegs have their name on and a picture to encourage a sense of belonging and sense of security, helping them become familiar with their peer group and routines of the day in the setting.

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## *How accessible are your premises?*

First Steps is on ground level situated next to St Giles Church centrally located within the village. We have two entrances to the premises; the side entrance has no steps which makes ideal wheel chair access. We have a disabled toilet which can be adapted to your child's needs and a nappy changing unit to support all ages of children (0-5).

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## *How will you keep my child safe?*

First Steps is based within the Old School Hall and is set up daily, this means that equipment is unpacked and packed away every day allowing us to check equipment used each time it is put out, this also allows us the opportunity to adjust the equipment to suit individual needs. All external doors are locked during session time in line with our policies and procedures. Child safety is paramount and their safety and wellbeing is our main priority. To ensure children's safety we maintain a high staff ratio and for children with SEND needs we would offer additional support. All staff and volunteers have CRB/DBS checks and are suitable people to be working in early years. Equipment used is always age appropriate and additional equipment would be sourced to support individual needs where required. We adopt a child-friendly approach based on clear understanding of the needs and views of children. As a well established team we provide a safe and child friendly environment for your child. A risk assessment is carried out daily at the premises. All other assessments are carried out annually or as required. The assessments are carries out on all areas of our premises including outdoors, the toys and equipment.

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## *How will you communicate with me what my child has done, enjoyed and learnt?*

First Steps provide every child with a daily activity sheet to show what activities have been on offer. We can adopt a number of strategies to communicate with parents depending on your availability; the key person or a Senco can be available at the beginning and end of the session; home diaries and photo strips are used, where key person/SENCO can share details of your child's activities during the session, and even a reassuring text message or phone call to let you know they are having fun and playing safely. With permission from parents we can share photos with you via email or on our Facebook /website page letting you see the activities your child has been enjoying. Your child will also have their personal Learning Journey recording their learning and development within the setting.

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## *How do you work with other professionals?*

First Steps are very familiar with working and liaising with other professionals and welcome them into our setting; we facilitate groups such as social communication groups and small workshops. We regularly host meetings and support each child's needs by implementing individually tailored support plans, using a plan, do, review approach in our setting and share information to help transition to school meetings. We are also happy to work with other settings, childminders the child may attend sharing information

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and working on individual targets together. We have a wealth of experience working with SENCO children with SEND; we are supported by regular visits from our area SENCO. All children have an Early Assessment Review as they settle into our Playgroup, if we have any concerns about a child's development we can make a referral with parental consent to The Specialist Teaching Services or for a specific area including Speech and Language Therapy Service.

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## *What training have you/your staff had in SEND?*

First Steps have a breadth of experience and knowledge in SEND and we are always willing to explore more training opportunities. Here is a current list: The SEN code of practice and Role of the SENCO/Sharing Concerns with Parents and Carers / Observations, Play-based Assessment and Writing a support plan. Signs and Symbols Understanding and Supporting Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Early Years Settings BA (hons) in educational Studies Level 2/3 NVQ in Child's Care, Learning and Development. Menphys SOS working with Disabled Children and Young People. Child Protection / Safeguarding Children/ A Shared Responsibility. Paediatric First Aid Makaton Training Promoting Positive Behaviour ECAT ELP level 3 Social and Communication group We are working towards a Healthy Tots accreditation Each member of our staff has their own folder, which hold copies of the various training certificates that they have obtained after courses have been attended and completed.

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## *How will you adapt play opportunities for my child?*

At First Steps Playgroup we like all our children to feel valued and individual despite the challenges they may face. So if the need arises to adapt your child's activities to support them using their interests, we will find a manageable and achievable way to put this into place. A Higher staff ratio allows us to offer more support in play interactions modelling and using social stories to support children in play. Smaller group activities and social communication groups help support language interactions and confidence. We will also liaise with parents and use of visual timetables may help them change between activities within the setting. We would also seek additional specialist equipment. We would endeavour to give regular reports to parents and have open communication with them again adapting a variety of methods to suit parent's needs. We differentiate our activities to offer an inclusive provision.

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## *How will you get ready for my child going to his/her new school?*

First Steps treat the transition process with the highest importance. We offer a range of resources to introduce the new school such as school uniform added to dressing up and a photo board of the school and foundation unit and teachers. Visits from your child's class teacher and additional visits to the new school are arranged. During this process we would continue to liaise with other professionals and keep parents informed, and produce an individual photo book to encourage talking about the move to their new school to share with parents. Transition progress summary reports, current support documents and reports would also be forwarded to the new school.

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## *How will you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?*

We build relationships in which parents/ Carers feel confident that they will be heard and not judged. Working together helps enable the child to develop further and we share their achievements. Initially we support parents during the settling into Playgroup by producing an individual settling in plan if required communicating frequently with parents either face to face or by the methods of communication most suited to them. We produce a settling in report within the first 6 weeks of beginning playgroup and regularly update parents via reports and meetings on progress and development, as well as an individual Learning Journey for each child.