

The Catalyst Collective Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2024-25

Introduction

All those working for or with The Catalyst Collective, either directly or indirectly with young people have a significant contribution to make to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. This includes, but is not limited to, paid and voluntary programme staff, volunteers and mentors and visiting speakers, guests and sessional staff.

The purpose and scope of this policy is:

- to protect young people involved in The Catalyst Collective mentoring programme from harm.
- to provide all staff and mentors, as well as young people and their families with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.
- to raise the awareness of staff and volunteers of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse or risk of abuse.
- to provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be vulnerable or at risk harm.
- to ensure that all adults within our organisation who have access to children or who have access to information, data or meetings concerning children have been checked as to their suitability via their references and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will ensure that:

- The Catalyst Collective will have a named and appropriately trained Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Every partnership organisation will have a Designated Safeguarding Lead that we collaborate with.
- All mentors and staff will undergo basic safeguarding and Child Protection training and develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and receive regular updated training as required but at least every three years.
- All mentors and staff will know how to respond to a pupil who makes an allegation or appears to be vulnerable or at risk.
- All mentors and staff having contact with our pupils will be checked (DBS) and given a copy of this policy and a safeguarding briefing.
- All parents/carers will have access to this document, to be made aware of the responsibilities of staff and mentors with regards to Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.
- All pupils are made aware of this policy and who they can speak to in organisation if they are worried or concerned.
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed, monitored, and updated by the DSL annually.

Disclosure and Concerns

- Disclosure is the process by which children and young people start to share their experiences of abuse with others. This can take place over a long period of time.
- A safeguarding concern is any indicator of potential abuse even if the child does not verbally express them.
- **All disclosures and concerns should be taken seriously.**

Child Abuse

- Child abuse happens when a person harms a child.
- This can be physical, sexual, emotional or involve neglect.
- Child abuse can be perpetrated by anyone including family members, friends, acquaintances or strangers.
- Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately harmed, causing physical harm. Signs of physical abuse include unexplained bruises, burns or scalds and frequent injuries.
- Neglect is when a child's basic needs are not met. Signs of neglect may include inadequate clothing, unsupervised children and unrelated injuries or health problems.
- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. Child sexual abuse includes contact abuse (involving physical contact) and non-contact abuse (such as online sexual grooming and exposure to sexual activities such as sexual conversations).
- Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a child. There aren't usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse but you may spot changes in a child's actions or emotions.
- Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child or are particularly unusual for their stage of development.

Responding to disclosure or safeguarding concern and Referral Procedures

If a disclosure is reported to you or you have a safeguarding concern:

1. Ensure the young person is safe and reassured. Respect their right to privacy and time to talk without interruption.
2. Listen to what is being said to you without pressure, judgement or horror. Do not ask leading questions. Always believe what the young person has told you. A young person who is freely recalling significant events should not be interrupted.
3. Reassure the young person calmly and gently that they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not promise confidentiality. You must inform the Catalyst Collective DSL. Explain to the young person that to safeguard them, you must pass on the information that they are telling you. Tell them what will happen next, who you will tell and when.
4. Do not ask the young person to remove any item of clothing to show you any injuries.
5. Report what you have been disclosed to the Catalyst Collective DSL as soon as possible, or a named deputy in her absence.
6. Record in a clear and precise way what the young person has told you as soon as possible whilst it is still fresh in your mind.

Recording

- Use actual words from sentences spoken by the young person rather than an interpretation of what was said.

- Specific facts relating to named people, dates, places, times and context of disclosure should be recorded accurately.
- Ensure you have signed, stated who you are, and dated the recording.
- If any injuries are visibly shown, record where they are and what they look like.
- Remember, all recordings must be accurate and factual and dated, as you may be required to produce the information as evidence for any further action that may follow.

Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in The Catalyst Collective is responsible for:

- Responding to disclosures in accordance with referral procedures
- Following The Catalyst Collective code of conduct, safeguarding and e-safety policies
- Attending regular training to maintain suitable knowledge for the fulfilment of the role

The named DSL for The Catalyst Collective 2024-25 is Chloe Lewis – 07940249509.

The Catalyst Collective partner schools and organisations are responsible for:

- Following the organisation policy of their school or organisation and procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns or an allegation of abuse.
- Nominating a named person (likely to be the existing DSL) to act as a lead point of contact alongside The Catalyst Collective DSL on all disclosures.
- Working with The Catalyst Collective to ensure mentors and staff contribute appropriately to these organizational procedures.
- Verifying The Catalyst Collective safeguarding policy appropriately corresponds to school/organisational requirements.

Programme staff and mentors from The Catalyst Collective are responsible for:

- Following the organisation policy of The Catalyst Collective as outline at safeguarding training
- Attending safeguarding training
- Responding to disclosures in accordance with referral procedures
- Following The Catalyst Collective code of conduct, safeguarding and e-safety policies

Supporting and Safeguarding

The Catalyst Collective will:

- Establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff and mentors, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to.
- Receive focused training to support learning and understanding of the changing landscape of safeguarding.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the organisation whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Work effectively with partner agencies to seek advice, support and guidance, drawing on multi agency expertise, knowledge and experience to support students at risk of harm including emotional and intellectual harm via social media and use of the internet

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. These will only be shared for the purpose of protecting the child or a third party in line with what is outlined in The Catalyst Collective and partner school safeguarding procedures.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will only disclose information to other staff and volunteers on a “need to know” basis.
- All staff and volunteers must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff and volunteers must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.
- Child protection information must be sent through a secure electronic system such as a password protected attachment on an email. Pupils’ records must not be sent by post.

Supporting Staff (including sessional staff)

- We recognise that staff working in the organisation who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding lead and either offer or signpost to further support as appropriate.

Allegations against staff

- Staff and volunteers should behave at all times in a professional manner towards students, bearing in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. It is important not to touch pupils however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent or make the child feel uncomfortable.
- We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer.
- If such an allegation is made, the member of staff or volunteer receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the partner organisation unless the allegation is about them.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). This contact will vary depending on the location of the partner organisation, and all relevant contacts are included at the end of this document.
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the partner organisation, the member of staff or volunteer must contact the named Deputy for the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- The organisation will follow the DfE/Local authority procedures for managing allegations against staff in discussion with the LADO.

Safe Recruitment

- The Catalyst Collective will, when appointing staff, take account of the guidance ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’ and any procedures issued or provided by the DfE.
- The Catalyst Collective will maintain a Central Record, detailing the range of checks carried out on staff and relevant volunteers: references, ID and DBS disclosures.
- The Central Record will demonstrate that the required enhanced DBS checks have been carried out.

- Documentation sent out to potential staff or volunteers will make it clear that child protection is a high priority of the organisation and that rigorous checks will be made of any candidate before appointments are confirmed:
- All references for staff and volunteers will be taken up and verified
- At interviews for prospective employees, all candidates will be asked to account for any gaps in their career/employment history
- All staff and mentors will require an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Disclosure and offers of appointment will be made conditional on the Organisation being satisfied that the prospective employee or mentor is a fit and proper person to work with or in proximity to children and young people.
- All contracts with third parties that involve the provision of staff to work in the Organisation will ensure that comparable checks are made by the provider in relation to any person engaged to work with or in proximity to children and young persons. Any staff who have not been so checked will be supervised by a person who has been cleared as a fit and proper person to work with or in proximity to children and young people.
- Volunteers who are in unsupervised contact with students will require an enhanced DBS disclosure.
- ID checks will be carried out on all appointments before an appointment is confirmed.
- The Catalyst will carry out further checks as appropriate on staff recruited from overseas, if in the opinion of the organisation the DBS disclosure is not sufficient for the purpose of assessing their suitability for the post and this will be done before the appointment is confirmed.
- Temporary or casual staff who do not have a current enhanced DBS Disclosure will not be allowed to work with or in proximity to children and young people unless supervised by a person who has been cleared as a fit and proper person to work with or in proximity to children and young people.
- The Catalyst will ensure that DBS checks on existing members of staff are currently valid. These will be refreshed every 2 years for paid staff.

Acceptable Physical Intervention or Restraint

Corporal punishment was abolished by section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. However, Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables organisation staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent the pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- Committing any offence (or, for pupils under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to property of, any person (including the pupil himself)
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the organisation or among any pupils receiving education at the organisation, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The provision applies when a member of staff, or other authorised person, is on the organisation premises, and when he or she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere, e.g. on a field trip or other authorised out of organisation activity.

- There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force' but, to be judged lawful, the force must be in proportion to the circumstances it is intended to prevent.

- We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to achieve the desired effect. We adhere to the local authority policy on physical intervention or restraint.
- Members of staff and other persons authorised by the Director may intervene if a student is causing damage to property or behaving in a way which endangers themselves or others.
- Safer handling training will be given to staff as necessary.
- In most situations the following protocol will be followed when intervening with students for the reasons outlined above:
 - Initially they will try to calm the student and defuse the situation.
 - If the student does not respond, staff will tell the student that their behaviour is unacceptable and will give instructions for the student to desist from their actions.
 - In exceptional circumstances, if the student continues to present a danger, staff may need to use passive physical contact (e.g. standing between students or blocking their path), to protect others from danger.
 - If the student continues to endanger others, the staff member will tell the student that they cannot be allowed to continue threatening others and may have to be restrained if they do not comply with instructions to stop.
 - In extreme situations (such as fights) the above process could result in more significant harm as physical intervention would be delayed. Consequently, staff may use physical restraint immediately if it is deemed that not to do so may result in significant injury to a student/students. However, restraint must only be used to contain the danger from the student in exceptional cases and teachers must satisfy themselves that this is the only way to contain a real and present danger.
 - To be judged lawful 'reasonable force', the force must be in proportion to the circumstances it is intended to prevent. It should be the minimum to achieve the desired effect.
 - The member of staff or other person is not expected to place themselves in danger. They should judge whether their duty to protect others would dangerously compromise their own safety.
 - If restraint is used, the member of staff will submit a report of the circumstances and outcome to the Director.
 - The Designated staff will inform the parents and give them an opportunity to discuss the incident.
 - In some cases, such as with SEN students, there may be medical advice about the safest way to hold pupils with specific health needs
 - We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.
 - There is post-incident support from the leadership team for any member of staff or other person who has had to resort to restraint, as required.

Key Contacts

Newham

Newham LADO Service

Nick Pratt or Alex Mihi

Email: lado@newham.gov.uk

Telephone: 0203 3733803 / 0203 3736706

Newham MASH

020 3373 4600 during office hours (Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5.15pm or Friday 9am to 5.00pm)

020 8430 2000 at any other time.

Hammersmith and Fulham

Megan Brown

H&F Safer Organisations (LADO) and Safeguarding in Education Manager

megan.brown@lbhf.gov.uk

07776 673020

Duty Admin: 020 8753 5125

LADO Referrals: LADO@lbhf.gov.uk

Hammersmith Front Door/Initial Consultation and Advice Team (ICAT)

020 8753 6600

Fax: 020 8753 4209

familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk

Out of hours service: 020 8748 8588

Hackney

Hackney LADO

0208 356 4569 / LADO@hackney.gov.uk

Hackney Children and Families Services Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

020 8356 5500

MASH@hackney.gov.uk

The telephone line is open between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday only, excluding bank holidays. Outside of office hours, if your concerns are urgent, you can call our Emergency Duty Team on 020 8356 2710.

Barnet Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Team (Children's)

020 8359 4066

mash@barnet.gov.uk

Barnet LADO contactable via the MASH team

Date of last review: 31 July 2024

Date of next review: 31 July 2025