The Catalyst Collective Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2026-27

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.

This policy is informed by the following legislation:

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- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Online Safety Act 2023
- The Catalyst Collective will review this policy regularly to reflect changes in legislation and statutory guidance.

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 and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads **who renew their training every two years.**
- Every partner school that we collaborate with will have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads).
- 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 student who makes an allegation or appears to be vulnerable or at risk.

- All mentors and staff having contact with our students will be have an enhanced DBS check.
- All mentors and staff will be 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 students 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 who work with The Catalyst Collective understand that behaviour is often a tool for communication.
- **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, exposure to sexual activities such as sexual conversations and being made to watch sexual activity in person on online e.g. pornography).
- 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.
    a. If the concern relates to the DSL, it must be reported to the Advisory Board Safeguarding Lead.
4. Do not ask the young person to remove any item of clothing to show you any injuries.
5. If there is risk of immediate harm, you should call 999.
6. Report what you have been disclosed/your concern to the Catalyst Collective DSL as soon as possible, or the deputy in her absence.
7. 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 using the form available here: https://tinyurl.com/CatalystDisclosureForm2026

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 and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in The Catalyst Collective are responsible for:

- Responding to disclosures and concerns – ensuring referrals are made to the school, social care or the police as necessary in line with the risk posed to the young person.
- 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
- Escalating concerns that in the opinion of the DSL/DDSL are not properly managed.

The named DSL for The Catalyst Collective 2026-27 is Chloe Lewis – 07940249509.

The Deputy DSL for The Catalyst Collective 2026-27 is Carol Murraine – 07469209979.

Carol Murraine is the Advisory Board Safeguarding Lead (and a company director of The Catalyst Collective). Carol provides oversight of safeguarding practice and can be contacted at carol.murraine@eyla.org.uk

The Catalyst Collective partner schools and organisations are responsible for:

- Full responsibility for the safeguarding of all students who are supported by the Catalyst Collective.
- Management of all referrals to statutory agencies.
- 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 organisational 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 outlined 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.

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/Deputy 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 (more information can be found here).
- 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. Students’ 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/ Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and either offer or signpost to further support as appropriate.

Allegations against staff and Low Level Concerns

- 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 students 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 student may make an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer. These are when an adult who works with children has:
    - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
    - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
    - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
    - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- If such an allegation is made against a person connected to the Catalyst Collective this should be referred to Chloe Lewis, Programme Director or The Advisory Board Safeguarding Lead who will discuss the content of the allegation with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who will determine next steps.
- If such an allegation is made about a person unconnected to the Catalyst Collective, the member of staff or volunteer receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead of the partner organisation unless the allegation is about them, in which case the allegation should be referred to the Chair of Governors or the Chair of Trustees. Chloe Lewis from the Catalyst Collective should also be informed.
- The Head Teacher/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 Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead of the partner organisation, the member of staff or volunteer must contact the Chair of Governors or the Chair of Trustees.
- The Catalyst Collective will follow the DfE/Local authority procedures for managing allegations against staff in discussion with the LADO which will lead to one of the following outcomes:
    - Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
    - Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation
    - False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
    - Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence, or
    - Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.
- If the allegation is against a person connected to The Catalyst Collective then due regard will be given to the role that they perform, how this will be managed during any investigation and support for them during the process. The Catalyst Collective will follow the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- If the allegation does not meet the harms threshold as detailed above it will be handled under the following Low Level Concerns framework as detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

- A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:
    - is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
    - does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
- As with an allegation this should be reported to Chloe Lewis or the Advisory Board Safeguarding Lead for those connected to The Catalyst Collective and to the person nominated in the Allegations Management and Low Level Concerns Policy in any other organisation. The reporting form is available here: https://airtable.com/appHT3WbXSMcC2shZ/shrMK24QBmIxvpvR2

Safe Recruitment

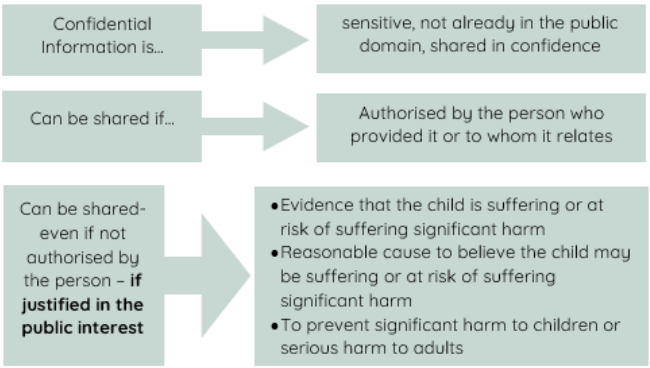
- The Catalyst Collective will, when appointing staff, take account of the guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' and any procedures issued or provided by the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- The Catalyst Collective will maintain a Central Record, detailing the 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.
- Any promotional materials and 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 staff and volunteers will be asked to complete a Catalyst Collective application form
- 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.

Information Sharing

The Catalyst Collective ensures that any safeguarding information is kept safely and only disclosed to agencies who have a need or right to know. They follow the principles published in the DfE information sharing guidance, summarised in the diagram below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66320b06c084007696fca731/Info_sharing_advice_content_May_2024.pdf



Recruiting external speakers and contacts

Mentors and staff working on behalf of The Collective Collective follow the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education with respect to engaging external speakers and contacts:

- Whilst external organisations can provide a varied and useful range of information, resources and speakers that can help schools and colleges enrich children's education, careful consideration should be given to the suitability of any external organisations.
- School and college safeguarding policies should set out the arrangements for individuals coming onto their premises, which may include an assessment of the education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks will be required.

All external speakers and contacts should be approved by the Programme Manager or Programme Director in advance of them being introduced to mentees. All persons engaged to support mentees must provide a copy of their identity documents to The Catalyst Collective. The purpose for their introduction in relation to the mentees goals should be identified.

Working alone protocol

In order to keep both young people and mentors safe the following applies to any in person meetings when the mentor and young person are meeting in a public place:

- All in person meetings are registered with The Catalyst Collective in advance
- Parent or carer consent is required to move from online to in person meetings.
- The mentee ensures that parent/carer knows when and where the meeting will take place and knows to raise the alarm if they do not return.

- The mentor ensures that a family member or friend knows when and where they are meeting and knows to raise the alarm if they do not return.

Residential or off-site Activities

When residential or off-site activities are undertaken, there will always be a Designated Safeguarding Lead present or on duty to take calls from those staff/mentors who are caring for the young people during the activity.

Activities will be risk assessed in advance and that risk assessment will be shared with parents/carers as part of the consent process for the young person to attend. At least two emergency contact details will be taken for the young person and any medical or safeguarding needs will be recorded for the purposes of ensuring that the young person is safe and well throughout the activity.

Adult to young person ratios will be carefully considered within the risk assessment so that young people would never need to be left alone in an emergency. The Catalyst Collective recognise that good practice would be that two adults would be able to stay with young people of there were an emergency and two adults should be assigned to the emergency situation.

Acceptable Physical Intervention or Restraint

The Catalyst Collective anticipate that Physical Intervention or Restraint will not be needed or used in respect of the activities that they carry out. If a staff member or mentor needs to touch a child in extreme circumstances, for example – a young person is about to step in front of a car – this, of course is permitted but should be reported to The Programme Manager or Director as soon as possible after the incident to eliminate any risk to the adult or the organisation.

Media and Consent

The Catalyst Collective is committed to ensuring that appropriate consent is obtained and respected in all aspects of programme delivery. Prior to participation in the programme, written consent is obtained from parents/carers for:

- participation in mentoring and programme activities
- communication between staff/mentors and young people (including via approved platforms such as WhatsApp, where applicable)
- attendance at enrichment activities, trips and residentials
- the collection and use of personal data in line with the organisation's Privacy Notice

Consent is recorded and stored securely.

The Catalyst Collective may capture photographs, videos or other media during programme activities. We will:

- obtain explicit consent from parents/carers (and young people where appropriate) before capturing or using images
- clearly explain how images may be used (e.g. website, social media, reports)
- respect the wishes of any young person or parent/carer who does not consent
- ensure that no identifying information is shared alongside images without additional consent

Images will be stored securely and used in line with data protection requirements.

Parents/carers and young people can withdraw consent at any time and any request to withdraw consent will be respected and actioned promptly.

Related Policies

This Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with the following organisational policies:

- Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality Policy
- Privacy Notice and Data Protection Procedures
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Key Contacts

Borough	LADO	MASH
Newham	Email: lado@newham.gov.uk Telephone: 0203 3733803 / 0203 3736706	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.
Hackney	0208 356 4569 / LADO@hackney.gov.uk	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	Barnet LADO contactable via the MASH team	020 8359 4066 mash@barnet.gov.uk
Greenwich	020 8921 3930 Email: childrens-LADO@royalgreenwich.gov.uk childrens-LADO@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.cjsm.net	Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours only): 020 8854 8888 Referral team: 020 8921 3172 **Email:** mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Lambeth	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), by: • phone on 020 7926 4679 or 07720 828 700 • email at lado@lambeth.gov.uk or helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk	020 7926 3100 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm) 020 7926 5555 (after office hours)

Document control

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