

A Checklist for Parents and Carers.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Introduction

Whatever activity your child is involved in, you will want to know that they are safe.

Most organisations working with children in the City of London and Hackney work really hard to keep children safe and have the right people, policies and practice in place to safeguard children. However, in some organisations these arrangements may not be as strong as they could be.

Whether your child is attending a nursery, a school, a youth club or participating in sport, if there are weaknesses that could mean your child is at risk, it's important that you know about them.

This will help you make an informed decision about the activities and organisations that YOU are comfortable with your child attending.

Even if all seems positive, you should not make any assumptions until you have looked into a few simple details. This leaflet provides some top tips about what questions to ask. **Remember - A well-run organisation will always welcome a conversation about what they are doing to keep children safe.**

Jim Gamble

Independent Chair of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board

If you are ever worried about your child (or another child), speak to a trusted professional or raise your concerns with an organisation's governing body. Alternatively, you can contact:

Hackney First Access Screening Team (FAST) **020 8356 5500**

City of London Children & Families Team **020 7332 3621**

For out of hours (5pm – 9am), the Emergency Duty Team **020 8356 2710**

For non-recent (historical) abuse please contact the numbers above and/ or the Police.

Worried about exploitation? Call the NSPCC Exploitation Helpline **0808 800 5000**

If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

PEOPLE - Are staff and volunteers suitable?

Are staff and volunteers recruited safely?

All staff and volunteers should go through a proper recruitment process which includes interviews, references and police checks.

Also ask if the organisation undertakes Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) checks (these used to be called CRB checks) for all their staff and volunteers.

Are staff and volunteers properly supervised?

There should be someone in charge to supervise staff and volunteers at all times.

Ask who is responsible for this.

Are staff and volunteers trained about child safeguarding?

All staff and volunteers should have up-to-date recognised safeguarding training.

Ask how often staff are trained and where they get training from.

Do staff and volunteers have the right qualifications?

Adults looking after your child should be properly qualified.

Ask if they are qualified to teach or coach sports, for example. You can also ask if they are a registered member of a recognised body or organisation – you might be able to check their details.

POLICY – What policies and procedures are in place?

- Is there a child protection policy?**
All organisations looking after children should have one of these, with a clear procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse. You should be able to view the policy on request.
- Do you know who can you talk to if you are worried about safeguarding?**
Organisations should make it clear who you can talk to if you or your child have any worries. They should be prepared to listen and be able to tell you what to do if you need advice, support or if you have any concerns.
- Is there a written code of behaviour or code of conduct for staff and volunteers?**
There should be a written code of behaviour (or conduct) showing what is required of staff, volunteers and participants.
- Are there clear boundaries about relationships?**
The organisation should have clear guidelines about physical contact and social activities between staff, volunteers, participating children, and parents (*including contact online, via messaging, social media or by text*).
- Are there clear arrangements in place when my child goes on a trip?**
For every outing, no matter how long or short, you should be informed of arrangements, including the venue, staffing levels, an emergency contact number and transport there and back. Your consent should be obtained for each one-off event or at the beginning of a series of regular outings.
- Is Health and Safety taken seriously and is it effective?**
Are there enough adults to properly supervise your child?
Is a qualified first aider always on duty?
Is there a procedure for reporting and responding to injuries or accidents?
Are there clear arrangements for providing drinks and giving medications? (parental consent will be required for giving medication)
Do the premises satisfy fire regulations?
If your child needs help with using the toilet, feeding or medication, ask about the procedures for personal care needs.
Does the organisation have public liability insurance?
How often is equipment checked for safety?

PRACTICE - Be Alert!

Be aware of the following situations – they could indicate a concern that may affect your child:

Poor communication and negative responses to the questions set out in this leaflet.
Activities where you are discouraged from watching or from becoming involved.
Anyone who always seems to take charge and works outside of organisational guidelines.
Anyone showing favouritism to your child.
Anyone encouraging inappropriate physical contact.
Anyone promoting a “win at all costs” attitude towards a sport or activity.
If your child is showing changes in behaviour, drops out or stops wanting to go for no apparent reason.
Anyone who invites your child to spend time alone with them or visit their home.
Anyone who befriends your child via social media or stays in contact for reasons not linked to the organisation.

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