

Are you thinking of sending your child to a nursery, school, youth club or sport activity?

You can support your child to be safe by asking these questions

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.

This checklist aims to help you to know what to ask.

PEOPLE - Are staff and volunteers suitable?

- Are all staff and volunteers recruited by interview, with references and police checks (DBS, previously called a CRB)?
- Are staff and volunteers properly supervised?
- Are staff and volunteers trained about child safeguarding?
- Do staff and volunteers have the right qualifications for the job they are doing?

POLICY – What policies and procedures are in place?

- Is there a child protection policy to deal with concerns about possible abuse? Who is the lead person to talk to if you have concerns?
- What does the organisation do about bullying?
- Is there a written code of behaviour or code of conduct for staff and volunteers?
- What are the organisation's guidelines about contact between staff, volunteers, children and parents? (both physical contact, and online contact including social media and text).
- Are there clear arrangements in place when your child goes on a trip? You should be told where they are going, what the transport arrangements are, given an emergency contact number, and you should be asked to sign to give your consent.
- Is Health and Safety taken seriously and is it effective? Is there always a qualified first aider on duty? Is there a procedure for reporting and responding to accidents? Is the building safe and secure? How do people access the facilities, is there a secure entry? Are there clear arrangements if your child needs medication? Does the organisation have public liability insurance?

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.

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) **0208 356 5500**

City of London Children & Families Team **0207 332 3621**

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