



The  
**Maltby** Learning Trust

# MLT Gang Related Activity Policy

Date Last Reviewed: March 2019  
Reviewed by: Executive Principal (Primary)  
Approved by: CEO

## INTRODUCTION

Children and young people often gather together to form peer groups which may socialise in public places, and which may lead to antisocial/youth offending behaviour. However, this type of 'gang' should not be confused with street gangs (which constitute a higher threat of serious violence) or organised crime groups.

## DEFINITION/CONTEXT

Street gangs have a hierarchical structure based on characteristics such as age, physical strength, propensity to violence and older sibling rank. There may be rites involved in gaining membership eg antisocial/criminal behaviour or sex acts. Evidence shows a high incidence of rape of girls who are associated with gangs, including multiple rape by different gang members. Incidence of rape of boys is not known but boys and young men should also be considered vulnerable to sexual violence.

This type of gang is likely to lay claim to territory, not necessarily geographical, and be in conflict with other similar gangs. Street gangs may be involved in drug dealing on behalf of organised crime groups as well as the sexual abuse/exploitation of both boys and girls.

Organised crime groups involve serious and organised criminality on a large scale, and, is normally led by adults who are involved for personal gain (eg monetary gain, status). Criminal activities include the exploitation of vulnerable children and adults, trafficking and modern slavery, and the movement and selling of drugs; these activities typically involve high levels of violence, coercion and intimidation.

## RISK FACTORS

Children across the age range (3-19) could be considered at risk of exploitation in areas where there is gang related activity, with younger children often being exploited by older, more 'powerful' gang members.

In addition to risk indicators associated with sexual exploitation (see separate CSE policy), indicators for gang related activity for children and young people may include:

- Starting to use new or unknown slang words
- Dressing in a particular style or 'uniform' which includes a particular colour
- New nickname
- Graffiti style 'tags' on possessions including school books
- Association with known or suspected gang members including family members
- Adopting certain codes of behaviour eg ways of talking and hand signs
- Expressing aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people, including those who have previously been friends
- Concern about the presence of unknown youths in the neighbourhood

## RESPONSE BY SCHOOL STAFF

Gang related activity is a complex issue and should be tackled in conjunction with parents and other agencies, including the police. However, if any form of exploitation is suspected, this should be treated as child abuse and therefore the safeguarding procedures as defined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy must be followed. This would usually be to the Designated Safeguarding Officers or Academy Principal in the

first instance but via the Local Authority's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if necessary, on 01709 336080.