

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review

Mossbourne Victoria Park Academy

Statement of the Independent Safeguarding Children Commissioner

I begin by thanking Sir Alan Wood CBE for his thoughtful, thorough, and evidence-based approach in conducting what was a challenging and complex Child Safeguarding Practice Review. His commitment to understanding the experiences of everyone involved, not least our children and their families, has been clear throughout.

Mossbourne Victoria Park Academy (MVPA) is undoubtedly a school that delivers outstanding academic achievement, creating meaningful pathways for young people to access the opportunities a good education provides. However, for every pupil to feel supported and enabled to thrive, there must be an equitable balance between high academic expectations and the duty of care owed to all pupils.

In my view, the evidence set out within Sir Alan's report demonstrates that this balance has not been achieved. For some children, the school has not been welcoming, flexible, or supportive.

It is now critically important that governors and school leaders examine their focus, ensuring there is true accountability and active oversight. They must reflect on the tone they have set, why harmful and humiliating practices have been allowed to persist unchecked and why key indicators relating to sanctions and disproportionality have attracted minimal curiosity.

This review was initiated because a small number of parents felt unable to engage meaningfully with the school. Their persistence, driven solely by concern for the health, safety, and wellbeing of their children, has led to today's findings. I hope they now feel better able to engage with the school and participate in its improvement journey in the months ahead.

I have no doubt that the vast majority of schools across Hackney strike the right balance between academic achievement, safeguarding, and pastoral care. This report should not be seen as an indictment of our schools and their committed teachers, but rather as a reminder that every educational setting should have the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children at their core.

There are lessons in this report for MVPA, the wider Mossbourne Federation, the Department for Education, and indeed for Ofsted. If the safeguarding, welfare and inclusion of all children are not at the heart of what we expect of schools, then the foundation upon which academic excellence is built is incomplete.

In closing, I wish to highlight two points. First, I thank all members of the CHSCP's Case Review Panel for the support and challenge they have provided throughout what has, at times, been an adversarial process. Second, I reaffirm that when it comes to the safety and welfare of our children, no individual or institution is above scrutiny. It is now for Members of Mossbourne's most senior governing body to take action and positively respond to the review's findings.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Gamble', written in a cursive style.

Jim Gamble QPM
Independent Safeguarding Children Commissioner
City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership
9 December 2025