

ST. CLARE'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

"Guided by Jesus Christ our teacher, we journey together, learning to dream, believe and achieve."

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Governors and staff of St. Clare's RC School fully recognise the responsibilities and duty placed upon them to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils at the school. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting pupils from harm. We understand that our school and staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and that safeguarding and the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility.

We believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment in which pupils can learn and which promotes the social, physical and emotional wellbeing of each individual pupil.

The school recognises its responsibilities and duties to report Child Protection concerns to the social work service within Children's Specialist Services and to assist Children's Specialist Services in Child Protection enquiries and in supporting Children in Need. At St. Clare's we maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' (Keeping Children Safe in Education page 7). Staff at St. Clare's will always act in the **best interests of the child**.

This policy is in line with the **Manchester Child Protection Procedures; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – advice for practitioners' and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015.**

We have regard to all of this statutory guidance when carrying out our duties to safeguard and promote welfare of all of the children at St. Clare's and we understand that we must always comply with it unless very exceptional circumstances arise.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy also shows our policy and procedure with regard to children who are missing from education. The school will raise Child Protection concerns with parents / carers at the earliest appropriate opportunity, and work in partnership with them and other agencies to improve outcomes.

The school will ensure that all staff are provided with the appropriate training in Child Protection issues, as recommended in the guidance. In particular, designated members of staff will be released to attend the necessary enhanced training courses to enable them to carry out their role effectively. All staff are required to read this policy and at least Part 1 and Appendix A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSiE) carefully and to understand be aware of their role in these processes. All new staff will have the opportunity to discuss safeguarding requirements and this policy during their induction process.

AIMS

- To raise awareness of all school staff of the need to safeguard all children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;

- To ensure all staff are aware of the role of the Designated Members of Staff (DMS);
- To ensure all school staff understand that **everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action;
- To ensure that school leaders make sure mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities as set out in Part One of KCSiE
- To emphasise the need for good communication between all members of staff in matters relating to child protection;
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse;
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring pupils known or thought to be at risk of significant harm;
- To ensure children and their families receive the right help at the right time;
- To work openly and in partnership with parents in relation to child protection concerns;
- To support all pupils' development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence;
- To provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
- To identify children who may benefit from early help – this is the role of all staff;
- To promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe practice;
- To further develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies involved with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- To ensure that all adults working within our school have been checked as to their suitability to work with children, in line with current guidance;
- To integrate opportunities into the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse, allowing for continuity and progression through the Key Stage Phases;
- To take account of and inform policy in related areas, such as anti-bullying; e-safety; discipline and behaviour; health and safety; missing children; child sexual exploitation; FGM; prevent, positive handling and physical intervention procedures; procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and recruitment practice and whistleblowing. The NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline is: 0800 028 0285

DEFINITIONS

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□ Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment; - Preventing impairment of children's health;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

□ We recognise that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. However, there are four broad areas of definition:

- Neglect

- Physical Abuse - Sexual Abuse and - Emotional Abuse.

Brief definitions are given below.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child. This situation is now known as illness fabricated or induced by carer (previously Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy).

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional abuse the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. It is important to recognise that many children will be living (or may have lived) in families where Domestic Abuse is a factor, and that these situations have a harmful impact on children emotionally, as well as placing them at risk of physical harm. The definition of Domestic abuse is below. Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by

gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

Children Who Go Missing from Home or Care are particularly vulnerable and may be at significant risk at times. The immediate risks associated with going missing include:

- No means of support or legitimate income – leading to high risk activities
- Involvement in criminal activities
- Victim of Abuse
- Victim of crime, for example through sexual assault and exploitation
- Alcohol/substance misuse
- Deterioration of physical and mental health
- Missing out on schooling and education
- Increased vulnerability

Longer-term risks include:

- Long-term drug dependency / alcohol dependency
- Crime
- Homelessness
- Disengagement from education
- Child sexual exploitation
- Poor physical and/or mental health.

Children Missing from Education: St. Clare's works closely with our Attendance Officer and Local Authority (LA) and rigorously monitors attendance and punctuality. We will always inform our Attendance Officer if we have any concerns about punctuality or attendance. We alert the LA immediately when children are: taken off of roll by parents (to another school or to be home schooled), permanently excluded or if we think that a child is missing from education and we will complete the mandatory LA Paperwork. Children missing from education are at risk because this is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect e.g. travelling to conflict zones, FGM, forced marriage. We will inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

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KEY PRINCIPLES

At St Clare's:

- We believe that all children have a right to be protected from harm and /or abuse; We recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility;
- We recognise that abuse occurs in all cultures, religions and social classes and that staff need to be sensitive to the many differing factors which need to be taken into account depending on the child's cultural and social background when dealing with CP issues. However, we also recognise that the needs of the child are paramount and any concerns will be referred on appropriately whatever the family background of the child concerned.
- We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children school staff are extremely well placed to observe outward signs of abuse.
- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses abuse or violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth, they may feel helpless and humiliated and may feel self-blame.
- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived as normal to that which is overly aggressive, disturbed or withdrawn.
- We know that it is important that children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are sensitively listened to, and that children know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried or unhappy.
- We acknowledge that (although all designated / key staff have the skills and experience to respond to a variety of situations and issues) there may be occasions where it will be appropriate to consider whether specific or additional arrangements need to be put in place where an issue is particularly sensitive due to gender issues or cultural or faith issues. This ensures that in cases of sexual abuse in particular, a pupil can be spoken to by a same sex member of staff if this is felt to be appropriate.
- We adhere to the principles of working in partnership with those who hold parental responsibility for each child.
- The prime concern at all times must be the welfare and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict between the needs of the child and the parent/carer, the interests of the child must be paramount.

PROCEDURES WITH REGARD TO CHILD PROTECTION

The Headteacher is the DMS/Safeguarding Lead at St. Clare's

J. O'Keefe and C. Sylvester are the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

D. Stenson & C. McGarry also have Level 3 safeguarding training who will act in the absence of the designated member of staff and has also received appropriate training for this role.

- We have designated members of staff who has received appropriate training and support for this role, in accordance with mandatory requirements. We will ensure that the designated safeguarding leads undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. Their knowledge and skills will be updated via training, at appropriate intervals, as and when required, (but at least annually), to keep up with any

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developments relevant to their role. This role will also be specified in this person's job description.

- All staff receive regular refresher training, at appropriate intervals, as and when required, (but at least annually), to keep up with any relevant safeguarding and child protection developments.
- Every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated member of staff (DMS) and their role and what the back-up arrangements are if the DMS is unavailable. These arrangements are clearly displayed throughout the school. All staff are familiar with this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as well as the staff code of conduct and these issues are included in the induction for each new staff member.
- All staff develop their understanding of signs and indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated lead but know that they can also refer direct to Children's Services (Social Services) if needed.
- We will ensure that all staff are aware that it is important to identify any concerns about children at as early a stage as possible so that their needs can be identified and monitored and appropriate support put in place.
- If staff members have any concerns about a child they will raise these with the designated member of staff.
- When considering referrals to support agencies the school will act in accordance with Manchester Thresholds for Intervention guidance, which is consistent with the Manchester Continuum of Need thresholds.
- All staff are aware that they should raise any concerns about colleagues or other adults with the DMS.
- All staff know how to respond to a child who discloses abuse or has any safeguarding concerns in regards to any pupil. **SEE APPENDIX 1**
- All staff are made aware that whilst the Data Protection Act 1998 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Fears about sharing information **cannot** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.
- All parents / carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to Child Protection procedures, (for example by including this information in the school prospectus).
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care (MASH) and/or the police immediately.
- We will ensure the immediate safety of any child felt to be at serious risk by taking appropriate action and by involving other relevant agencies as necessary.
- We develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at CP case conferences wherever possible and providing reports as a matter of course (model format attached as appendix 2). We will contribute to multi – agency assessments of children's need where appropriate and work in a fully integrated way with other relevant services as appropriate.
- If a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the school will take responsibility for finding out what is happening and keep pressing for action to be taken.

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- Staff will alert the Headteacher or Governors if they have any concerns about the safeguarding systems at St. Clare's and their concerns will always be taken seriously.
- Written records are kept of all concerns, whether or not there is a need to refer the matter immediately, and that these records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- The child's social worker is notified of any pupil subject to a Child Protection Plan who is absent from school without explanation for more than 2 days.
- Any new concern or relevant information about a child subject to a Child Protection Plan will be passed to the child's allocated social worker without delay.
- If a child subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves the school, records will be transferred to the new school without delay and the child's social worker informed of the change. If school staff are unsure how to proceed in a potential Child Protection situation, or require advice, this will be appropriately sought via the Education Safeguarding Advisor,

or the link social worker for the school, a duty social worker or directly from the Safeguarding Standards Service. (useful numbers listed in Appendix 1)

- The Board of Governors will utilise the experiences and expertise of Staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policies.

EARLY INTERVENTION AND HELP

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- We recognise that when a child or family may be experiencing difficulties, support is most effective if it is provided at as early a stage as possible.
- Any concerns will be identified by staff, discussed with relevant colleagues and parents and support put in place. Effective monitoring systems will be used to assess the effectiveness of interventions and outcomes.
- If appropriate support is not available within school's own resources, an Early Help Assessment will be completed to identify the child's needs and enable additional support to be sought from other agencies.
- A Team Around the Child (TAC) will be established where appropriate and a Lead Professional identified.
- Early Help Assessments will follow the Signs of Safety and Wellbeing model.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

At St. Clare's

- A risk assessment for any external trip takes place.
- A first aider is always on a trip.
- Emergency exits and planning for unexpected events are always accounted for.
- Risk assessments are read and signed by a senior member of staff before any trip.
- Any risk that is medium or high is assessed and provision is given to lower the risk.
- The needs of children with special education needs or medical provision / disability is accounted for and recorded in the risk assessment.
- Appropriate arrangements with regard to security are planned for.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS / DISABILITIES

At St. Clare's

- We recognise that children with SEN / Disabilities may be especially vulnerable to abuse and expect staff to take extra care to interpret apparent signs of abuse or neglect.
- We will provide a school environment in which all pupils, including those with SEN, can feel confident and able to discuss their concerns.
- The designated member of staff will work with the Inclusion Manager, where necessary, to ensure that the needs of SEN pupils in relation to child protection issues are responded to appropriately (eg for a child with particular communication needs).

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN.

- We will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the Authority looking after him/her, as well as the details of the child's social worker and the 'Virtual School Head in the LA.

MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOUR

- In order to help our pupils, succeed, we recognise that the school plays an important role in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.
- We will ensure that pupils and their families are enabled to participate as fully as possible in decisions and are provided with information and support.
- We recognise that some children are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. These risks can relate to the child, their family or to community and life events.
- Risk factors are cumulative, and children exposed to multiple risks are more likely to develop behavioural or mental health problems.
- Where severe problems occur we will ensure that appropriate referrals are made (with consent) to specialist services (eg CAMHS)

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS / CARERS

At St. Clare's

- We will ensure that all parents are informed that the school has a child protection policy and is required to follow WSCB guidelines in respect of reporting suspected abuse to the Children's Social Care.
- Pupils and parents will be made aware of how the school's child protection system works and with whom they can discuss any concerns.
- Information will also be made available about any local and national telephone helplines.
- In individual cases, parents will be notified of the schools concerns at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

At St. Clare's

- We recognise that matters related to Child Protection are of a confidential nature. The designated member of staff and / or Headteacher will therefore share detailed information about a pupil with other staff members on a need to know basis only.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other relevant agencies where necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child that they will keep certain information secret.

SUPPORT FOR STAFF

At St. Clare's

- We recognise that staff working in the school who have been dealing with child protection issues may find the situation stressful or upsetting.
- We will ensure that opportunities are provided for staff to be supported in these circumstances and to talk through any anxieties they may have.

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ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

At St. Clare's

□ We recognise that there will be occasions when a pupil at the school, or a parent or another person may make an allegation against a member of staff. The term allegations refer to concerns reported or raised that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity. This means it has been alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:

- behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

- In this event the Headteacher (or Chair of the Board of Governors, if allegation is against the Headteacher) must be informed and the One Education Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff followed. This will always involve a discussion with LA officers and a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

- All staff are expected to recognise the need for absolute confidentiality in these situations.

SAFE RECRUITMENT

At St. Clare's

- The school will ensure that it operates a safe recruitment policy to ensure that all those working in the school, in either a paid or unpaid capacity are suitable to do so as far as can be reasonably ascertained.
- Senior Leaders and any other staff involved in selection procedures will attend Safer Recruitment training.
- Appropriate checks (ie enhanced DBS checks and checks against the barred list will be carried out on all potential employees and volunteers, and all references will be taken up and verified. The school will ensure it is following the most recent guidance in respect of these issues, including taking account of the definition of regulated activity. This will include: prohibition check for everyone in 'teaching work', not just those with QTS; restrictions imposed by countries in the European Economic Area (EEA).
- Interview panels will follow recommendations from the HR section in relation to practice. One member of each interview panel must have completed Safer Recruitment training.
- At interview, candidates will be asked to account for any gaps in their employment history.
- We will check that an agency worker who comes to St. Clare's is the same person on whom the agency has provided checks for.

At St. Clare's we follow the statutory guidance: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which cites the following actions to ensure safer recruitment:

BOARD OF GOVERNORS RESPONSIBILITIES

At St. Clare's

- The Board of Governors will ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They will ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times and take into account the procedures and practice of the WSCB.
- The Governors will ensure that a member of the Board of Governors (usually the Chair) has been nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of Child

Protection and in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Headteacher or Principal.

- The Governors will remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to Child Protection arrangements that are brought to its attention without delay.
- The Board of Governors will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The Board of Governors will ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place so that children are not able to access harmful or inappropriate material from the school.

POSITIVE HANDLING and the use of REASONABLE FORCE

At St. Clare's

- Our policy on 'Positive Handling and Physical Intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that staff should only use physical intervention in particular circumstances, and that even when necessary the minimum force should be used to prevent harm to the child or another child or adult.
- A large number of staff have received positive handling training (provided by a TEAM TEACH accredited trainer) and disseminates information and guidance annually for all staff members to ensure best practice at all times.
- Risk assessments will be carried out where individual pupils have additional needs or challenges that mean there is an increased likelihood of physical interventions being required and individual plans will be developed and shared/agreed with the parents/carers.
- Physical intervention which causes injury or severe distress to a child may have to be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

At St Clare's

- Up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues will be sought where necessary.
- The DMS will attend relevant training and ensure that staff are aware of issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation, understand the indicators and recognise the complexities of these issues for young people

ANTI – RADICALISATION

At St. Clare's we are committed to safeguarding in all its forms and therefore we make sure that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is seen as part of our wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. We also recognise that during the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. Therefore, St. Clare's RC School supports the **Prevent Strategy**, which works to prevent the growth of issues that create a climate which encourages radicalisation and extremism, which in turn can lead to acts of violence or terrorism.

Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions. Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views which may deny rights to any group or individual. All staff members are aware of these issues and staff have attended training. Staff have received 'Prevent Training

If any concerns arise, or are disclosed by a child, they will be responded to following normal safeguarding processes and advice would be sought from colleagues in LA (either Prevent coordinator or safeguarding services) if necessary.

Others policy has clear links to other policies / statements in our school, in particular to any policies concerned with the protection of all children in the school from various kinds of harm. These policies / statements are listed below:

- Anti-bullying
- E-safety
- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Positive Handling and Physical Intervention
- Equality (sex, race and disability)
- Health and Safety
- Photography and Images
- Children missing from school and education
- Confidentiality
- Safer Recruitment
- Whistleblowing

Review Date: Summer 2019

