



Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Statement

Credition Town Council (CTC) recognises the importance of its services to children and young people and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people, making sure that all necessary steps are taken in the event of a disclosure. CTC recognises that all children and young people have equal rights to protection.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types from harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy is:

- To provide protection for the children and young people who receive CTC services, including the children of adult members or users
- To provide officers and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all officers, members, volunteers/sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of CTC.

CTC is committed to safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people as well as promoting their welfare and protection
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for officers and volunteers
- Supporting Early Help by providing support as soon as a problem emerges.
- Providing effective management for officers and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures so that all officers and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures, and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- Recruiting and selecting officers and volunteers safely, ensuring all appropriate checks are made
- Recording, storing, and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with young people and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- Adopting procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
- Supporting those affected by abuse

- Maintaining good links with statutory childcare authorities and other young people's organisations
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately
- Making sure that young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations made against officers and volunteers
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our young people, officers and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where officers and volunteers, children, young people, and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns
- Ensuring all officers have access to the current legislation around safeguarding children.
- We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually

Organisation Policy and Procedures

CTC recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. It also acknowledges that young people can be the victims of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect.

An adopted set of procedures are set out in this policy and CTC recognises the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies.

CTC is committed to ongoing safeguarding training for all youth workers and will regularly review its operational guidelines. All relevant officers will complete Level 2 safeguarding training annually.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is an officer who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The DSL will carry out their role in accordance with relevant current legislation. The DSL will provide advice and support to other officers on welfare and protection matters. Any concern for a young person's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the DSL.

CTC's DSL is Cath Kelly, Lead Youth Worker. CTC's Deputy DSL is Rachel Avery.

CTC will work in accordance with relevant current legislation, alongside the following documentation:

- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (DfE 2015)*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2018)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2021)*

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding and promoting welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from harm
- Preventing impairment of children's health and growth
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Undertaking that role to enable those children to have optimum life chances.

Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

CTC will ensure that identified officers/volunteers undertake appropriate training dependent upon their role to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and recognises how concerns about a child or young person's safety can come to light.

For example:

- a child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe,
- a third party or anonymous allegation is received
- a child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect
- a child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago
- a report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.

Also see Appendix 2 for Definitions of Abuse

Guidance on how to respond to a person disclosing abuse

Do:

- treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you
- believe what they are saying
- Do tell the child they are right to tell you
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame
- Do be honest about your own position, who you must tell and why
- Do tell the child what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening
- Do take further action – you may be the only person able to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately
- Do write down everything said and what was done
- Record all contact for chronology within the Safeguarding Incident Log
- Record discussions in the child or young person's words. Do not elaborate or correct grammar
- If suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Officer, concerns should be reported to the Town Clerk
- Maintain a relationship with the child or young person where appropriate
- Contact Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on [0345 155 1071](tel:03451551071) or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk and give as much information as you can
- **If a child is at immediate risk, contact the police on [999](tel:999).**

Don't:

- make promises you can't keep
- interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this
- cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject
- say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse
- do nothing – make sure you tell your Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

It is the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to child protection agencies or to seek advice from Social Services should they feel it is appropriate. It is Social Services' task to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. To contact Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk and give as much information as you can

Disclosure of abuse

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL Lead Youth Worker (in some circumstances the DDSL may do this) will share the information with the appropriate professionals, which may include:

- Liaising with the relevant school and agree a plan of action with the relevant DSL in line with any existing actions
- Contacting Social Services to seek advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about safety or the child/young person is afraid to return home
- Seeking medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.

Safe recruitment practices: Appointment, support, supervision and training of leaders and workers

CTC will ensure that all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in accordance with government guidance. Safe recruitment procedures will be followed, and an induction and training programme developed.

CTC will use the following checklist for safer recruitment.

- Write a clear job/role description (what tasks the applicant will do) and a role profile (what skills the person will be expected to have)
- Use application forms to assess the candidate's suitability for the role. This makes it easier to compare the experience of candidates and helps you to get all of the important information you need to ask
- Make it clear that your organisation has a commitment to safeguarding and protecting children. You could include this in a job application pack
- Where possible have a face-to-face interview with pre-planned and clear questions. Include a question about whether they have any criminal convictions, cautions, other legal restrictions or pending cases that might affect their suitability to work with children
- Check the candidate's identity by asking them to bring photographic identification

- Check the candidate actually holds any relevant qualifications they say they have
- Apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service check if appropriate to the individual's role
- Take up references. Ask specifically about an individual's suitability to work with children
- Provide a copy of your organisation's child protection policy and procedures.

All officers and volunteers will be given details of this policy as part of their induction as well as the health and safety procedures. All new officers and volunteers should be adequately supervised and their progress reviewed on a regular basis.

CTC will identify which officers and volunteers are required to participate in the relevant Child Protection training courses and be responsible for arranging this training and ensuring relevant updating takes place. From this training those officers and volunteers should be able to recognise signs of abuse and know the appropriate reporting systems for this.

Information regarding the policy should be disseminated to all involved in the group – young people, parents and carers knowing there is a policy in place and how to utilise this. It should be the role of officers and volunteers to ensure this happens.

Photography & Filming

We will not permit photographs, video or other images of children or young people to be taken without the consent of the parents/carers and children. Should CTC require photographs, video or other images of children or young people for our own promotional purposes CTC will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform CTC immediately.

Internet, social media and mobile phone acceptable use

CTC understand the importance of emerging technologies for children's education and personal development but recognise that safeguards need to be in place to ensure children are kept safe at all times.

Use of the internet by employees and volunteers is permitted and encouraged where its use supports the aims and objectives of the organisation.

CTC has a policy for the use of ICT, social media and the internet whereby employees, volunteers and committee members must ensure that they:

- comply with current legislation
- use the internet in an acceptable way
- do not create unnecessary business risk to CTC by their misuse of the internet.

The role of the DSL / Named person

Every organisation that works with children or young people should have in place a named person who is responsible for dealing with child protection issues that may arise. A deputy must be made available in their absence. These individuals must be trained in child protection and their responsibilities clearly stated within your procedures.

CTC has an appointed individual(s) who are responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for workers to consult with.

The named persons for Child Protection & Safeguarding within CTC are:

Designated Person for Child Protection: Catherine Kelly

Deputy Designated Person: Rachel Avery

The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- To ensure that all officers are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

Recording and managing confidential information.

If CTC becomes concerned that a child/young person may be at risk of significant harm, then the organisation has a duty to refer their concerns to the relevant agencies / Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

Where possible this should be done with the child's/young person's consent, but, if necessary, such consent should be set aside in the interests of the child/young person concerned. Officers/volunteers will be responsible for completing the incident report form (in Appendix 3). This is for recording concerns/allegations of abuse, harm and neglect and the person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma.

Access to those records needs to be limited to people in named roles who either need to know about the information in those records and/or who manage the records/files.

Whistle Blowing Procedure (Procedures to deal with in house allegations against other workers/volunteers)

It can be very difficult to report concerns about officers or volunteers, but all officers and volunteers have a duty to do this. It is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from suspected abuse or harassment by an officer or volunteer should be reported immediately.

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns either verbally or in writing with your immediate supervisor/manager. This may depend, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issue involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example, if you believe that management is involved you should approach a more senior level of management.

Should any uncertainty about how to proceed if there was a whistle blowing situation and you need immediate advice contact the Devon Request for Support Helpline via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk. If you

would like to know more about safeguarding procedures and the Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership visit <https://www.dcfp.org.uk>
You must also refer to CTC Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

This Safeguarding policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

Useful Contacts/Support Organisations

If you have concern that a child is being harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must not keep these concerns to yourself. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. You need to ensure that you either speak to your own organisations 'Designated Safeguarding Officer' or the Devon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) both of whom can listen to and record your concern, and then take appropriate action. In Devon, these are the numbers that you can ring for advice and to make a referral:

- Crediton Town Council, Designated Safeguarding Officer: Cath Kelly
Contact number 01363 773717
- Devon M.A.S.H Contact Details Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (M.A.S.H) PO Box 723
Exeter EX1 9QS Tel: 0345 155 1071 E-mail: mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk Fax: 01392
448951
- Devon Early Help Team 0345 1551071
- Devon Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) 01392 386013
- Devon Emergency Duty Team 0845 6000388
- If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, ring the police on
999
- NSPCC 24 hour National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Definitions of Abuse

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/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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, 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, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE:

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

CONFIDENTIAL**Safeguarding Incident Log**

This form must be used to record any safeguarding incidents or concerns that are raised. The record is confidential and should be passed to the Safeguarding Officer for safe storage. The record should be completed as soon as possible following an incident.

Crediton Youth Safeguarding Officer	Cath Kelly communityyouthworker@crediton.gov.uk Address: 8 North Street, Crediton, EX17 2BT Telephone: 01363 773717 Website: www.crediton.gov.uk/youth-work
Record completed by (include name, address & phone):	
Name and contact details of the person raising a concern/reporting an incident:	
Time & Date of incident:	
Date the incident or report was raised:	
Police Incident or Crime Number (if applicable)	
Date of the first entry in this record:	
Names of the key people:	
Nature of concern: The allegation/behavior/risk that is causing concern. Names of principal parties are essential. If you have not done so make a factual written record of your observations and any conversations - sign and date it.	

Who has information been shared with	Legal basis for sharing the information	Date shared	Name of person sharing

Please record further details on “Incident narrative” sheet overleaf.

Progress should be reviewed regularly, and a record kept here:

Date	Status	Reviewed by
	Live / Being monitored / Closed	
	Live / Being monitored / Closed	
	Live / Being monitored / Closed	
	Live / Being monitored / Closed	
	Live / Being monitored / Closed	

INCIDENT NARRATIVE

Please use this sheet to record details of the incident/concern. Include details of

- **Who** was involved
- **What** happened
- **How** it happened
- **Where** it happened
- **When** it happened (dates and times),
- **Why** it happened

Record discussions in the child or young person’s words. Do not elaborate or correct grammar.
Record details of any **referrals** made; if no referral was made **explain why**