

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2026

Policy Statement

Our Commitment

CROPS is committed to providing a safe environment for children, young people and adults. We recognise the risk of abuse and neglect and uphold international human rights conventions including the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

CROPS will:

- Follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and international conventions.
- Support the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and team in protecting vulnerable individuals.
- Recruit, train and support staff and volunteers to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Maintain appropriate insurance cover for activities.
- Display safeguarding contact details where appropriate.
- Listen to and take seriously all disclosures of abuse.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of when or where it occurred.
- Ensure health and safety policies and risk assessments are in place and reviewed annually.
- Review Safeguarding Policy and Practices annually.

Prevention

We aim to create an environment where children feel safe, are listened to, and know who to approach if worried.

Safer recruitment – Staff

- There will be a written job description and person specification
- Those applying will complete an application and a self-declaration form
- Safeguarding will be discussed at interview
- Written references will be obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks will be completed – Enhanced
- Qualifications will be verified
- A suitable training programme will be delivered for new staff
- There will be a probationary period
- A copy of the safeguarding policy will be provided.

Safer recruitment – Volunteers

- All volunteers will be asked to complete an application and a self-declaration form
- All volunteers will be asked to provide suitable references
- All volunteers will be asked to attend an interview
- Applicants will be given opportunity to declare and discuss any convictions

Safeguarding training

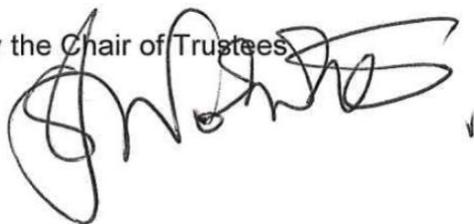
All staff and volunteers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis. Children and adults with care and support needs will be provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying.

Declaration

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy was approved on ... 5/3/26

And will be reviewed annually. The next review date is 5/3/27

Signed by the Chair of Trustees



Designated Safeguarding Lead



Procedures

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Organisation Details

CROPS (ChRistian Options in Peterborough Schools)

Charity Number: 1157651

Address: 68a Westgate, PE1 1RG

Tel No: 01733 352701

General Email address: hello@crops.org.uk

Safeguarding Trustee Name: Steve Warburton

Safeguarding Trustee Contact Telephone: 07869 055791 Email: releasingsuccess@gmail.com

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sam Higgins

Designated Safeguarding Lead Telephone: 01733 352701 Email: sam.higgins@crops.org.uk

Safeguarding Coordinator: Chris Wild

Safeguarding Coordinator Telephone: 01733 352701 Email: chris.wild@crops.org.uk

Description of the organisation, and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and young people:

CROPS (Christian Options in Peterborough Schools) are a Christian education charity who predominately work in schools. CROPS aim to help children and young people gain an understanding of the Christian Faith, and its relevance to life today. In its work in schools, CROPS also support the needs of young people pastorally through a mentoring project and lunchtime clubs, developing the whole individual.

CROPS provide a wide range of resources to primary and secondary schools through assemblies, lunch-clubs, curriculum input for Religious Education, chaplaincy work, special 'off-timetable' projects, and targeted pastoral support in liaison with school pastoral teams.

In addition to this, CROPS support local youth workers and youth work in churches through events like 'Together' (monthly youth worship-outreach event) and 'Letton Houseparty' a residential/retreat; as well as running a Gap Year programme for school leavers.

Practice

Staff and volunteers must:

- Know the DSL's name
- Recognise signs of abuse and neglect
- Record and report concerns promptly
- Provide a safe environment for children
- Complete safeguarding training at induction and annually

This policy will be made available publicly either via the website or by other means.

Record Keeping

CROPS will:

Keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately.

Ensure all paper records are kept securely, and in a locked location.

Ensure all digital records are password protected and stored on secure systems with appropriate access controls.

Retain safeguarding and child protection records until the child reaches the age of 25 years, after which they will be confidentially destroyed. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), records will be retained until the age of 30 years.

Confidentiality and information sharing

The Data Protection Act 2018 does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child

CROPS will ensure staff and volunteers are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children

Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

If you receive an allegation or suspicion of abuse, **report it immediately** to:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – See Appendix 1 for contact details**

The DSL acts on behalf of leadership to manage allegations or suspicions, including referrals to statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or if the suspicions in any way involves the Designated Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made to:

Safeguarding Trustee – See Appendix 1 for contact details

If the suspicions implicate both the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111.

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- The DSL will contact the appropriate agency or the **thirtyone:eight** helpline for advice. They will then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.
- The DSL may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern
 - Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
 - LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the DSL, the absence of the DSL or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.
- CROPS will support the DSL/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.
- It is the right of any individual to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice, although the Leadership hope that members of the organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the DSL/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the DSL as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the DSL/ deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the DSL/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the DSL, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regard to the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

Responding when a child or young person discloses abuse

It is likely that a child or young person who has been abused will have given a lot of thought as to whether they should disclose the abuse. It is highly likely that they will be nervous and afraid that they might be rejected, blamed or not believed. It is important that staff and volunteers follow the steps outlined below:

- **Stay calm**

Remain calm and natural. You have been approached because you are trusted, not because you are an expert counsellor. Do not promise to keep the information secret; you may have to inform an appropriate person. You must take any disclosure seriously and reassure the young person that you believe them.

- **Listen and take the allegation seriously**

Listen to what the child or young person is saying. Give them the time and opportunity to tell you as much as they are able and willing to.

Do not pressurise them and allow them to disclose information at their own pace. You should not investigate, ask leading questions or ask specific or explicit questions.

You should only clarify what they are willing to tell you in their own words. Try to do this in an appropriate place, such as a room where other people can see in through an open door or window.

Whilst it's important to respect the young person's privacy it should not be at the expense of other child protection measures.

- **Reassure**

Reassure them that you believe what they are saying and that you know it is not their fault. You should also give them some indication of what you will do next with the information that they have given you.

- **Confidentiality**

Reiterate that you cannot promise to keep the information secret. You must take any disclosure seriously. Details of the disclosure should only be passed onto the safeguarding coordinator or safeguarding trustee who should refer the case to the appropriate authorities. Wherever possible you should try not to discuss any concerns that you have about a child or young person in a way that may lead others to suspect that they are being abused.

Appendix 1 - Important Contacts

Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL)

Name: Sam Higgins

Tel: 07904 601468

Email: sam.higgins@crops.org.uk

Safeguarding Trustee

Name: Steve Warburton

Tel: 07869 055791

Email: releasinguccess@gmail.com

thirtyone:eight

PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board – Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures <http://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/>

Education Safeguarding Team Email: ECPSGeneral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit

Tel: 101

Useful Contacts - Peterborough

Early Help

Tel: 01733 863649

Customer Service Centre – social care referrals

Tel: 01733 864180

Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)

Tel: 01733 234724

IMPORTANT – The employer must inform the local authority designated officer (LADO) within one working day when an allegation is made and prior to any further investigation taking place.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Email: LADO@peterborough.gov.uk

Peterborough LADO

Tel: 01733 864038

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team

Tel: 01733 864180

Appendix 2 - The 4 categories of abuse

Physical Abuse

Causing physical harm to a child through actions such as hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, drowning, or suffocating. Includes fabricating or inducing illness.

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs, likely to impair health or development. May involve:

- Lack of food, clothing, shelter, or abandonment
- Failure to protect from harm
- Inadequate supervision
- Denial of medical care
- Emotional neglect or lack of responsiveness

Emotional Abuse

Persistent maltreatment causing severe impact on emotional development. Includes:

- Making a child feel worthless, unloved, or inadequate
- Silencing or mocking them
- Imposing inappropriate expectations
- Exposure to ill-treatment, bullying (including online), exploitation, or corruption

Note: Emotional abuse is present in all forms of maltreatment and may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child into sexual activities, whether or not they understand. Includes:

- Physical contact (penetrative or non-penetrative acts)
- Non-contact activities (viewing sexual images, watching sexual acts, grooming, online exploitation)

Perpetrators can be male, female, or other children.