



Church Knowle Rural Learning Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Church Knowle Rural Learning (CKRL) takes its responsibilities regarding Safeguarding and its Duty of Care to our children and young people extremely seriously. CKRL is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation.

CKRL will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. CKRL's child protection and safeguarding procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Pan-Dorset Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures, the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership and the BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership, follow Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, Children Act 1989, Education Act 2002, Prevent Duty 2019, Teaching Standards 2012, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools, The Use of Social Media for Online Radicalisation 2015, and follow the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2025 Guidance.

There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or Deputy (DDSL) available at all times while CKRL is in session. The DSL coordinates safeguarding and child protection issues, supports practitioners with safeguarding concerns and liaises with external agencies (eg Social Care). CKRL's Safeguarding practices will be audited at least annually. See also see our **Safer Recruitment Policy**.

The CKRL's designated DSL is Amelia Coffen and the DDSL is Catherine Starmer-Howes.

CKRL acknowledges the critical role of its staff, as they are well-positioned to identify issues early on, provide assistance to children, support their welfare, and prevent concerns from worsening. All staff at CKRL have a duty to create a secure environment conducive to children's learning.

CKRL staff are trained to identify children who may benefit from Early Help, which involves providing support promptly when an issue arises, whether during early childhood or teenage years. If any staff member has a concern about a child's welfare, they are required to follow CKRL's local protocols, document their concern, and notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Every educational organisation must have a designated safeguarding lead (DSL), who supports staff in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities and collaborates closely with external agencies, such as Children's Social Care. Details of CKRL's safeguarding team can be found on the first page of our policy document.

CKRL understands that, as outlined in the Teachers' Standards 2012, teachers have a duty to safeguard children's welfare and uphold public confidence in the teaching profession.

Our Directors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that our policies on child protection, safeguarding, recruitment, and managing allegations—along with the staff code of conduct and behaviour policy—align with both Local Authority and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually, and are publicly accessible on our website.
- Providing all staff and volunteers with our safeguarding and child protection policy, as well as our code of conduct and behaviour policy.
- Confirming that all staff have read Part 1 and Annex A & B of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*.

- Implementing a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks and ensuring at least one person involved in hiring has completed safer recruitment training.
- Establishing procedures for managing allegations of abuse involving staff, volunteers, and young people.
- Ensuring we have a trained DSL and that appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place for children missing from education.
- Maintaining online filtering and monitoring systems that meet required standards.

The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

As above, Amelia Coffen, co-founder and Director of CKRL, serves as the DSL, overseeing both in-person and online safety. Catherine Starmer-Howes is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and the alternate contact in the DSL's absence, ensuring full role coverage at all times.

The DSL/DDSL undergoes comprehensive child protection training at least every two years to stay informed and prepared for their role. Additionally, they update their skills and knowledge annually. All senior staff are trained to a similar standard.

The DSL's responsibilities include:

- Being accessible during operational hours.
- Managing referrals to Children's Social Care, Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership, BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership, Channel programs, the Disclosure and Barring Service, the police, and other partners.
- Attending meetings for child protection, child in need, and looked-after children.
- Handling child protection files and sharing relevant information.
- Raising and addressing safeguarding concerns.
- Offering staff guidance, support, and advice.
- Identifying children with social workers or those on multi-agency plans.

- Ensuring the effectiveness of CKRL’s online filtering and monitoring systems, including reviewing the Department for Education’s (DFE) standards on these systems and clarifying staff expectations and roles in monitoring.

Staff Responsibilities and Safeguarding Awareness

CKRL staff are fully informed of our safeguarding systems, which are outlined as part of their induction training. This training includes:

- Our safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Procedures for managing child-on-child abuse and our behaviour policy.
- The staff behaviour policy, code of conduct, and all related guidelines.
- Our approach to safeguarding children missing from education.
- An understanding of the roles of the DSL and DDSL.

Staff at CKRL are encouraged to adopt a mindset of “it could happen here,” actively identifying and addressing concerns early to prevent escalation. They provide a secure environment where children feel safe and supported. Staff are also trained to respond appropriately if a child discloses abuse, exploitation, or neglect, recognising potential disclosure challenges. They follow CKRL’s safeguarding procedures, engage in regular training, and understand that children missing from education can be a critical indicator of safeguarding issues such as neglect or exploitation.

Staff must read and comprehend Part 1 and Annex A & B of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* 2025, and they are made aware of CKRL’s safeguarding support systems, including policies on behaviour and conduct. Copies of all relevant policies are shared during induction, with Part 1 of KCSIE (2025) and Annex A & B included. Necessary training is completed before staff begin working with young people and is regularly reviewed and updated.

Training for Staff

All CKRL staff and volunteers receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction, including online safety. Staff stay updated on safeguarding matters through inset days, emails, and briefings. Procedures for logging concerns are well-defined, and staff understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality without making promises to children about keeping disclosures secret.

Staff recognise that children may not always feel ready or able to disclose abuse, exploitation, or neglect, or may not see their experiences as harmful (*KCSIE 2025*). They reassure children that any disclosure will be taken seriously and handled with appropriate support.

Amelia Coffen oversees safer recruitment and has completed the necessary training. More information is found in CKRL's Safer Recruitment Policy.

Identifying Signs and Providing Early Help

CKRL staff understand that any child might benefit from early help, but they remain particularly vigilant for children who:

- Have disabilities, specific health conditions, or additional needs.
- Have mental health needs, are young carers, or are drawn into risky behaviour.
- Frequently go missing or face risks such as modern slavery, exploitation, or radicalisation.
- Have family challenges, such as substance misuse, domestic abuse, or mental health issues.
- Engage in substance misuse, have returned to family from care, or are at risk of honour-based abuse like FGM.

Confidentiality and Inter-agency Collaboration

CKRL recognises the importance of inter-agency collaboration to meet children's needs, ensure their welfare, and protect them from harm, in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2023). Staff are aware that they cannot promise confidentiality if it would compromise a child's safety.

Procedures for Safeguarding Concerns

Recognising that any child could become a victim of abuse, CKRL staff are trained to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here." Staff understand that abuse and neglect are complex and often involve overlapping issues. They are aware that abusive behaviour may take place online or offline and can involve adults or peers.

Staff are vigilant regarding behaviours like drug use, alcohol abuse, truancy, and sharing explicit images, as these can be indicators of safeguarding issues such as child-on-child abuse.

More information on abuse types and indicators is provided in this policy and in KCSIE 2025 (Annex A/Annex B).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

Specific safeguarding risks that CKRL monitors include:

- Children missing from education or home.
- Exploitation (CSE/CCE), domestic abuse, substance misuse, fabricated illness, and faith abuse.
- FGM, forced marriage, gang violence, radicalisation, sexting, and other forms of violence.

Responding to Concerns

After an initial conversation with a child, if staff remain concerned, they should make a written account of their concerns using a Logging a Concern form and consult the DSL. Documentation should include:

- A summary of the concern.

- Details on how the concern was addressed.
- Any actions taken and the outcome.

All concerns, regardless of severity, must be recorded and shared with the DSL, as they may form part of a larger picture of the child's experiences. In urgent cases where a child faces immediate harm, the DSL may contact the police or social care directly.

All CKRL staff are responsible under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to refer children to Children's Social Care if they believe a child:

- Has experienced significant harm.
- Is at risk of harm.
- Needs support to prevent developmental impairment.

If possible, referrals should include any pre-existing Early Help assessments.

Action

- Offer reassurance, listen carefully, and take seriously what is being shared. Do not promise to keep anything confidential, nor allow yourself to be swayed by the child, young person, or their family against taking necessary action.
- Remember, it is not your role to investigate. However, it's essential to gather relevant information.
- Explain the process to the child or young person, including that you will need to report the information, to whom it will be shared, the reasons for sharing, and potential actions that may follow.
- All concerns will be documented, using a Logging a Concern form, including the child's account, a body map (if necessary), and other pertinent details. Concerns will be communicated verbally to the DSL/DDSL, with a record of these conversations as well.

If a Child or Young Person Discloses Information to a Staff Member

- We understand that it requires a great deal of courage for a child or young person to share that they are experiencing abuse. They may feel fear, guilt, or shame.
- A child or young person who discloses may need to retell their account several times to police or social workers, so it is vital that their initial experience of sharing with a trusted adult is positive.
- Allow the child or young person to talk freely; remember TED (tell, explain, describe).
- Remain calm, avoid overreacting, and do not show shock.
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Use open-ended questions rather than leading ones.
- Avoid assumptions or jumping to conclusions.

Informing Parents

- CKRL will generally seek to discuss any concerns about a child or young person with their parents. This must be approached with sensitivity, and typically, the DSL/DDSL will contact the parent if a concern arises.
- However, if CKRL believes that notifying the parents may increase risk to the child or young person, advice will be sought from the Local Authority (LA) safeguarding team.
- For concerns related to forced marriage or honour-based abuse, parents should not be informed of the referral as this could increase risk to the child or young person. In some cases, contacting the police may be appropriate.

Making a Referral

- For referrals to Children's Social Care, the child should be treated as potentially in need, with the referral evaluated on the same day it is received.
- A decision should be made within one working day on the appropriate response.
- When sharing information with Children's Social Care, it is usually best to be open with parents or carers. Inform both the parents and the child (if

age-appropriate) about the referral. However, if notifying the parents is deemed to place the child at risk, referrals can be made without prior notice, but this must be logged, with reasons documented.

- If no acknowledgement of the referral is received within three working days, CKRL will follow up with Children's Social Care.
- By the end of the referral process, the referrer and Children's Social Care should agree on next steps, timescales, and whether further action is necessary. Outcomes may include:
 - No further action
 - Early help (referrals for intervention and prevention services)
 - Child in need (assessment by Children's Social Care under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989)
 - Child protection (assessment and investigation under Section 47, with the involvement of other agencies, such as the police)

Supporting Staff

- We recognise that staff who are involved with a child or young person affected by harm may find the experience stressful or upsetting.
- Support will be offered to such staff, including opportunities to discuss their concerns with the DSL and additional support as needed.

Contextual Safeguarding

- Contextual safeguarding considers significant harm young people may experience beyond family settings, including in the community, at school, in clubs, or online. It acknowledges that parents and carers may have limited influence in these environments. All staff, particularly the DSL or DDSL, should assess the context of incidents and behaviours, including this information in referrals where relevant.

Attendance

- At CKRL, consistent attendance is key to child safety. Attendance is monitored through daily registers. Persistent absences may indicate potential risks to a child's welfare and will be addressed immediately. The DSL will determine the appropriate course of action.
- We understand that children at CKRL may struggle to articulate their feelings, and we will support them in expressing themselves. Behaviour is observed and documented to build an understanding over time.

Whistleblowing

CKRL has a comprehensive Whistleblowing Policy.

- We recognise that a safe environment for children and young people requires staff to raise any concerns about the safeguarding practices, including concerns about colleagues' conduct, unsafe practices, or potential shortcomings in CKRL's safeguarding policies.
- If necessary, staff should contact the Local Authority Safeguarding team, following the Whistleblowing Policy.
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available at 0800 028 0285 from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday to Friday, or via email at help@nspcc.org.uk.

Abuse and Neglect

- Types of abuse and neglect are detailed in the policy's appendix. Staff are trained to recognise abuse and neglect, understanding that multiple safeguarding concerns often coexist. Staff remain vigilant for indicators of abuse.
- Harm can include non-physical ill treatment, such as the impact of witnessing harm to others. This is particularly relevant in cases of domestic abuse. (KCSIE, 2025)
- CKRL staff understand that safeguarding issues often involve external factors. Children may be vulnerable to harm from outside influences, such as sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and online abuse.

Safeguarding Issues

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): Both forms of abuse involve using an imbalance of power to manipulate a child into sexual or criminal activities, sometimes in exchange for something the child needs, or through threats or violence. CSE and CCE can affect all children, and staff are trained to recognise and address these risks.
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): Defined by Pan-Dorset as exploitation where a power imbalance is used to control a young person under 18, this can occur both online and in person. CKRL staff are vigilant about forms of CCE, such as county lines, where children may be coerced into transporting drugs, stealing, or committing violent acts. Staff are also aware that exploited children are not always recognised as victims despite experiencing harm.
- County Lines: According to KCSIE (2025), “county lines” refers to organised criminal groups involved in drug trafficking, often using children and young people. CKRL staff are aware that social media has facilitated this recruitment and that signs of county lines exploitation include missing school, possession of unexplained money or items, relationships with controlling individuals, and more.

Response

- All staff are trained to report concerns of CCE to the DSL immediately, as sharing information is crucial. The Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit, available in CKRL files, provides staff with resources to address specific CCE risks.

Gang Activity, Youth Violence, and Criminal Exploitation Involving Children

This section has been updated to include recent amendments on Knife Crime. Gang involvement may involve peer groups, street gangs, or organised crime groups. Vulnerable children are sometimes targeted by gangs to sell drugs. According to Pan-Dorset, white British children are often targeted because they

are perceived as more likely to evade law enforcement, and children as young as 12 have been known to face exploitation.

Warning Signs of Gang Involvement:

- Child becomes withdrawn from family
- Sudden disinterest in school or change in behavior
- Declining school attendance
- Emotional detachment
- Use of unfamiliar slang
- Possession of unexplained money or valuables
- Staying out unusually late
- Noticeable change in appearance
- New nicknames
- Unexplained injuries
- Constant reference to a new person
- Adopting specific mannerisms
- Going missing

CKRL takes these issues very seriously, recognising the link between gang activity, exploitation, and missing episodes. We conduct thorough daily attendance checks, sharing records with each child's primary setting to quickly identify and respond to attendance patterns.

Actions for Staff:

1. If staff believe a child may be at serious risk due to gang activity, they must contact Children's Social Care or the police.
2. The referral procedure should be followed, with the DSL taking the lead, and an Early Help assessment may be needed for further support.
3. Information sharing from CKRL will be crucial for any multi-team assessments if necessary.

Knife Crime Prevention Orders (KCPOs):

KCPOs provide the police with tools to help young people disengage from knife crime and violence, including educational courses, life skills training, and awareness programs.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):

CSE is a form of sexual abuse that can affect any young person under 18, including those who can legally consent to sexual activity. It may appear consensual but is still abusive and can involve contact or non-contact actions, both in person and online. CSE involves the manipulation or coercion of a young person into sexual acts, often through an imbalance of power and for the exploiter's benefit.

Indicators of CSE:

- Unexplained money, clothes, or devices
- Association with gangs
- Absences from provision
- Excessive texts/calls
- Returning home under the influence
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Relationships with controlling individuals
- Spending time in known sex-work areas
- Secretive internet use
- Self-harm or changes in emotional wellbeing

Staff who suspect CSE should use the CE Screening Tool and Pan-Dorset Guidance to assess the situation. If necessary, a Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) meeting will follow a full risk assessment.

Harmful Sexual Behaviours (HSB):

KCSIE (2025) recognises a spectrum of sexual behaviours from expected to inappropriate or abusive. Harmful sexual behaviour can happen both online and in person. CKRL staff are trained to recognise when an age difference, power imbalance, or inappropriate *behaviour* may indicate abuse.

Key Concerns for Harmful Sexual Behaviours:

- Sexual violence or harassment
- Upskirting or sexting
- Abuse of younger peers

Risks:

- Two-thirds of contact sexual abuse involves peers
- Children from abusive backgrounds may repeat such behaviours
- Exposure to explicit content online can influence behaviour

Indicators of HSB:

- Attachment issues or domestic abuse background
- Previous victimisation
- Loneliness or social rejection

CKRL uses the Brook Traffic Light Tool to differentiate between normal behaviour and concerning patterns.

Action and Protection:

Reports of HSB are documented and passed to the DSL, who assesses the risk and determines necessary protective steps, including potential referrals to Children's Social Care.

Child-on-Child Abuse:

In line with KCSIE (2025), CKRL recognises that children may abuse other children, both within and outside of the learning environment. We adopt

a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviour, including bullying, sexual violence, and harassment. Staff are trained to address abusive behaviours and avoid downplaying incidents. Students who may be affected can also be signposted to a confidential chat service for extra support:

<https://shorespace.org.uk>

Extra-Familial Harms and Serious Violence:

Children are vulnerable to abuse beyond the family environment, including risks of violence, criminal exploitation, and radicalisation. Indicators may include increased absence, shifts in friendships, self-harm, and unexplained gifts or possessions.

Self-Harm and Suicidal Behaviour:

Self-harm, as defined by the Mental Health Foundation, includes a range of behaviours meant to express distress. Indicators may include injuries such as cuts, bruises, and signs of risk-taking.

CKRL Actions for Self-Harm:

All self-harm cases are documented, with the DSL making further assessments if necessary, often involving Children's Social Care for comprehensive support.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):

FGM, which involves the partial or complete removal of external female genitalia, is illegal. Staff should report any concerns to the DSL, who will activate appropriate safeguarding protocols.

Teachers have a mandatory duty to report any instances of FGM in minors to the police directly.

Mental Health and Safeguarding:

Mental health problems may signal abuse or neglect. Staff at CKRL are vigilant about signs of trauma and create supportive environments for students.

Referrals to appropriate services are made as needed, with parental or child consent when possible.

Honour-Based Abuse (HBA):

HBA includes actions taken to protect family or community “honour,” including forced marriage and FGM. Staff must report any suspicions to the DSL immediately.

Additional Information and Support

The Department for Education’s guidance, *What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners*, offers more information on recognising and understanding abuse and neglect. This advice highlights examples of possible indicators of abuse and neglect throughout. Additional helpful information on identifying signs of abuse and neglect can also be found on the NSPCC website.

Bullying

Bullying is described as “behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally” (DfE definition). CKRL has a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of bullying. Children and young people are encouraged to speak openly with staff if they feel they are being bullied or if they have witnessed bullying of others.

Any child or young person who feels they have been bullied will be heard and supported. It is essential for all young people to feel they can share their

concerns about bullying with a trusted adult. The *Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges* report by Ofsted (2021) identified significant rates of sexual harassment among both girls and boys, often occurring in unsupervised settings. Bullying can occur between children or be inflicted by adults and may include:

- Physical: such as hitting, kicking, or shoving.
- Verbal: including name-calling or using racist, sexual, or homophobic slurs.
- Emotional: for instance, excluding someone from activities or social groups.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying carried out via digital technology and can have serious effects on a young person's well-being. CKRL's policy states that "bullying is always unacceptable" and that "all students have the right to be free from bullying." CKRL also recognises the impact of cyberbullying outside the learning environment, and when such incidents affect the learning environment, CKRL will respond as appropriate. Cyberbullying is defined as "an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic communication, repeatedly over time, against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves."

Forms of cyberbullying include:

- Bullying through text messages, calls, or social media posts
- Using mobile phone cameras to intimidate or humiliate
- Posting abusive or humiliating material on websites, blogs, or social media
- Sending harmful messages via email or hijacking accounts
- Making threats or abusive comments in online forums

If staff suspect any form of abuse, including cyberbullying, a referral will be made following the Pan-Dorset referral process. Please refer to our Bullying Policy.

Abuse Through Digital Media

As of May 2022, the definition of “sexting” has been updated to include the creation and distribution of nude or semi-nude images. Internet abuse primarily includes:

- Sharing or creating abusive images of children (not exclusive to the internet)
- Online grooming for sexual abuse
- Exposure to pornographic or offensive material
- Using the internet to engage children in extremist ideologies or gang activity

Internet abuse may also include cyberbullying, sexting and online harassment.

CKRL understands that children often view sexting as the sharing of explicit messages rather than nude or semi-nude images, but Pan-Dorset’s guidance states that sharing such images of minors is illegal, regardless of intent.

Indicators of internet abuse may include:

- Noticeable mood or behaviour changes in the child
- Changes in friend groups
- Avoidance of specific individuals or fear of using certain devices

Staff at CKRL are trained to observe signs of abuse, understanding that changes in behaviour may indicate underlying issues.

Action

If anyone is suspected of accessing or creating indecent images of children, CKRL will report it to the police and children’s social care following the Pan Dorset referral procedure. Referrals related to online grooming also lead to a strategy discussion to determine further action. For concerns about extremist content, a similar process applies. Suspected terrorist material can be reported

via www.gov.uk/report-terrorism. For more details, please refer to our online safety and bullying policies.

Online Safety

CKRL prioritises the safeguarding of children from harmful online content, recognising the significant role technology plays in safeguarding and well-being issues. To ensure online safety, CKRL aims to:

- Implement strong processes, including filtering and monitoring, to protect learners, staff, and volunteers online
- Educate the school community about the responsible and safe use of technology, including mobile devices
- Clearly outline guidelines for mobile phone use within CKRL
- Identify, respond to, and escalate online safety concerns appropriately

Our online safety approach addresses four key risk categories:

1. Content: exposure to illegal, harmful, or inappropriate content (e.g., pornography, fake news, extremism, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories).
2. Contact: harmful online interactions, including peer pressure, advertising, and adult predators.
3. Conduct: risky online behaviour that may lead to harm (e.g., sharing explicit images, online bullying).
4. Commerce: financial risks such as gambling, scams, or phishing.

To address these risks, CKRL:

- Educates children on topics like safe social media use, personal privacy, and recognising and reporting cyberbullying
- Trains staff on online safety, cyberbullying, and risks of online radicalisation
- Ensures staff are aware of guidelines on mobile phone and camera use
- Maintains filtering and monitoring systems to reduce exposure to harmful content

- Provides online safety training for all staff at least annually
- Reviews and updates the safeguarding policy at least annually

For full details on our approach to online safety and mobile phone use, please see our online safety and mobile phone policies.

Protecting Children and Young People from Violent Extremism - Prevent

Designated Prevent Lead: Amelia Coffen

The Prevent initiative is part of the government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, which focuses on safeguarding individuals from terrorism and extremism. It aims to prevent individuals from becoming involved in terrorism. CKRL addresses the risks of violent extremism in the same way as other safeguarding risks, ensuring that all children and young people are protected from this form of harm. CKRL remains vigilant to potential sources of violent extremism, which may include social media, family influence, peer groups, or direct contact with extremist organisations.

Safeguarding Protocol Adjustments for CKRL

Staff Awareness of Grooming and Radicalisation

CKRL staff are educated on the nature of grooming and the potential for it to gradually steer a child or young person away from trusted individuals who might otherwise challenge problematic ideologies. If any concerns or suspicions arise, information will be shared with parents, schools, children's services, and law enforcement as part of a comprehensive risk assessment. Any individual identified as vulnerable to radicalisation will be referred to a multi-agency Channel Panel for early intervention to protect them from extremist influences, addressing all forms of extremism.

Indicators of Potential Radicalisation or Violent Extremism:

- Identity Crisis: Disconnection from cultural heritage.
- Personal Crisis: Tensions within family, feelings of isolation, low self-worth.
- Personal Circumstances: Alienation from societal values, community tensions.
- Unmet Aspirations: Perceptions of injustice or exclusion.
- Criminal Background: Experiences involving incarceration.
- Online Secrecy: Engaging in private online behaviour or sharing extremist content.

Other Observable Indicators in the CKRL Setting:

- Changes in mood or an increase in secrecy.
- Shifts in friendships or social groups.
- Use of aggressive or extreme language.
- Possession of extremist literature.
- Expression of violent or extremist views.
- Sympathising with extremist causes.
- Attempting to recruit others into extremist activities.
- Glorification of violence.

Holding extreme or radical beliefs is not illegal; however, inciting actions in support of these beliefs constitutes a legal offence.

Radicalisation and Extremism Awareness

Radicalisation refers to the process by which an individual comes to endorse extremist ideologies or terrorism. Extremism is the vocal or active rejection of core British values such as democracy, rule of law, individual freedoms, and respect for different beliefs. Factors like social influence and online exposure can make children vulnerable to these ideas. CKRL staff are trained to observe changes in behaviour that might signal the need for further support or intervention.

Steps for Action if a Child Appears at Risk of Radicalisation:

1. A multi-agency risk assessment will be conducted to determine necessary support and interventions, potentially including referrals to the Channel program.
2. Where immediate risk is suspected, staff should contact emergency services (999) or refer to Children's Social Care as per the Dorset protocol. CKRL will ensure a proportionate response to any situation, which may involve additional support, mentoring, or educational activities. If further investigation by law enforcement is required, CKRL will cooperate fully with police and other agencies.

Addressing Youth Sharing of Sexual Images (Sexting)

The sharing of sexual images or videos, particularly by those under 18, has become a concern due to the ease of distribution via text, social media, or messaging apps. Any incident of this type will be handled as a safeguarding issue.

Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery May Include:

- An under-18 individual creating and sharing sexual content with a peer.
- Sharing of images created by or between under-18s.
- Possession of such imagery by a minor.

All instances of youth-produced sexual content should be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as per safeguarding procedures. Staff should avoid viewing or duplicating the content, instead placing the device on flight mode or turning it off if confiscated.

Immediate Referral to Local Authorities/Police If:

- An adult is involved in the exchange.
- Coercion or manipulation is suspected.
- Sexual acts are depicted, or the subject is 12 or under.
- A child is at immediate risk, including risk of self-harm.

Where these conditions don't apply, the DSL will assess risk based on factors such as age differences, consent, distribution, and potential impact on those involved.

Responding to Harmful Sexual Behaviour

When reports of sexual violence or harassment are received, the DSL will act promptly, taking the victim's wishes into account and assessing the specifics of the incident, including age and power dynamics involved.

A risk assessment will be conducted to prioritise the safety of the victim, the alleged perpetrator, and others in the setting. The DSL may notify police if actions fall under criminal behaviour, including sexual assault. Where necessary, CKRL will explore disciplinary actions, ensuring any measures taken consider the safety of all children in the setting.

Photography and Image Consent

CKRL adheres to strict guidelines for the use of student images. Consent from parents and guardians is required for any photographs or images published on CKRL's website or other public platforms, and only first names will be used alongside images.

Effective Inter-Agency Collaboration for Safeguarding

CKRL actively participates in Child Safeguarding Practice Review processes as part of local and national efforts to enhance child welfare. Significant cases of abuse or neglect, especially where a child has suffered or is at serious risk, will be reported to the safeguarding partners.

All staff at CKRL bear a responsibility to report welfare or safeguarding concerns to the DSL or other senior staff, or directly to children's services when necessary.

Child Death Review:

In the tragic event of a child's unexpected death, CKRL will provide all available information regarding the child, their family, and the circumstances surrounding the death. CKRL will also notify the designated contact of any professionals who may have been involved with the child or family, and will fully cooperate with the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) to support learning and prevent future deaths.

Responsibility for conducting child death reviews lies with the 'child death review partners,' as outlined in the "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023" guidance and relevant legislation. These partners coordinate reviews for all child deaths in the region. Child death review partners in BCP, Dorset, and Somerset have agreed to treat Pan Dorset and Somerset as a unified area, with a joint child death review panel. A comprehensive list of the designated officials involved in these reviews is available on the Pan-Dorset website.

The Child Death Overview Panel:

The panel's role is to review all child deaths for children under the age of 18. Their objectives are to:

- Understand the circumstances surrounding each death.
- Identify and address any needs of other children in the household.
- Provide appropriate support to family members.
- Consider lessons that can be learned to help prevent future child deaths.

Purpose of Child Death Reviews:

The Pan-Dorset Child Death Overview Panel aims to determine whether cases need a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, identify any issues related to child

safety and welfare, address public health concerns, and ensure a coordinated response to child deaths.

Children Missing from Education or School

As per the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' guidelines, attendance, absences, and exclusions are carefully tracked daily, as children missing from education may be at risk of abuse or neglect. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will monitor unauthorised absences and take steps, including notifying the local authority, as needed.

There is heightened concern for children who run away, as they face risks of criminal or sexual exploitation, which is underscored by guidance from PDSCP. Additionally, grooming and radicalisation risks increase if a child goes missing from education. All staff at CKRL are trained to recognise these risks and respond appropriately.

Identification and Response to Children Missing from Education or School

Staff at CKRL can identify if a child is missing through daily attendance records, which are shared with the school where the child is registered. This tracking allows CKRL staff to identify any patterns in absences, which can be shared with the local authority and other professionals involved in the child's care.

Before placement begins, parents or carers must complete a medical/consent form with their address and two emergency contacts. This ensures that CKRL has information about the child's identity and residence.

If a staff member suspects that a child has run away or is missing, they will first try to contact the parent/carer and notify the DSL.

When to Involve Children's Social Care or Police:

- The child may be a victim of crime.
- The child is under a Child Protection Plan.
- Section 47 inquiries are ongoing.
- The child is in the care of the state.
- There are significant attendance issues.
- The family has a history of frequent moves.

Additional factors that may influence a decision to refer to children's social care or police include the child's age, the context of their absence, history of bullying, religious or cultural considerations, and any history of family issues, including substance misuse.

Immediate Actions for Day One:

If concerns about the child's safety arise, a referral to the police and children's social care should occur immediately on day one. CKRL will contact the local police station, making sure to report any suspected crime and all relevant family information. The missing person report will trigger an immediate police response, including a risk assessment and involvement of the local Missing Persons Unit and/or CID. The police will also notify LA children's social care and consult with the Dorset Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) if there are concerns of abuse.

CKRL will work closely with children's social care and the police, and a representative will participate in any necessary strategy discussions, Section 47 inquiries, or Child Protection Conferences.

Reasonable Inquiry:

The DSL will use all available contact information to reach the child's family and, if necessary, will send letters, make home visits, and consult the local authority.

Days 2-28:

If attempts to reach the family are unsuccessful, CKRL will contact the local authority's Children Missing Education (CME) officer, who will begin further inquiries. The DSL will continue to share relevant information with the local authority and the police as appropriate.

CKRL will inform the local authority of any additions to or removals from the admission register. This will assist the local authority in monitoring any child at risk of missing education, neglect, or radicalisation.

Information Sharing

Information sharing is essential in identifying and addressing abuse or neglect. CKRL understands the importance of sharing information with local agencies and professionals as early as possible to identify and respond to potential safety or welfare concerns. The Pan-Dorset guidelines emphasise that information sharing should be necessary, proportionate, accurate, and secure.

Data Protection Compliance

Safeguarding children allows sharing special category personal data, even without consent, when it improves child protection efforts. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR permit information sharing to protect children. Concerns about data sharing must not hinder efforts to ensure child safety.

Action on Safeguarding Concerns at CKRL

Staff must maintain a proactive approach, acting immediately and in the best interest of the child. They will follow CKRL's safeguarding policies and guidance from the DSL. Actions include:

- Sharing concerns with the child's lead professional.
- Consulting with lead professionals to conduct an early help assessment.
- Referring cases to statutory services if required.

If the DSL and deputy are unavailable, staff should contact:

- Another senior member of staff.
- Family Support & Advice Line in Dorset.
- MASH in BCP and Wiltshire.

All staff members can make referrals, not just the DSL.

Early Help

CKRL staff can identify children who may benefit from early intervention and provide immediate support as concerns emerge. Early help cases are reviewed regularly, and if the child's situation worsens, a referral to children's social care may be made. CKRL collaborates with local agencies to offer early help through options such as assessments and referrals to services, including CAMHS.

Statutory Children's Social Care Services

Concerns regarding a child's welfare should be referred to Local Authority Children's Social Care. Immediate referrals are necessary if a child is suffering or at risk of harm. Local procedures will guide these referrals.

Children in Need

Defined under the Children Act 1989, a child in need is one unlikely to achieve a reasonable level of health or development without services. Local authorities provide services to safeguard these children, who may be assessed under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Children with a Social Worker

At CKRL, we understand that a child with a social worker may face a higher level of risk compared to other children. This status often suggests greater vulnerability to further harm and can bring additional challenges related to

attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health. We factor in these needs when creating support plans for children with a social worker.

Children Suffering or Likely to Suffer Significant Harm

Local authorities, with support from other organisations when appropriate, are obligated to conduct inquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. These inquiries allow authorities to determine whether further action is necessary to protect and promote the child's welfare. This includes addressing all forms of abuse and neglect, such as female genital mutilation, other forms of so-called 'honour'-based violence, forced marriage, and external risks like radicalisation or exploitation.

Local Authority Actions

Once a referral is made, a local authority social worker is expected to confirm receipt within one working day, then decide on the next steps and necessary response. This process includes assessing whether:

- Immediate protective actions are needed
- Services are required for the child or family and, if so, what types
- The child needs an assessment under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (details in Chapter 1 of *Working Together to Safeguard Children*)
- Section 47 inquiries and assessment are warranted if significant harm is suspected
- Additional specialised assessments are needed to guide further action by the authority

The referring party should follow up if they do not receive this information. If an assessment begins, CKRL staff will actively support the process. If the situation does not improve after referral, CKRL's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy may consider using local escalation procedures to ensure concerns are addressed and the child's circumstances improve.

Why Early Action Matters

Providing timely assistance is crucial for addressing safeguarding risks, preventing escalation, and promoting a child's welfare. Research and case reviews highlight the risks of inaction, which can include:

- Ignoring early signs of abuse or neglect
- Inadequate record-keeping
- Failing to prioritise the child's perspective
- Slow or limited information sharing between agencies
- Insufficiently challenging those who may not be taking adequate action

Allegations Against Staff

Staff should avoid potentially vulnerable situations with children. If working with a child individually, staff should remain visible to other adults. Safe practice guidance, including mobile phone use, will be provided during induction and aligns with KCSIE Part 4 guidelines. Please refer to CKRL's Managing Allegations Policy. We always follow advice and instructions from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and fully comply with their recommendations.

Concerns Below the Harm Threshold

This section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in Part 4 of KCSIE. CKRL encourages a transparent culture where all concerns are promptly and appropriately addressed. Concerns regarding an adult at CKRL—whether a teacher, learning mentor, volunteer, or other staff member—will be taken seriously. Examples of behaviours that may meet the harm threshold include:

- Actions harming a child
- Possible criminal offences involving a child
- Behaviour suggesting unsuitability for working with children

Addressing Staff Concerns

- Staff are educated on appropriate behaviours and trained to recognise concerning versus expected behaviour
- Staff are encouraged to raise low-level safeguarding concerns
- Staff are supported in addressing these issues

If a staff member raises concerns about another adult potentially posing a risk to children, this should be referred to the CKRL Directors. If the concern involves this person, it should be referred directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Dorset Council's LADO can be contacted at 01305 221122 or by email at LADO@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk.

Reporting Concerns about CKRL Safeguarding Practices

All CKRL staff and volunteers are encouraged to report any unsafe practices or potential shortcomings in CKRL's safeguarding approach. Such concerns are always taken seriously. Low-level concerns should be documented in writing, including the name of the individual reporting, the details and context of the concern, and actions taken. These records must be securely stored and adhere to the Data Protection Act 2018.

Positive Handling

Occasionally, staff may need to use trained restraint techniques to ensure safety. Any such intervention must be recorded in CKRL's system, and parents/carers informed immediately. Only staff trained in positive handling are permitted to use physical intervention, and it is always a last resort. After any intervention, a follow-up meeting involving the DSL, the child, and the involved staff member is held.

Staff Recruitment and Selection

CKRL follows all recruitment protocols as mandated by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). All CKRL staff and volunteers are required to undergo an enhanced DBS check, reviewed in accordance with current DfE and DBS guidelines.

- Staff and volunteers sign documentation acknowledging their receipt, understanding, and commitment to CKRL's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and related procedures.
- All recruitment is led by individuals trained in safer recruitment, with adherence to safer recruitment guidelines. Candidates must provide full personal information and relevant experience.
- CKRL secures written references, and no staff member is permitted unsupervised access to children until satisfactory DBS checks are complete.
- Interviews follow documented procedures to confirm applicant suitability.

Enhanced DBS Checks

CKRL applies a consistent DBS process for all staff, including proprietors, casual or relief staff, volunteers, visiting professionals, and temporary workers, such as those on work placements. Checks are reviewed at least every three years. New staff or volunteers may not work unsupervised with children until their DBS check is complete. CKRL maintains a secure, centrally-stored record of all recruitment and vetting checks, including those for supply staff, which is regularly updated by the proprietors.

Safe Working Environment

CKRL staff work to ensure a safe environment at all times. If working one-on-one with a child, staff should adhere to all safeguarding protocols, notify other staff, and be available for support as needed. When working alone with a child outdoors, staff should inform colleagues and carry a radio for communication and safety.

Safeguarding Children with SEND

At CKRL, children with mild to severe SEND needs or specific health conditions can face additional safeguarding risks. Staff recognise that abuse indicators, such as changes in behaviour or mood, may relate to a child's disability but should still be carefully investigated. Staff are vigilant regarding the unique vulnerabilities of these students, including social isolation, susceptibility to bullying, and communication barriers, and work closely with the DSL or designated SEN staff on any concerns.

Expectations for Staff Conduct

All new staff and volunteers receive training on appropriate conduct, as outlined in the CKRL Code of Conduct. Staff are expected to:

- Respect all children and set a positive example
- Involve children in decisions that affect them
- Listen attentively to children and stay alert to behaviour changes
- Avoid sexualised or derogatory language
- Maintain professional boundaries both on and off the premises
- Recognise family circumstances that may increase risk
- Refrain from illegal activities that could endanger children

All staff are required to declare any offences or police involvement that may impact their role at CKRL.

APPENDIX 1: INDICATORS AND FORMS OF ABUSE

Staff at CKRL understand that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely isolated incidents defined by a single label. Such issues may arise within families or externally, either in or out of school, from peer interactions, the broader community, or online. Typically, multiple factors overlap, creating a heightened vulnerability to various forms of risk for children.

Abuse involves causing harm or failing to prevent harm to a child. This harm may be inflicted within a family or community setting by individuals known to the child, or, less commonly, by strangers (for example, through the internet). Abuse can occur entirely online or may involve technology that facilitates offline abuse. Children may be abused by adults or by other children, with potential forms of abuse including:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect.

UPSKIRTING

As of April 2019, ‘upskirting’ was designated as a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) defines ‘upskirting’ as the act of positioning a camera or other device beneath a person’s clothing to capture images without consent, either for sexual gratification or to cause distress, humiliation, or alarm. Recognised as a type of peer-on-peer abuse in the latest *Keeping Children Safe in Education* guidance, staff must remain vigilant. Any instance of upskirting observed by staff should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL (DDSL), or reported directly to the police using 101.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All CKRL staff are trained to recognise signs of abuse and neglect. Early identification of such indicators is critical in detecting abuse, neglect, and other specific safeguarding concerns such as child criminal and sexual exploitation. We acknowledge at CKRL that these issues often involve factors beyond our setting.

- **Abuse:** Harmful treatment of a child that may involve inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Abuse can occur online, with technology facilitating

offline abuse, or within a family or community by familiar individuals, though abuse by strangers is rare.

- **Physical abuse:** Involves inflicting physical harm on a child, such as hitting, shaking, or poisoning. It may also occur when a caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse:** Persistent emotional mistreatment affecting a child's psychological development. This includes making a child feel worthless, limiting their ability to express themselves, imposing unrealistic expectations, exposing them to the mistreatment of others, or bullying (including cyberbullying). All forms of maltreatment inherently involve emotional abuse, even if they are not exclusively emotional.
- **Sexual abuse:** Coercing a child into sexual activities, including both physical and non-physical actions such as watching inappropriate material or grooming. Sexual abuse can occur both online and offline and may involve perpetrators of any gender, including children.
- **Neglect:** Persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, potentially causing severe physical or psychological harm. Neglect might include failure to provide food, shelter, or medical care, or to protect a child from harm.

DRUG NETWORKS AND COUNTY LINES

Children may be exploited by drug networks or gangs to transport drugs or money across regions. A sign of county lines involvement is recurrent episodes of the child going missing, which may indicate trafficking. If there is a concern, the DSL or DDSL will consider a referral to the National Referral Mechanism, as this may indicate modern slavery or human trafficking.

FORCED MARRIAGE

Forced marriage is a criminal offence in England and Wales. This is a marriage entered into without full consent and often involves violence or coercion. CKRL understands the importance of protecting children from forced marriage. Staff can seek guidance from the Forced Marriage Unit (020 7008 0151 or fmufco.gov.uk).

DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as behaviours including physical, sexual, and economic abuse, or controlling and coercive behaviour, between individuals aged 16 or older who are personally connected. The Act also applies to children who witness or experience the effects of such abuse.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

The Department for Education's *What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners* provides further details on identifying abuse. The NSPCC website also offers additional resources on recognising abuse and neglect.

HOMELESSNESS

Families facing homelessness due to factors such as debt, rent arrears, or domestic abuse may require support. Concerns about homelessness should be reported to the Local Housing Authority, in addition to children's social care where necessary.

LGBT CHILDREN

LGBT children, or those perceived as LGBT, may face peer targeting. Staff should remain alert to any vulnerability and follow safeguarding policies.

CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

Court proceedings, whether as witnesses or in custody arrangements, can be stressful for children. Staff should be aware of the specific needs of children involved in such situations and report any concerns in line with this policy.

CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

Children with incarcerated family members are at risk of adverse outcomes, including stigma and mental health challenges. Staff are encouraged to remain alert to these children's needs and report any concerns to the DSL or DDSL.

APPENDIX 2 - LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

In case of concerns about a child's welfare or potential abuse, referrals may be made to:

Dorset Area

- Family Support & Advice Line: 01305 228558
familysupportandadvice@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
- For Dorset families or the public: 01202 228866

Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole (BCP) Area

- BCP Children's Service First Response Hub: 01202 735046 (email: childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Out of Hours Service

- Dorset: 01305 228558 Emergencies: 01305 221000
- BCP: 01202 738256 (Childrensoohs@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

For further guidance, the NSPCC helpline is available at 0808 800 5000.

APPENDIX 3 - RECORD KEEPING

CKRL's DSL must ensure records meet professional standards, secure storage, and adhere to data protection laws.

1. Reporting Disclosures: Records should be created promptly following a disclosure, noting the child's words, context, and the child's demeanour.
2. Records Held by the DSL: Concerns should be recorded in detail, and the DSL should determine appropriate actions based on local safeguarding procedures.
3. Child Protection Files: Files should be created for children with high levels of concern, organised chronologically and kept securely.
4. Transfer of Records: When a child transfers to another institution, the DSL should notify the new institution, and records should be sent securely.

APPENDIX 4 - REPORTING CONCERNS

When staff have concerns about a child, they should remain observant for signs of abuse. After a child makes a disclosure:

- Listen attentively without expressing shock.
- Avoid leading questions, but allow the child to speak freely.
- Report the disclosure promptly to the DSL or DDSL.

If concerns remain, the DSL will decide whether to refer the case to the Family Advice & Support Line or the child's social worker within 24 hours and will follow up as needed, following the guidelines as per the Reporting Concerns and Continuum of Need:

<https://pdscp.co.uk/dorset/working-with-parents-and-carers/supporting-you-in-discharging-your-safeguarding-responsibilities/applying-thresholds-and-reporting->

concerns/#:~:text=If%20you%20live%20in%20Dorset,be%20taken%20following%20a%20discussion.

Other Contact numbers/details

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): BCP 01202 817600 Dorset Council
01305 221122

Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership: 01305 221196

dorsetscp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

BCP Safeguarding Children Partnership: 01202 127465

safeguardingchildrenpartnershipbcp@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator: 01305 221196

Police: 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)

Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

This policy was adopted by: Church Knowle Rural Learning	Date: 01/09/25
To be reviewed: 01/09/26	Signed: 