



Puffin Play Therapy Safeguarding Policy

Reviewed January 2024

Rebecca Blackwell, Play and Creative Arts Therapist trading as Puffin Play Therapy helps children aged 3-14 with emotional and behavioural difficulties through Play Therapy sessions which support children to make sense of life experiences.

Puffin Play Therapy recognises that it has a duty to Safeguard Children and is committed to safe and ethical practice which protects children from all types of abuse and harm.

This policy has been drawn up based on Law and Guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Relevant government guidance on Safeguarding Children

Puffin Play Therapy recognises that:

- The welfare of the child 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 of harm and abuse.
- Some children may be additionally vulnerable due to the impact of past experiences, levels of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Partnership working with parents, carers, teachers or other agencies is essential in safeguarding children.

Puffin Play Therapy will seek to safeguard by

- Listening to children, respecting and valuing them.
- Ensuring full and enhanced DBS clearance of all therapists
- Accessing Safeguarding Training to ensure safeguarding knowledge is in line with current guidance and local procedures.
- Maintaining knowledge of current practice and guidance from the Local Safeguarding Childrens Board.
- Sharing information of Child Protection good practice with children and parents.
- Sharing information about concerns with Safeguarding Leads and other appropriate agencies.
- When working within school settings familiarising myself with and adopting the Safeguarding Policy of the school setting, including engaging in discussion with the Safeguarding lead of the organisation to ensure safe practice.
- As a registered Social Worker, maintaining CPD requirements and standards of proficiency for registration with Social Work England (SWE) and registration requirements for Play Therapy UK (PTUK).



Puffin Play Therapy are committed to review policies annually.

Next review date: January 2025



Puffin Play Therapy Safeguarding Procedure

Reviewed January 2024

These Procedures apply to Rebecca Blackwell, Play and Creative Arts Therapist trading as Puffin Play Therapy.

Purpose:

To ensure that all children who attend Play Therapy sessions with Puffin Play Therapy are protected from risk of harm from abuse and neglect.

Definitions of Abuse

Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical Abuse



A form of abuse which may involve hitting shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Sexual Abuse

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

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may



involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploration or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect

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:

- a) Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- b) Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- c) Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- d) Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

If a child tells you that they are being abused

- Reassure the child that it was the right thing to do to tell an adult.
- Explain that you cannot keep this information to yourself and that you must share it with another person whose job is also to ensure that they are safe.
- Explain what you will do next.



- If a child discloses during a therapy session **you must end the session immediately** and transfer the child to the care of the schools Safeguarding Lead or Deputy.
- **Record verbatim** what the child has said, share this with the school safeguarding lead.
- Follow the schools safeguarding procedure in the sharing of this information with the relevant social care team.

Wiltshire Council Integrated Front Door (IFD)

0300 4560108 (Monday – Friday 8:45 – 5:00)

Out of Hours

0300 4560100

Or Email: mash@wiltshire.gov.uk (for less urgent enquiries)

As soon as appropriate after following these procedures, speak to your clinical supervisor.

Record Keeping

In the event of a disclosure clear accurate records ensure that there is a documented account of Puffin Play Therapy's response. This is important for agencies responding to the incident.

In the event of a disclosure an incident form will be completed (Puffin Play Therapy Incident Form – Appendix 1). This must be completed in addition to documentation required as part of the schools safeguarding procedure.

Useful contact details

Child Protection Officer, Puffin Play Therapy: Rebecca Blackwell



Integrated Front Door: 0300 4560108 (Monday – Friday 8:45 – 5:00)

Out of Hours Team: 0300 4560100

Less urgent safeguarding enquiries: mash@wiltshire.gov.uk

Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership: [Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership \(SVPP\) - Home page \(wiltshirescb.org.uk\)](http://wiltshirescb.org.uk)

NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000 or help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline: 0800 1111 or www.childline.org.uk

Police non emergency number: 101

NHS medical helpline non emergency: 111



Appendix 1

Puffin Play Therapy Incident Form

Private and Confidential
Name of child:
Parent/Carer's name(s):
Address:
School:
Therapist details
Name:
Position:
Date and time of Incident
Report Include dates and times and other relevant information. The child's account of what has happened and how (verbatim where possible)
Incident reported to: (school safeguarding lead)



Signed: Date:

Name of Signatory:

Signed: Date:

Name of Signatory:

This form should be signed by all those involved in its completion and kept confidentially on the child's file.