

Safeguarding Policy for The Healing Space

1. Purpose and Scope

The Healing Space, owned and operated by Gemma Brown, is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults who use our counselling services. We provide 1:1 counselling to individuals in-person (7+), online, and through Walk and Talk therapy (12+). This policy outlines our commitment to protecting individuals from harm and provides a framework for all our work.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is based on relevant UK legislation and guidance, including the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and Working Together to Safeguard Children. Information on local safeguarding procedures can be found via the Warrington Safeguarding Partnership.

3. Supporting Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Social Media and Online Communication Policy
- Lone Working Policy (especially relevant for Walk and Talk therapy)
- Emergency Procedures

4. Our Beliefs

- The welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults is paramount.
- All individuals have the right to protection from abuse and neglect.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of those we work with.
- Working in partnership with individuals, their families (where appropriate), and other agencies is essential.
- All individuals, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have an equal right to protection.
- Some individuals may be more vulnerable due to various factors, requiring additional safeguards.

5. Our Commitment

We will seek to safeguard individuals by:

- Prioritising their well-being and respecting their views.
- Adhering to this safeguarding policy and related procedures.
- Maintaining professional boundaries at all times.
- Ensuring secure storage of records in line with data protection legislation (ICO guidelines).
- Providing clear information to individuals about confidentiality, safeguarding procedures, and how to raise concerns.

- Responding promptly and appropriately to any concerns or disclosures.
- Consulting with the Warrington Safeguarding Partnership for complex cases or when unsure of the appropriate course of action.
- Maintaining appropriate professional indemnity insurance.
- Engaging in regular professional development and staying up-to-date with safeguarding best practices.
- Reviewing and updating this policy annually or as required by changes in legislation or guidance.

6. Procedures

Responding to a Disclosure or Concern:

- Listen carefully and empathetically.
- Reassure the individual that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Do not make promises of confidentiality that you cannot keep (e.g., if a child is at risk of significant harm).
- Record all details of the disclosure, including date, time, and what was said, using factual language.
- Consult with the Warrington Safeguarding Partnership for guidance on next steps, especially if the disclosure involves a child or vulnerable adult.
- Follow their advice regarding reporting to statutory agencies (e.g., police, social services).

Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

- Information shared within counselling sessions will be treated as confidential, except in the following circumstances:
 - Risk of harm to self or others.
 - Disclosure of abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult.
 - Legal obligation to disclose information.
- Any information sharing will be done in accordance with data protection legislation and ethical guidelines.

Lone Working:

- For Walk and Talk therapy, a risk assessment of the location will be conducted beforehand.
- Individuals will be informed of the planned route.
- Mobile phone communication will be maintained.
- A system for checking in after the session will be in place.

7. Contact Information

- Gemma Brown (Owner/Counsellor:
Gemma@thehealingspacetherapy.co.uk/07359459004

- Warrington Safeguarding Partnership:
safeguardingpartnerships@warrington.gov.uk/ 01925443126

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation or guidance.