

# The Healing Space

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Location: Cheshire & Manchester (online and in-person)

## Safeguarding Policy

*(Updated to reflect new premises at Lymm Court, 11 Eagle Brow, Lymm WA13 0LP)*

**Effective From:** 5th January 2026

### 1. Purpose and Scope

The Healing Space Therapy is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people, and adults who access therapy. This policy outlines my responsibilities, procedures, and safeguarding expectations in line with current legislation and professional standards.

This policy applies to:

- In-person counselling (ages 7+)
- Online counselling
- Walk & Talk therapy (ages 12+)
- Parent coaching
- Any service delivered under The Healing Space Therapy

### 2. Legal and Professional Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Care Act 2014

- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Gillick competence and the Fraser Guidelines
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Warrington Safeguarding Partnership guidance
- BACP and NCPS ethical frameworks

### **3. Principles**

- The welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk is paramount.
- All individuals have the right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility involving practitioner, child/young person, parents/carers (where appropriate), and statutory agencies.
- All clients have the right to be listened to, respected, and treated without discrimination.
- Clear boundaries and safe working practices underpin all therapeutic work.
- Children remain the responsibility of their parent/carer outside the session time.

### **4. Consent & Parental Responsibility**

- By engaging in therapy, parents/carers confirm that they hold parental responsibility for the child.
- Parents/carers must disclose any existing court orders affecting consent, custody, or decision-making.

- Under the Children Act 1989, the consent of one parent with parental responsibility is sufficient unless a court order states otherwise.
- Where parents disagree about counselling, sessions may be paused until clarity is obtained through the appropriate legal channels.
- Children under 16 may be assessed as Gillick competent to consent independently. Their confidentiality will then be prioritised.

## **5. My Responsibilities as Practitioner**

I will:

- Explain confidentiality and safeguarding clearly at the start of therapy.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns or disclosures.
- Assess Gillick competence for clients under 16.
- Apply Fraser Guidelines where appropriate.
- Involve parents/carers when safe and appropriate.
- Consult clinical supervision regarding safeguarding concerns where required.
- Contact Warrington Social Care or emergency services when there is a risk of significant harm.
- Maintain accurate, factual records in line with GDPR.
- Uphold professional boundaries and ethical standards.
- Review this policy annually.

## **6. Safeguarding Procedures**

### **6.1 Responding to a Disclosure or Concern**

If a safeguarding concern arises, I will:

- Listen carefully, calmly, and without judgement.
- Reassure the individual appropriately.
- Explain that confidentiality may need to be broken if someone is unsafe.
- Record information factually: date, time, exact words, and observations.
- Seek supervision where appropriate.
- Make an immediate referral to Social Care or police if there is a risk of significant harm.

## **6.2 Confidentiality & Information Sharing**

Confidentiality may be broken when:

- There is risk of harm to self or others.
- A child or vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse or neglect.
- There is a legal requirement to disclose information.

Any information shared will be proportionate and in line with UK GDPR.

Parents are not routinely informed of session content unless the young person consents.

# **7. Working With Children & Young People**

## **7.1 Consent**

- Under 16s may be deemed Gillick competent and may consent independently.
- Parents will be informed of the limits of confidentiality.
- 16–17-year-olds hold full confidentiality unless they give permission to share information or safeguarding applies.

## **8. Attendance, Arrival, and Collection Procedures**

At Lymm Court, the main front door is locked at all times, and there is no waiting area. These procedures ensure safety and clear boundaries:

### **Arrivals**

- Clients must arrive at their appointment time only.
- Parents/carers and children should knock on the main door and wait to be let in.
- Once inside, clients are accompanied directly to my room.
- Parents/carers must not wait inside the building.

### **Departures**

- Children and young people are not my responsibility once the session has ended.
- I cannot supervise a child before or after their session.
- For all children without independent-departure consent, I will escort them to the main door at the end of the session.
- Parents/carers must be prompt for collection to avoid safeguarding concerns and disruption to other sessions.

### **Independent Departure (Age 11+)**

A child or young person may leave independently only when:

- The parent/carer has given written consent, and
- It is safe and appropriate for them to do so.

Without written consent, collection at the main door is required.

## **Additional Safeguarding Requirements for Children Under 11**

For children under the age of 11 attending in-person sessions:

- A parent or carer must remain **contactable at all times** during the session.
- Parents/carers are expected to **remain local** so they can return promptly if required.
- Children under 11 **must be collected** by a parent or carer at the end of each session.
- Independent departure is **not permitted** for this age group.

These arrangements are necessary due to the layout of the premises and form part of my safeguarding responsibilities.

## **9. Lone Working**

I complete a lone working risk assessment for in-office, online, and Walk and Talk sessions, and follow safety procedures including pre-arranged routes and check-in/out systems.

## **10. Record Keeping**

All records are:

- Stored securely
- Confidential
- Managed in accordance with GDPR and professional guidance
- Retained only as long as legally required

# 11. Contact Information

## **The Healing Space Therapy**

Email: [gemma@thehealingspacetherapy.co.uk](mailto:gemma@thehealingspacetherapy.co.uk)

Phone: 07359 459004

## **Warrington Safeguarding Partnership**

Children's Social Care: 01925 443400

Adult Social Care: 01925 444239

Police Emergency: 999

Non-Emergency: 101

# 12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or local guidance changes.