



Confidentiality Policy for Working with Children and Young People

Introduction

As a person-centred counsellor and clinical supervisor, I am committed to maintaining the confidentiality of all clients in my private practice. This policy outlines how confidentiality is upheld when working with children and young people, ensuring compliance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Children Act 1989 & 2004, and BACP ethical guidelines.

Confidentiality Commitment

Confidentiality is fundamental to the counselling process, helping to create a safe and trusting space for young clients. All personal information shared during therapy remains private, except in specific situations outlined below.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

Confidentiality may be breached in the following circumstances:

1. **Safeguarding Concerns** – If I believe a child or young person is at risk of harm, abuse, or neglect, I have a legal duty to share relevant information with the appropriate safeguarding authorities, in line with UK child protection laws.
 - I will attempt to discuss this with the client and/or parent/carer first, unless doing so would place them at greater risk.
 - Concerns may be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (if working within a school) or external agencies such as the MARU (Multi agency referral unit or the Police).
2. **Serious Harm to Self or Others** – If there is a significant risk that the young person may harm themselves or others, I may need to share information with relevant professionals (e.g., GP, mental health services) to ensure safety.



3. Legal Requirements – If required by law (e.g., court order, terrorism prevention laws), I may have to disclose specific information.

Working with Parents/Carers

- Young people aged 16 and over are legally entitled to confidentiality in line with UK GDPR.
- For young people under 16, confidentiality is maintained unless Gillick Competency or Fraser Guidelines indicate they can make independent decisions.
- If a child is not Gillick competent, parents/carers may be informed about the counselling process, but session content remains confidential unless there are safeguarding concerns.

Record-Keeping & Data Protection

- All counselling notes are anonymised, securely stored, and retained for 5 years, in compliance with UK GDPR, BACP and Insurance requirements.
- Parents/carers do not have automatic access to session notes unless legally required.
- Data sharing follows UK GDPR principles of lawfulness, fairness, and transparency.

Collaboration with Schools & Professionals

- If I am working freelance in a school, I follow both my confidentiality policy and the school's safeguarding procedures.
- I will only share information with school staff if the young person consents or if there is a safeguarding concern.

Young Person's Rights

Under UK GDPR, young clients have the right to: ✓ Access their personal data. ✓ Request corrections to inaccurate data. ✓ Withdraw consent for processing special category data. ✓ Request data deletion (unless legally required to retain it).



Contact & Further Information

For concerns about confidentiality or data protection, please contact me directly. If necessary, you can also contact the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
[**www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).