



Abi Hearn Counselling: Safeguarding Policy

Purpose and Scope

I, Abi Hearn, am dedicated to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people in Cornwall. This policy applies to all the services I provide, including one-to-one therapy sessions and work within schools with students and staff. My aim is to protect clients by ensuring clear procedures are in place to identify, respond to, and manage safeguarding concerns effectively.

My Commitment

I believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and am committed to:

- **Prioritizing Welfare:** Ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young people is central to my practice.
- **Creating a Safe Environment:** Providing a secure and supportive setting where clients feel valued and respected.
- **Recognizing Vulnerabilities:** Acknowledging that some children may face additional challenges due to factors such as disability, race, or adverse childhood experiences.
- **Listening and Responding:** Taking all concerns seriously and responding promptly and appropriately.
- **Collaborating:** Working with parents, schools, and external agencies to protect children effectively.

Legal Framework

This policy aligns with current safeguarding legislation and guidance, including:

- **Children Act 1989 and 2004**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024**
- **Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures**
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR**

My Roles and Responsibilities

As the sole therapist and safeguarding officer, I am responsible for:

- Undertaking regular safeguarding training.
- Recognizing and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Maintaining confidential and accurate records of safeguarding concerns.



- Reporting concerns to appropriate agencies, such as Cornwall's Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU).
- Collaborating with schools, parents, and external agencies to safeguard children.

Recognizing and Responding to Abuse

I am trained to identify signs of abuse, including:

- **Physical abuse:** Unexplained injuries, bruises, or burns.
- **Emotional abuse:** Low self-esteem, withdrawal, or extreme behaviors.
- **Sexual abuse:** Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior.
- **Neglect:** Poor hygiene, malnutrition, or consistent lack of supervision.

When I suspect abuse:

1. I document the concerns accurately and promptly.
2. I report to Cornwall's Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU) or the appropriate safeguarding body.
3. I inform parents or guardians unless doing so increases risk to the child.

Reporting Procedures

If a safeguarding concern arises, I will:

1. Document the concern, including dates, times, and details.
2. Contact Cornwall's Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU) for advice or referral:
 - **Phone:** 0300 123 1116
3. In emergencies, contact the police by dialing 999.

Record-Keeping

I maintain secure, confidential records of safeguarding concerns. These records include:

- Detailed notes of the concern.
- Actions taken and their outcomes.
- Decisions regarding the referral process.

These records are stored in line with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR**.

Whistleblowing

If you have concerns about my safeguarding practices or the welfare of a child, you are encouraged to:



1. Raise the concern directly with me via email (info@abihearn.co.uk) or phone (07753311831).
2. Contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline at 0808 800 5000 if needed.

Safer Recruitment

As a sole practitioner, I ensure my suitability by:

- Undergoing enhanced DBS checks.
- Attending regular safeguarding and child protection training.

Online Safety

I recognize the risks posed by digital platforms and educate clients about safe internet use. All therapy sessions conducted online use secure, encrypted platforms to protect privacy.

Supervision and Training

I participate in regular clinical supervision and safeguarding training to remain informed of best practices and legal updates. This ensures high-quality service delivery and adherence to safeguarding standards.

Partnership Working

I work closely with schools, parents, and local safeguarding boards to protect children effectively. This includes sharing relevant information with appropriate agencies when necessary.

Policy Review

I review this policy annually to ensure it remains effective and up-to-date. Feedback from clients, parents, and schools is welcomed to inform updates.

Next Review Date: September 10, 2025

Contact Information

For any safeguarding concerns or further information, please contact me directly:

- **Abi Hearn:** Lead Therapist and Safeguarding Officer
 - **Email:** info@abihearn.co.uk
 - **Phone:** 07753311831
- **Cornwall Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU):**
 - **Phone:** 0300 123 1116



- **NSPCC Helpline:**
 - **Phone:** 0808 800 5000
- **Childline:**
 - **Phone:** 0800 1111

By implementing this policy, I demonstrate my commitment to safeguarding children and young people, ensuring their safety and well-being in all aspects of my service delivery.