

Child Protection Policy



At Clear Sky, we are committed to a practice which protects children from harm.

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which cause children, and young people harm.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by –

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about child protection and good practise with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately in accordance with our ethical principles of confidentiality.
- Following Safer Recruitment procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at regular intervals.

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1. Code of Behaviour

a. Statement of Intent

It is the policy of Clear Sky to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm and neglect.

This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any Clear Sky activities. Personnel should at all times show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of Clear Sky.

b. Definition of Safeguarding

(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015)

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best chances

Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Domestic abuse
- Human Trafficking
- Peer on peer abuse
- Bullying
- Substance misuse
- Sexting

Staff are expected to access information and learning tools on <http://www.oscb.org.uk/themes-tools/> to gain further understanding on key safeguarding themes emerging locally and nationally.

c. Guidelines for all Clear Sky Staff and Volunteers

Attitudes

- Staff and volunteers should be committed to
 - Treating children and young people with respect and dignity
 - Always listening to what a child or young person is saying
 - Valuing each child and young person
 - Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make

By Example

- Staff and volunteers should endeavour to
 - Provide an example that we wish others to follow
 - Use appropriate language with children and young people
 - Respect a young person's right to privacy

Physical Contact

- Staff and volunteers should never
 - Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay
 - Do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves
 - Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind (see touch policy)

General

- Staff and volunteers should
 - Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
 - Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
 - Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues

d. Sharing Information about Child Protection and Good Practice with Children, Staff and Volunteers

Good communication is essential in any organisation. At Clear Sky, every effort will be made to assure that should individuals have concerns they will be listened to and taken seriously.

It is the responsibility of the management to ensure that information is available to and exchanged between all those involved in this organisation and its activities. Some information is confidential and should only be shared on a strictly need to know basis.

When information is requested from an outside agency on the work of Clear Sky, staff will question why the information is being requested, who by, and for what purposes before releasing any information. This is to safeguard confidentiality and data protection.

○ Children and Young People

Children and young people have the right to information, especially any information that could make life safer and better for them. Clear Sky will act to ensure they have information on how and with whom they can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties.

When sharing information, Clear Sky will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as the level of responsibility of the people with whom they are sharing.

○ Parents

Parents / persons with parental responsibility are ultimately responsible for their children's welfare at all times and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible organisation.

We achieve this by:

- Publicising information about all our work
- Publishing the names of Designated Child Protection Person(s) and how to make a complaint on our website www.clear-sky.org.uk
- Publishing a full copy of our Child Protection Policy on our website www.clear-sky.org.uk

- **Staff and Volunteers**

As an organisation which offers support and guidance to children and young people it is imperative that each member of the Clear Sky staff is aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of Clear Sky's procedures. Each member of the therapy team is required to have up to date Generalist Safeguarding and Advanced Level 3 training through the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB).

2. Recognising Cultural Diversity in Safeguarding

As a Charity we are aware of the cultural diversity of the wider community and work sensitively to address this in relation to safeguarding.

At Clear Sky we ensure we have all the relevant information through our referral process to support us to identify signs of female genital mutilation (FGM), radicalisation, and forced marriage (not arranged).

All Clear Sky therapists have undertaken Safeguarding training, which supports them to recognise behaviours that indicate a cause for concern. These behaviours could be emotional, verbal or physical/ circumstantial.

We work closely with the school to ensure that any indications for concern are closely monitored. At Clear Sky we have a duty to report concerns we have regarding FGM, radicalisation, CSE and forced marriage to the schools safeguarding lead and social services or the police if necessary.

a. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision, cutting or sunna.

At Clear Sky we believe that all our pupils should be kept safe from harm. Female Genital Mutilation affects girls particularly from north African countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Sierra Leone. Although we work with no/few children from these backgrounds and consider girls in our care safe from FGM, we will continue to review our policy annually.

Staff are aware:

- It is illegal in the United Kingdom to allow girls to undergo female genital mutilation either in this country or abroad
- That FGM is not a religious, but cultural practice
- That it is mostly practiced on girls aged 5-8 years old but up to 15 years of age
- Of signs to look out for to protect children from FGM, E.G. long family holidays home
- Of post-FGM symptoms such as discomfort in walking/ sitting/ sanding or long absences from school.

b. Radicalisation

Radicalisation is an issue in all areas of the country. All staff should complete Prevent training to support them to look out for signs of radicalisation.

c. Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both of the parties do not agree or consent to the marriage. All child marriages are forced because a child cannot provide informed consent. Therefore, it is a violation of children's rights. Forced marriage is a global

problem. If forced marriage is suspected, Clear Sky staff should report concerns to the schools safe guarding lead and ensure that follow up actions are carried out.

3. Disqualification by Association

A member of staff may become disqualified from working within a school setting by association with others, such as living in the same home as another who is disqualified from working with children.

The grounds for disqualification include

- Being on the DBS Children's Barred List
- Being convicted of, cautioned for or charged of certain violent and sexual offences both against children and adults (at home or abroad)
- Being the subject of certain other orders relating to the care of children
- Refusal or cancellation of registration relating to childcare or children's homes or being prohibited from private fostering

Disqualification occurs as soon as the above criteria are met and as soon as a caution or conviction occurs. A person does not yet have to be formally included on the children's barred list.

Clear Sky will ask staff annually, in their appraisal if they are disqualified by association. Staff are required to inform Sophia Giblin immediately if they believe themselves to have been disqualified, or disqualified by association.

4. Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding

Clear Sky staff adhere to the following statement:

"The Equality Act 2010 puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regards to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular need"

5. Other Bodies

A copy of our Child Protection Policy will be made available to any other appropriate body.

6. Explaining Confidentiality to Children in Play and Creative Arts Therapy Sessions

Clear Sky Therapists regard children's safety and wellbeing as the **most** important aspect of the Play and Creative Arts Therapy intervention. As Therapy sessions are confidential, it is important that we are able to explain the boundaries and limits of confidentiality in a way that children understand. This helps to create an atmosphere of trust and safety within the therapeutic relationship.

Play and Creative Arts Therapists will explain confidentiality to children in a boundary statement at the beginning of the Play and Creative Arts Therapy intervention, and will repeat this boundary statement at the beginning of each Play and Creative Arts Therapy session to remind the child.

Example boundary statement:

"I will be coming to school each week to do Play and Creative Arts Therapy sessions with you in this room. Play and Creative Arts Therapy is where you can choose to play with whatever you like in this room/area in whichever way you would like."

Before we start Play and Creative Arts Therapy we need to agree on some rules in order to keep us safe. In these sessions we agree not to hurt each other, the room, or the toys in it. I will remind you of these rules from time to time.

This your own special play time, so you get to choose what happens in here. I will not talk about what happens in your Therapy sessions with anyone else, but you can talk about what happens in here with anyone you like.

I will only tell someone what happens in here if you tell me something that makes me worried about you and your safety, in which case I'll have to talk to Mr Brown (safeguarding officer at the school), but I will always tell you first if I need to talk to him about what happened in the session."

Children may need to be reminded of this boundary statement at different times during the Play and Creative Arts Therapy process. This reminder helps children to feel safe within the sessions and they can predict what will happen if they did choose to disclose any information to their Play and Creative Arts Therapist.

Play and Creative Arts Therapists will often use a drawing to show children how communication works around Play and Creative Arts Therapy. This diagram helps children to understand that they can talk to their friends, parents, teachers and anyone else that they like about what happens in the Play and Creative Arts Therapy session. It explains to children that the Play and Creative Arts Therapist will only speak to the safeguarding officer about disclosures or concerning situations that happen in the Play and Creative Arts Therapy sessions.

Schools that we work with understand that the Play and Creative Arts Therapy is a confidential process, whereby our Therapists will share limited information about what takes place in the sessions, but can share wider information about the progress that the child is making in more general terms.

Children who have Play and Creative Arts Therapy need to feel that they are allowed to express themselves in whichever way they choose without concerns about who this information might be shared with, however they also need to be aware of the limits of this confidentiality, so they know what to expect if a disclosure of harm is made.

7. Play and Creative Arts Therapy Ethical Framework and Confidentiality

Clear Sky Play and Creative Arts Therapists are all individually registered with governing bodies of Play and Creative Arts Therapies. Additionally, Clear Sky has an organisational membership with the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP). Play and Creative Arts Therapists work within a strict ethical framework to inform their way of working.

Notable ethical principles that cover children's safety and confidentiality of Play and Creative Arts Therapy are the principles of fidelity, autonomy, beneficence and non-maleficence.

How do these principles apply to confidentiality?

- **Fidelity** – honouring the trust placed in the Play and Creative Arts Therapist

Play and Creative Arts Therapists adopt this principle and act in accordance with the trust placed in them, regard confidentiality as an obligation arising from the client's trust, restrict any disclosure of confidential information about clients to furthering the purpose for which it was originally disclosed.

- **Autonomy** – respect for the child’s right to be self-governing

Play and Creative Arts Therapists adopt this principle and protect privacy, protect confidentiality, and normally make disclosures of confidential information conditional on the consent of the client involved (or will inform the client of the intention to disclose confidential information for the purpose of keeping the client safe).

- **Beneficence** – the commitment to promoting the child’s wellbeing

Play and Creative Arts Therapists work within the best interest of the client based on professional assessment. This will become paramount when working with clients whose capacity for autonomy is diminished because of immaturity, lack of understanding, extreme distress, serious disturbance or other significant personal constraints.

- **Non-maleficence** – the commitment to avoiding harm to the child

Play and Creative Arts Therapists have an ethical responsibility to strive to mitigate any harm caused to a client even when the harm is unavoidable or unintended. This includes being aware of safeguarding issues that might impact upon a child and when the Therapist needs to disclose any concerns that they may have around the welfare of a child.

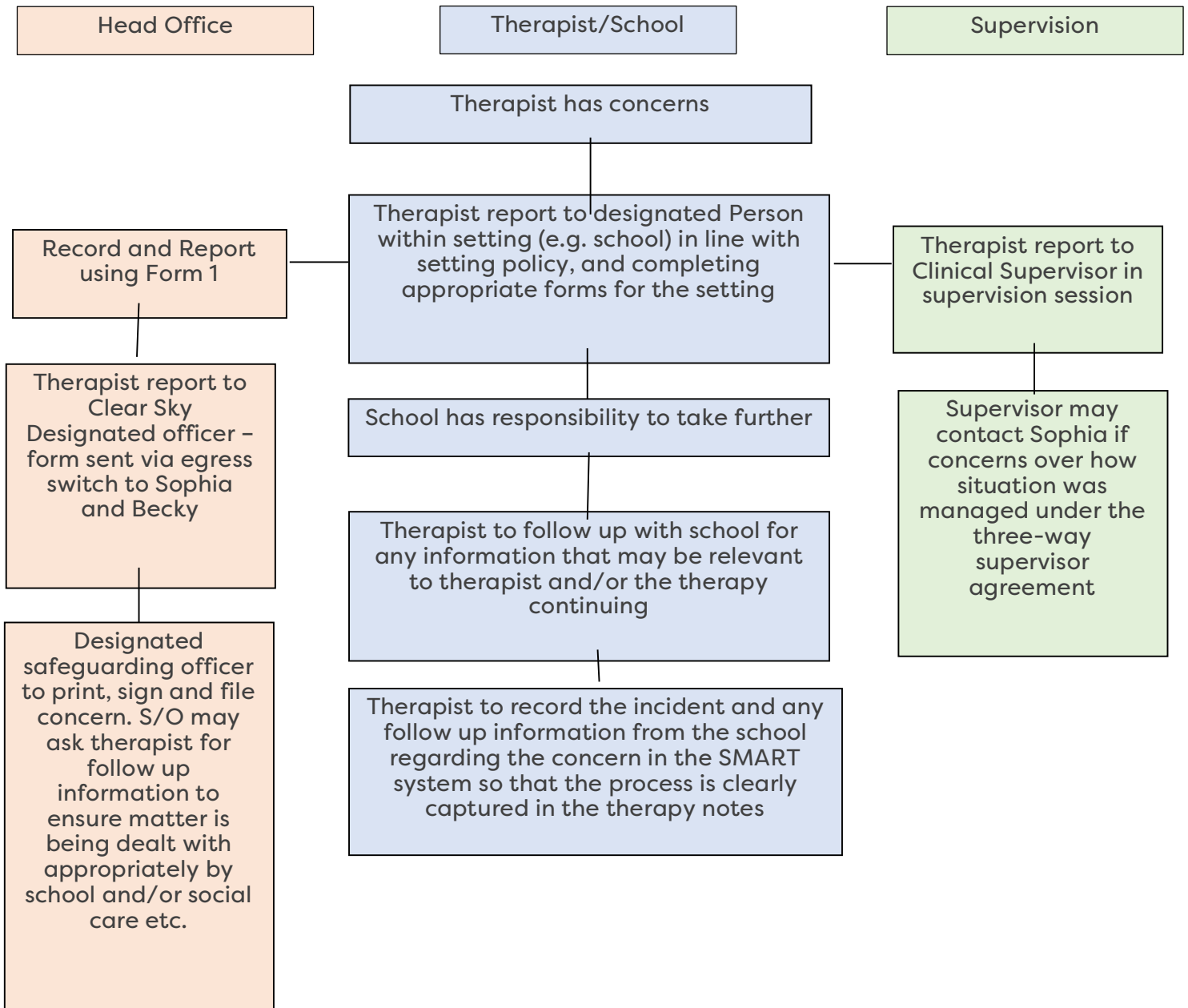
For more information see Clear Sky's Ethics Policy.

8. Procedure for Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse (Form 1)

In any case where an allegation is made, or someone involved with Clear Sky has concerns, a record should be made using this form. Details must include, as far as practical:

Name of child or young person	
Age	
Home address	
DOB	
Names and address of parent(s) or persons with parental responsibility	
Telephone number	
Name and job title of person reporting concern	
Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or passing on those of someone else? Record details	
What has prompted these concerns? Include times and dates of any specific incidents	
Has the child or young person been spoken to? If so, what was said?	
Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details	
Who has this been passed onto, in order that appropriate action is taken? E.g. designated office, social services etc.	
Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details	
<i>Date concern received by designated officers</i> (office use only)	<i>Date:</i> <i>Print Name:</i> _____ <i>Sign:</i> _____ <i>Action taken:</i>

Reporting Procedure



9. Designated Child Protection Persons

Therapists working for Clear Sky in a school / children's centre / early years setting will be working under the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedure of the setting (e.g. each individual school will have a different policy and procedure). Staff need to be aware of the Designated Person within their setting and to be familiar with the procedure of the setting.

Staff will be provided with a copy of the Child Protection Policy and Procedure on commencement of employment, or agreement of services with Clear Sky.

For reasons of confidentiality the only persons within Clear Sky who need to know this information are the following Designated Child Protection Persons.

1. Sophia Giblin (Ms)
Charity Director & Designated Child Protection Person
Clear Sky Children's Charity
The Manor House
Little Wittenham
Abingdon
OX14 4RA
Tel: 07821 202931 / 01865 362789

2. Rebecca Hill (Ms)
Therapeutic Consultant & Designated Child Protection Person
Clear Sky Children's Charity
The Manor House
Little Wittenham
Abingdon
OX14 4RA
Tel: 07837 384635 / 01865 362789

10. Important Numbers



For therapists working with children in Oxfordshire:

Immediate Concerns about a Child

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is the front door to Children's Social Care for all child protection and immediate safeguarding concerns. If there is an immediate safeguarding concern, for example:

- A child or young person discloses physical abuse
- If there are signs of physical abuse e.g. injury
- A child or young person discloses sexual abuse
- A child presents as very different/scared to go home anxious and you are aware home could be risky

You should call the MASH immediately. Tel: 0345 050 7666.

A No Names Consultation should not be used for the above scenarios.

Outside office hours: Emergency Duty Team: 0800 833 408

Non-Immediate Concerns about a Child

If you have a concern about a child/family but it is not an immediate safeguarding concern, as described above, then you should look at the Threshold of Needs matrix: <http://www.oscb.org.uk/professionals/>. This tool is designed to support professionals to make decisions as to whether contact needs to be made with Children's Services and if so which team.

The Locality and Community Support Service (LCSS)

The Locality and Community Support Service (LCSS) has been created as part of Oxfordshire County Council's, Children's Services Integration Programme.

You should contact the Locality Community Support Service if you:

- Have emerging concerns for a child that does not require an immediate safeguarding response
- Need support or guidance with an Early Help Assessment or TAF
- Wish to complete a No Names Consultation

You should:

- Discuss your concerns with the family
- Gain advice from LCSS with family's knowledge
- If you wish to discuss a concern without a family's consent you can gain advice via a No Names Consultation only

No Names Consultations

A No Names Consultation enables professionals to talk through concerns they have for children when there is not an immediate safeguarding concern and where there is no consent from the family.

LCSS North (including Banbury, Witney, Bicester, Carterton and Woodstock)	Tel: 0345 2412703
LCSS Central	Tel: 0345 2412705
LCSS South (including Abingdon, Faringdon, Wantage, Thame, Didcot and Henley):	Tel: 0345 2412608

Early Help Assessment & Team around the Family Advice & Support

The LCSS Teams will provide advice and support to professionals on Early Help Assessments (EHA-formerly CAF's) and Team around the Family (TAFs). They are also responsible for the storage, auditing and feedback to professionals on EHAs and TAFs completed.

LCSS North	Samuelson House, Tramway Rd, Banbury OX16 5AU	LCSS.North@oxfordshire.gov.uk
LCSS Central	Knights Court, Between Towns Road, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 3LX	LCSS.Central@oxfordshire.gov.uk
LCSS South	Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 3JD	LCSS.South@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Other Important Numbers

To talk about an on-going concern/open case

- Oxford City – 01865 328563
- North Oxfordshire (including Banbury, Witney, Bicester, Carterton and Woodstock) – 01865 323039
- South Oxfordshire (including Faringdon, Wantage, Thame, Didcot and Henley) – 01865 323041

Sexual exploitation helpline (Kingfisher Team): 01865 335276

Police: if you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999

NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 500 (24 hours)

Childline: 0800 1111

For therapists working with children in Buckinghamshire

Discuss with you supervisor and/or Clear Sky's safeguarding lead, and us the Thresholds Document alongside your professional judgment to identify the Level of need of the child. The Thresholds Document can be found using the link below

http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/BSCB-Procedures/Thresholds_Document_Sept_2015_final.pdf

Level 3 (Complex needs/ Specialist/ Children in Need)

- If the concern reaches level 3 you must gain written consent from the family to agree to a referral.
- Contact first Response on **01296 383962** or **0845 4600 001** or **0800 999 7677** (out of hours) or send a Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF)

Immediate Concerns about a Child

Level 4 (Acute/ Child protection)

If there is immediate risk of harm to a child, contact the police on 999

If you think that the concern has reached **level 4 (Acute/ Child protection)**, collect all the information you have and contact

- First Response on **01296 383962** or **0845 4600 001** or **0800 999 7677** (out of hours)
- This should be followed up with a Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF)
- Call the police on 999 if there is immediate risk

You do not require consent for level 4, however, if you are unsure whether you need consent, you can receive advice from First Response who will advise you.

Concerns about staff working with children

Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01296 382070 or secure-LADO@buckscc.gcsx.gov.uk

Further safeguarding information for therapists working with children in Buckinghamshire can be found at

<http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/concerned-about-child/professionals-report-a-concern/>

11. Record Keeping

Filing System

All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet. Only authorised personnel will have access to these files.

Client Record Policy

Clear Sky therapists keep brief notes of all client sessions on our secure encrypted online system. All notes and information related to each client will be securely stored for 3 years in paper form from the end of therapy, at which point all therapy notes will be destroyed (see Data Protection Policy and Data Security and Storage Procedures and Best Practice documents)

12. Good Practice Advice on Disclosure

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Child Protection will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Listen to the child rather than question him/her directly. Offer them reassurance without making promises and take what the child says seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption. Accept what is said – it is not your role to question or investigate. Do not overreact.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- Advise you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on. Explain what we will have to do and whom you will have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event. Use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- If the child has made a serious disclosure, or you believe they are about to, ask the child if they would like to go with you to tell the Designated Safeguarding Officer within the school so that the child can deliver the disclosure directly to this person. This removes the therapist from needing to escalate further and can remove any barriers that are associated with multiple professionals being involved at disclosure stage.
- Contact the Clear Sky Designated Officer for advice / guidance, or call the no names consultation line if you are unsure.
- Record any discussions / actions taken within 24 hours.
- Therapist should discuss any disclosures in clinical supervision.

13. Suspicions and Allegations of Harm and Abuse

Children make disclosures in different ways in therapy sessions. This policy document outlines how Clear Sky manage concerns and disclosures of abuse.

A **direct disclosure** is when a child **tells** a Clear Sky Therapist that they have been, or are being abused or hurt.

Children may play out scenes of a sensitive nature in their Therapy sessions, through any of the creative mediums available within the therapy room. Clear Sky Therapists do not assume that this type of suggestive play is related to a disclosure – however Therapists are highly vigilant at noticing and recording elements of the play that might raise concerns.

Clear Sky Therapists are required to keep an official record of Therapy sessions. These records outline the date of the session, whether the child attended, what themes arose in the play and how the child presented in the room. These records are not in any way an interpretation of the play and do not make assumptions about what is happening for the child in their lives, **unless** there is reason to believe that the child might be at risk of harm. In this case, the therapist will record the child's play in note format to help us build up a picture of what might be going on for the child.

Clear Sky Therapists have a duty of care to record and report suspicions or allegations of abuse by following the guidance set out in this policy.

14. How Clear Sky supports the investigation process with other agencies and professionals

1. We will work in a cooperative and transparent manner with other organisations and agencies to promote the best interests of the child.
2. When our therapists are able, they will attend meetings related to the safety and welfare of the child, in particular if there has been a disclosure made directly to the Clear Sky Therapist
3. Clear Sky will remunerate therapists for their time dedicated to supporting child protection issues. The amount of time to be remunerated will be agreed with Clear Sky's CEO.
4. Clear Sky will provide additional supervision for their therapists on request when they are working with difficult child protection cases.
5. Clear Sky will provide a summary report of Therapy sessions as required by social care, the court or police. This will document a record of the sessions that took place, how the child presented over the course of the Therapy intervention and all concerns that have been noted and escalated over the period.
6. Clear Sky only keep factual records about Therapy sessions, including date, whether the child attended the session, what they played with, any themes noticed in the play and any factual information that raises concerns for the therapist.
7. Therapists do not make interpretations about a child's play or identify any play as a **direct disclosure** of harm or abuse. Therapists have a duty to pass on concerns to the school and Clear Sky Designated Safeguarding Leads if they witness any play that may be a cause for concern.
8. When a child engages in borderline suggestive play, but the therapist deems it age appropriate or low risk, therapists will keep a written record of what happened and when to build up a picture of what might be happening for the child, without escalating as a Child Protection issue. This will be discussed in supervision. Over a period of time this may amount to a concern that would then be escalated.
9. Our therapists maintain trust within the relationship with the child by making therapeutically sound judgements about what information to pass on in line with Clear Sky's ethics policy, and in consultation with Clear Sky's CEO and the Therapists Clinical Supervisor.
10. Clear Sky Therapists receive a minimum of 1.5 hours' clinical supervision per month with a suitably qualified supervisor to discuss all cases relating to Clear Sky clients.

Requests for information relating to Child Protection and/or disclosures is to come directly to Clear Sky's Head Office.

To request a summary report as a professional as part of a child protection concern, please contact Sophia Giblin directly.

E: sophia@clear-sky.org.uk

T: 01865 362789 / 07821 202931

15. Safer Recruitment

Clear Sky operates employment and supervision procedures that ensure highest priority is given to issues relating to child protection.

Each member of therapeutic staff working with children is required to undergo a DBS check as part of our recruitment policy, which is refreshed every 3 years (see DBS policy). Clear Sky will carry out a disqualification by association check annually.

Clear Sky encourages the development of staff and volunteers through its ongoing support, supervision and training.

There is always at least one member of the Clear Sky Head Office team who has done recent Safer Recruitment training, which is updated every 3 years.

Induction

- Each new member of staff or volunteer is made familiar with Clear Sky's policies and procedures including the Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour in their induction to the role.

16. Appraisal and support

- Each new member of head office staff undergoes 1 month / 3 month and 6-month appraisal
- All Therapists have a review every 6 months with the Therapeutic Consultant and Service Administrator/ CEO
- There is an official annual appraisal system for each member of staff
- Self-employed therapists are offered termly check-in sessions with the Therapeutic Consultant and Service Administrator in the absence of appraisals
- Clear Sky customer schools are asked to provide feedback on their experience of the therapists working in their school
- Clear Sky have a three-way agreement between therapist, their clinical supervisor and CEO to share any important information
- Clear Sky Therapists are required to have a minimum of 1.5 hours of clinical supervision per month for their Clear Sky clients.

Training

- All staff are required to have safeguarding training through Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB). Therapists are required to attend the Advanced Level Safeguarding Children course (3 hours) for those who regularly work with young people. Training can be booked via the online portal for OSCB <http://training.oscb.org.uk/>
- Newly appointed therapists must do the online OSCB certificate 'Introduction to Safeguarding Children' before they see any children in therapy. We require our Therapists to attend the OSCB Advanced Safeguarding Children course within 2 months of joining Clear Sky.
- Therapists must have refresher training every two years, plus meet their governing body quota for CPD training annually (usually 30 hours of additional training and learning)
- All therapists must complete online training for Prevent <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/auth/login>

17. Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when a staff member reports certain types of wrongdoing or misconduct within an organisation. The wrongdoing disclosed must affect others, e.g. children. The concern could be past, present or something that could happen in the future.

All allegations of abuse against children by persons working with children must be taken seriously.

The whistleblowing procedure should be followed if a person working with a child has:

Behaved in a way that has, or could have harmed a child or put a child at risk

Disclosures may concern a Clear Sky Therapist or member of the Head Office team. It may also concern an un-paid volunteer or adults within school settings Clear Sky work within. Allegations may be historic or recent; both should be responded to with equal urgency.

All staff working at Clear Sky Children's Charity have an obligation to report suspicions of abuse, even when the case regards a colleague.

- *If concerns are about a staff member at Clear Sky:*
 - Staff should report their concerns to Sophia Giblin who will contact the LADO to report the concern and receive advice on the following actions
 - You will be informed on whether the case is being investigated within 10 days
 - You might not be told what the outcome is to protect confidentiality

- *If concerns are about the Clear Sky CEO:*
 - Report your concerns to Nicole McDonnell (Chair of Trustees) who might ask further questions about the disclosure (nicole@naughtyelephants.co.uk)
 - The Trustees will contact the LADO to report the concern and receive guidance on what to do next
 - You will receive an update within 10 days as to whether the disclosure is being investigated

- *If concerns are about a staff member at a school Clear Sky are working in:*
 - Staff should report their concerns verbally, or in writing to the school's head teacher/ deputy head teacher/ DSL in line with the school's whistleblowing policy
 - Staff should also update Sophia Giblin and their supervisor
 - The case will then be dealt with following the school's whistleblowing / allegations procedure

- *Following disclosure:*
 - A whistleblower can request confidentiality
 - The person with whom you have raised your concern will decide what action needs to be taken
 - You will be written to within 10 days to update you on how your concern has been dealt with
 - An investigation may be carried out dependent on the nature and evidence of the disclosure. Details of the investigation may not be shared with you, to protect others confidentiality.

- If staff members do not feel their concerns have been dealt with appropriately, concerns can be raised to outside agencies such as:
 - The police
 - The LADO
 - The Citizens Advice Bureau

Staff have a duty to Clear Sky not to disclose the confidential information they share. This does not prevent staff from seeking support from an outside agency or their clinical supervisor.

Updated:

23.01.18

..... (date)

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. P. ...".

..... CEO & Designated Safeguarding Lead