

Catharsis Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following guidance and legislation:

- The Children's Act 1989 and 2004
- The Children and Young Person's Act 2008
- Working Together to Safeguard Children – Updated December 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Revised 2025
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years. Statutory Guidance 2015
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused – Advice for Practitioners 2015
- Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines Guidance 2018 – Updated 7 Feb 2020
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales – Updated 1 April 2021
- Information Sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers – May 2024
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures.

Catharsis policies, which have links with this Safeguarding Policy, are as follows:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection and Information Sharing policy
- Compliments and Complaints
- Equality and Diversity
- Whistleblowing and Allegations about Staff
- Fire Safety and Risk Assessment
- Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Self Harm Policy Statement

Safeguarding is described as, "All agencies working with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children's welfare are minimised" and "where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other agencies"

"Whilst it is parents and carers who have primary care for their children, local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area" (Working Together 2023)

Catharsis recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with the institutions it works within to ensure procedures are in place to support those children who are suffering, or at risk of harm.

Catharsis operates with a commitment to:

- The welfare of every child/young person.
- A child-centred, trauma-informed approach.
- Upholding the rights of the child (UNCRC).

Family, peers and associates from other areas of a young person's life, as well as access to on-line content can cause harm; therefore, a contextual approach to assessing risk of harm is required by all staff. Contextual safeguarding requires consideration of a YP's wider social networks (including online) and gathering as much information as possible where these environments may result in a YP being vulnerable to abuse or violence. County Lines and CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation) is a widespread problem. Gangs are known to target vulnerable children and adults; many of the factors that heighten a person's vulnerability are present in the referrals received by Catharsis and as such Catharsis recognises the importance of being alert to any indicators a YP is being exploited.

In this policy "staff" refers to all Catharsis therapists and other staff who are working directly with children and young people.

The aim of this policy is to ensure Children and Young People are, as much as is possible, protected from harm and properly supported where harm has occurred.

The therapeutic services provided by Catharsis aim to build confidence and resilience. Staff should provide a supportive and safe environment in which children and young people feel secure, respected and able to disclose difficulties and abuse.

This policy aims to ensure there is a systematic means of monitoring and contributing to assessments of children and young people known or thought to be at risk of harm.

Responsibilities - Catharsis Staff

- The Catharsis Senior Management Team is committed to ensuring key national and local safeguarding information and changes in policy are shared with the Catharsis Team; this will be done through induction, team meetings, training, emails and supervision.
- The Catharsis Senior Management Team will have read and be familiar with the full documents 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and the latest update of "Keeping Children Safe in Education"
- The Catharsis Safeguarding policies will be updated annually in line with the above documents and Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children's Board. Where therapists are working outside of Derby and Derbyshire, the procedures for the relevant local authority will need to be adhered to.
- All staff working directly with children and young people have been selected to work for Catharsis as a result of a rigorous interview process. They come with relevant qualification, registration, clinical supervision and insurance. Arts Therapists are governed by the HCPC (Health Care Professions Council) and are members of the governing body particular to their specialism (see Recruitment policy for further information).
- All staff have an enhanced DBS certificate and this is checked prior to starting work with Catharsis. Staff should be registered with the update service allowing for checks to be made whenever needed and annually as a minimum.

- Staff are encouraged to sign a 'Disqualification by Association Declaration'
- All staff complete Safeguarding training, including training in relation to Prevent; the frequency of this is monitored in 1:1 Supervision. As a minimum staff will have read at least Part One of the latest version of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and Annex A of KCSIE, as well as What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused – Advice for Practitioners 2015. All staff will be expected to confirm they have done this and this also will be recorded on the Single Central Record.
- All staff should be vigilant to the indicators of abuse (includes indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation and Child on Child Abuse) and have access to the right reporting procedures and forms (see process flowchart).
- All staff should understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between children and young people (child on child abuse) and not collude with behaviours or language that normalises abuse and unsafe environments for children and young people.
- All staff will work in partnership to assess and address any Safeguarding concerns in relation to their clients; this includes reporting of extremist ideas, which may indicate a risk of being drawn into terrorism and the reporting of sexual abuse, including historical incidents.
- All staff will be supported and protected from repercussions if raising safeguarding concerns.
- All staff have access to institutional reporting systems or the **Catharsis Safeguarding Report Form**. These forms enable details of a safeguarding concern to be recorded and reported; this includes referral to the relevant Children and Young Peoples Department of Social Care. Information recorded in this way will be shared with the parent or carer unless to do so could put the child or young person at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.
- All staff will be supported to know how to access key Contacts and Resources linked to Safeguarding
- Written records of concerns about a child or young person should be passed to Designated Safeguarding Leads within institutions, or the safeguarding lead for home schools, to action and retain securely and in accordance with Data Protection legislation (GDPR). The Senior Management Team of Catharsis should be copied into all such reports, for recording and monitoring purposes.
- Where disclosure is made outside of an institution the **Catharsis Safeguarding Report Form** should be forwarded directly to the involved social worker where there is one (and where this individual is immediately contactable), or the First Contact Team (or equivalent in areas outside of Derby) for the Local Authority. Contact details for Derby / Derbyshire, Nottingham / Nottinghamshire are at the end of this policy.
- Staff are made aware of the documents library for making a referral to Children's Social Care (Derby and Derbyshire) and for information in relation to thresholds - <http://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>. Therapists working in other areas of the country should make themselves aware of the reporting processes relevant to their Local Authority. The following link allows the use of a postcode to find the relevant council for reporting concerns: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>
- Staff making a referral to Children's Social Care should follow up on actions taken, if this information is not forthcoming within expected timescales

- Therapists, with the support of Catharsis Senior Management Team, should do everything they can to support any assessment being made by Social Care
- All staff should be aware of Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures in relation to escalating concerns when there is a difference of professional opinion about the seriousness of a situation or the proposed action
- Where a female client discloses FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) to a therapist, it is that therapist's responsibility to report the disclosure to police immediately, unless it is felt a report to police is likely to result in other increased safeguarding risks. Where this is the case, discussions must take place with Catharsis Management team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead for a plan of action.
- Where a child or Young Person fails to attend a therapy session and the reason is not known, the therapist must ensure the school or lead worker are aware of the absence immediately, in order that safeguarding checks can be made. Catharsis therapists should familiarize themselves with the distinction between CME (children missing from education) and CAE (children absent from education) as outlined within KCSIE.
- In any circumstance where a therapist believes a child to be at immediate risk and in need of protection the therapist should call the police on 999 immediately.
- Whenever a Safeguarding Incident is disclosed and reported, details of what action is taken should be recorded by the Senior Management Team on the **Catharsis Safeguarding Incident Monitoring spreadsheet**.
- All staff are trained to know how to respond appropriately if abuse is disclosed.
- All therapists have Clinical Supervision to ensure their practice is sound; details of who the Clinical Supervisor is recorded on the Catharsis Single Central Register.
- All staff will explain clearly to clients from the onset of therapy the limits to confidentiality. Consent to therapy includes explanations about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- All staff should regularly review safeguarding / confidentiality and the boundaries around these within sessions; they should actively discuss and agree ways to keep their client safe – this may include a safety plan for a situation that may arise in the YP's life.
- The Service Development Manager or Schools Project Manager will ensure the name and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead for home schools and in each institution Catharsis works in, is known to the therapist working there. This person will be the first point of contact for concerns to be discussed.
- Safeguarding Policies specific to the institutions Catharsis works within should be made available to staff at the start of a project.
- Parents / carers and the institution Catharsis is working within are made aware of staff responsibilities with regard to disclosure and Safeguarding.
- Staff will, wherever possible, attend Safeguarding Case Conferences, Team Around the Family meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency meetings. Where this is not possible they may delegate other staff to attend and / or provide a written report.

- Due to the nature of Catharsis work it is recognised that staff will frequently have physical contact with children and young people; this is done with safe practice and safeguarding in mind.
- If an allegation of unsafe practice is made against a member of Catharsis staff, the Managing Director will work closely with the institution to investigate the allegation and will take action as deemed appropriate; this may include reporting to HCPC and / or referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Catharsis has a Staff Code of Conduct, and Whistleblowing policy – these may need to be referred to where there is a concern about staff, colleagues or management procedures.
- Staff are encouraged to discuss their practice and emotions linked to Safeguarding issues, within Clinical Supervision and with the Catharsis Senior Leadership Team.
- Safeguarding procedures and practice will be regularly discussed as a team within team meetings and with individual therapists as needed.
- There is an expectation that all Catharsis therapists have a minimum of Level 2 Safeguarding Training and that this is updated every 2 years (some Catharsis contracts require annual updates).
- Keren Adler, Service Development Manager will act as first point of contact within Catharsis for reporting or discussing Safeguarding issues. Hannah Robertson, Managing Director and Lucy Partington, Project Manager will act as deputy safeguarding leads within Catharsis.
- The Catharsis Senior Leadership Team (as above), being responsible for recruitment, will be fully trained in Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding at Level 3 as a minimum.

Alternative Ways of Working

In certain situations, such as a pandemic, new ways of working may necessitate alternative ways to offer support; telephone and/or web based contact may be the only options available. Where this is the case confidentiality and safety issues need to be considered carefully, alongside the age of the client and their ability to access / engage with an alternative to face-to-face sessions. Therapists will need to follow the guidelines of their governing bodies, including in relation to seeking consent.

Alternatives to face-to-face contacts present their own risks; YP should be supported to understand on-line safety wherever possible – concerns about a YP's understanding of this should be raised as a possible Safeguarding concern. Misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories are considered safeguarding harms and should be reported.

It is recognised that for some YP staying at home may place them at increased risk. Catharsis therapists must take note of where a YP is whilst they are in contact with them and remain vigilant to signs of abuse.

Where therapists are not providing a service within an institution, they should keep accurate records and ensure regular contact with a designated member of staff, in order to be transparent regarding their contacts with their client.

It is recognised that in a situation such as a pandemic YP may feel fearful and anxious –therapists are experts in dealing with trauma and knowing what happens to people when they have little control over their circumstances. It is understood that therapists have a role to play in helping to minimise the spread of viruses; government guidance with regards to staying at home and frequent hand washing should be encouraged. Where it is known a YP is being exposed to unnecessary risk, this should be reported.

Contact details for reporting to Local Authority Children's Social Care (Derby / Derbyshire / Nottingham / Nottinghamshire):

Derby City Social Care: 01332 641172 (office hours) or Careline 01332 786968 (outside office hours) <https://www.derby.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/safeguarding-children/worried-about-a-child/>,

Childrens Services Professional Consultation Line offers advice on the thresholds for referral to MAT and Children's Social Care (The service is available on [07812 300329](tel:07812300329) between 10am and 1pm)

Derbyshire Social Care: Call Derbyshire 01629 533190. <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/support-for-families/starting-point-referral-form/starting-point-contact-and-referral-service.aspx>

Nottingham City: Duty Team 0115 8764800. <http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/children-and-families/are-you-worried-about-a-childs-well-being/>

Nottinghamshire County: MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) 0300 500 80 90. <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/safeguarding/childrens-mash>,

Police: Non urgent 101

Links to current additional advice, guidance and support are available within Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1)

Review

Implementation / Review date	Reviewers
August 2025	Hannah Robertson
Next Review date	Keren Adler
August 2026	