CHERRY BLOSSOM THERAPY

Complaints policy and procedure

Final version 3.0 | Effective 3 November 2026 | Next review 3 November 2027

Cherry Blossom Consulting Ltd trading as Cherry Blossom Therapy | Company number 16479968
Sarah Musselwhite | 07311 473976 | cblossomtherapy@gmail.com
https://cherryblossomconsulting.co.uk

Anyone using Cherry Blossom Therapy can raise a concern about care, communication, charges, accessibility, privacy or conduct. Children and young people can complain themselves, with a supporter or through an advocate. Complaints are free. A person will not be penalised or have therapy withdrawn simply because they complain. We will consider adjustments and safe continuing care.

1 How to raise a concern

Contact Sarah Musselwhite for Cherry Blossom Consulting Ltd at cblossomtherapy@gmail.com or 07311 473976. A complaint may be spoken or written; you do not need a particular form or legal language. Ask for help to record it, an alternative format, a safe communication method or support to participate. We can confirm our understanding in writing or another agreed format.

If you feel comfortable, an informal discussion may help, but it is optional. You do not have to approach the therapist first where your concern is about her conduct or safety. Independent professional and statutory routes appear below. You may use them at any stage, subject to the receiving organisation's rules.

Tell us what happened, approximate dates, who was involved, how to contact you safely and what you would like to happen. Missing information does not prevent us recording or considering a concern. We consider anonymous concerns as far as possible, although they may limit investigation and feedback. This policy sets no short internal deadline that excludes older safeguarding or serious concerns; please raise issues when you can.

2 Safety comes first

If someone is in immediate danger call 999. A complaint alleging harm, abuse, an offence or unsuitability to work with children must be considered promptly under the Safeguarding Policy, including social care, police or LADO or designated officer referral where required. Do not wait for the complaint response timetable. Use adult safeguarding and position of trust procedures for concerns involving adults where relevant.

Safeguarding and complaints may run alongside each other. Statutory enquiries take priority where needed to protect evidence and people. We explain any necessary limits or delay in the complaint investigation, record reasons and maintain contact without disclosing protected information.

3 Acknowledgement and response

We aim to acknowledge within 5 working days, confirm the issues and desired outcome, identify who is handling the matter and provide the expected response date. Working days are Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays in England. For a data protection complaint we will in all cases meet the applicable 30 day acknowledgement requirement.

Our target for a full response is 20 working days from receipt. If more time is needed we explain the reason, give a revised date and update you at least every 10 working days until a response is available, unless another contact plan is agreed. Privacy rights requests keep their separate statutory deadlines.

4 Fair consideration and conflicts of interest

Where something significant has gone wrong, Sarah explains promptly, apologises where appropriate and takes protective action. She contacts her clinical supervisor promptly without delaying a safeguarding

referral, follows applicable professional disclosure rules and cooperates with relevant enquiries. Sarah preserves relevant records, establishes the issues, considers the applicable agreement and standards, seeks appropriate advice and offers the complainant a chance to clarify matters. We distinguish allegations, evidence and conclusions and protect everyone's information. A parent or funder's complaint does not automatically authorise disclosure of the client's confidential records.

Because Sarah is the sole practitioner, her response is not an independent adjudication. If the complaint concerns her care or conduct, the company considers whether a suitably qualified independent reviewer can be appointed with a clear remit, lawful access, confidentiality and no conflict of interest. Where an independent reviewer is appointed, we explain their role and the review process to the complainant. Clinical supervision alone does not provide independent complaint determination.

The written outcome explains the issues considered, findings and reasons, any apology or remedy, action to prevent recurrence, and options for further review. A remedy may include correction, explanation, a change of arrangements or an appropriate refund. Insurer or legal advice may be needed but does not justify withholding an acknowledgement or safety action.

5 Review and independent routes

If dissatisfied, ask the company to review the response, stating what remains unresolved. We aim to acknowledge within 5 working days and respond within 20 working days, with updates if extended. Where no impartial internal reviewer is available we say so clearly and explain external options; we do not present Sarah's reconsideration as an independent appeal.

PTUK handles concerns about its registrants under its current complaints and concerns procedure: https://playtherapy.org.uk/complaints-concerns-procedure/.

BACP provides help with counselling concerns and a route to complain about a member: https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-therapy/get-help-with-counselling-concerns-service/. Each body applies its own jurisdiction, evidence requirements and time limits. Contact it promptly for current advice; this company's procedure does not extend its deadlines.

Privacy concerns can be taken to the Information Commissioner's Office: https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/ or 0303 123 1113. You can complain to the company by the phone or email route above. We investigate data protection complaints appropriately, keep you informed and communicate the outcome without undue delay. We will explain how to refer unresolved concerns to the ICO.

For safety or allegations about someone working with children use the local social care, police and LADO or designated officer routes in the Safeguarding Policy for Northamptonshire, Leicestershire or Rutland. A commissioning school, agency or funding body may also have a relevant complaints route. These do not prevent seeking legal advice or exercising consumer or court rights. No agreement here requires you to keep a safeguarding concern secret.

6 Records and learning

Record the concern, acknowledgement, risk action, evidence, conflicts, advice, correspondence, outcome and learning in a restricted complaint record. Share only what is necessary and lawful with a reviewer, statutory body, professional body, insurer or adviser. Apply the Privacy Notice retention schedule and any preservation hold. Review themes and actions in governance and supervision without unnecessary identification. Review this policy annually and after a serious complaint or legal change.

Optional complaint prompt

Name and role if you wish: _____

Safe contact method and adjustments: _____

What happened and when: _____

_____

What would help put things right: _____

_____

Supporter or representative and authority if relevant: _____

Date and any documents supplied: _____

Document owner Sarah Musselwhite for Cherry Blossom Consulting Ltd. Effective 3 November 2026. Next scheduled review 3 November 2027, or sooner after relevant changes or incidents.

Sources and review

Official and professional sources supporting this policy are listed below. Use the live source for later changes. Local links give current reporting instructions and forms.

PTUK complaints and concerns procedure
BACP help with counselling concerns
ICO notice on the data protection complaints duty
PTUK Ethical Framework and good practice guidance
BACP Ethical Framework 2026 effective from 3 November 2026