

# □ Cherry Blossom Therapy

## Safeguarding Policy

**Practice Name:** Cherry Blossom Therapy

**Therapist:** Sarah Musselwhite, Paediatric Psychotherapist

**Professional Memberships:** PTUK Registered Play Therapist / BACP Registered Member

**Location:** Northamptonshire

**Policy Version:** 1.2

**Date Implemented:** 1.12.2025

**Review Date:** 11.2.2026

**Next Review Due:** 11.2.2027

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## 1. Policy Statement

Cherry Blossom Therapy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

The welfare of the child or vulnerable person is paramount. Safeguarding concerns will always take precedence over confidentiality where there is risk of significant harm.

This policy reflects the ethical requirements of:

- Play Therapy UK (PTUK) Standards of Practice
- The BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions
- UK safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance

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## 2. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Cherry Blossom Therapy is a sole practitioner service.

**Sarah Musselwhite** is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and is responsible for:

- Safeguarding decision-making
- Making referrals to statutory services
- Maintaining safeguarding training
- Liaising with local safeguarding partnerships
- Ensuring compliance with professional body requirements

In situations where independent advice is required, consultation will be sought via clinical supervision or directly from safeguarding services.

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## 3. Legislative Framework

This policy operates in accordance with current UK legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (latest edition)
- Care Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (where applicable)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR

Cherry Blossom Therapy follows procedures set out by:

- Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP)
- Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB)

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## 4. Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding means:

- Protecting children and vulnerable adults from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of physical or mental health or development
- Ensuring safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable the best outcomes

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## 5. Types of Abuse

Abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Grooming
- Financial abuse
- Modern slavery
- Honour-based abuse

- Forced marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Online abuse

Safeguarding concerns may arise from disclosure, observation, behavioural indicators, or third-party information.

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## 6. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Confidentiality is an essential part of therapeutic work; however, it is not absolute.

Confidentiality will be overridden if:

- There are concerns of significant harm to a child, young person, or vulnerable adult
- There is risk of serious harm to the client or others
- There is disclosure of serious criminal activity (e.g. terrorism, trafficking, money laundering)
- A court order requires disclosure

Where possible, concerns will be discussed with the client and/or parent/carer before a referral is made, unless doing so would increase risk.

Information will be shared:

- On a need-to-know basis
  - Proportionately
  - In line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation
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## 7. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

If a safeguarding concern arises, Cherry Blossom Therapy will:

1. Listen calmly and without leading or investigating.
2. Reassure the client appropriately.
3. Record the disclosure factually and promptly.
4. Assess risk.
5. Consult supervision where appropriate (unless urgent).
6. Make a referral to the relevant safeguarding authority where threshold is met.

Referrals may be made to:

- Children's Social Care
- Adult Social Care

- Police
- GP or other healthcare professionals
- Educational settings

In an emergency, 999 will be contacted immediately.

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## **8. Record Keeping**

Safeguarding records will:

- Be clear, factual, and dated
- Record the exact words used where possible
- Be stored securely in line with GDPR
- Be kept separate from general therapy notes where appropriate
- Be retained according to professional and insurance requirements

All records are password protected and/or securely locked.

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## **9. Supervision**

All safeguarding concerns are discussed in clinical supervision in accordance with PTUK and BACP requirements.

Supervision supports:

- Ethical decision-making
  - Risk assessment
  - Professional accountability
  - Therapist wellbeing
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## **10. Allegations Against the Therapist**

Any allegation made against the therapist will be taken seriously and responded to immediately.

Where appropriate, this will involve:

- Reporting to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Informing PTUK and/or BACP
- Informing the therapist's professional indemnity insurer

Cherry Blossom Therapy is committed to full transparency and cooperation with safeguarding investigations.

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## **11. Safer Working Practice**

Cherry Blossom Therapy maintains safer working practices, including:

- Appropriate professional boundaries
  - Risk assessment of therapy space
  - Lone working safety measures
  - Online therapy safety protocols (where applicable)
  - Secure storage of therapeutic materials and records
  - Up-to-date safeguarding training
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## **12. Training**

The therapist undertakes regular safeguarding training in line with:

- PTUK requirements
- BACP recommendations
- Local safeguarding board guidance

Training is updated at least every two years or sooner if legislation changes.

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## **13. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
  - Professional body guidance is updated
  - Practice circumstances change
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## **14. Contact Information**

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Designated Safeguarding Lead:

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PTUK Registered Member

BACP Registered Member