

VIOLET PLAY THERAPY

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2019

Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their day-to-day lives... Protecting and safeguarding children is defined as *protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health and development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes* (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018).

Violet Play Therapy works with children aged between 4-14 years old. It provides a safe environment for children and aims to help them to express their feelings both verbally and non-verbally. Protecting and safeguarding children's welfare is essential and all staff and volunteers who work at Violet Play Therapy are responsible for taking reasonable steps to prevent children from any types of abuse, neglect and ill treatment if they have any concern about any their welfare.

This policy is based on the following children acts and guidance:

- Children Act 1989
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>
- Children Act 2004
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/pdfs/ukpga_20040031_en.pdf
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (September 2018)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741314/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_3_September_2018_14.09.18.pdf
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (July 2018)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729914/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children-2018.pdf
- Data Protection Act (2018)
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/pdfs/ukpga_20180012_en.pdf
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)
<https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/131.-CRC-poster-A2-1pp-AW.pdf>
- Sexual offences Act (2003)
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/pdfs/ukpga_20030042_en.pdf

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that all the staff and volunteers are aware of their duties and responsibilities
- To take reasonable steps to prevent any children from any form of ill treatment and neglect
- To provide a clear guidance for Violet Play Therapy workers how to follow child protection procedures if they have any concerns about a child's welfare when he/she makes any disclosures.

Every child who receives Violet Play Therapy services will be treated equally and fairly regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, disability, language or economic and cultural backgrounds. All staff and volunteers work at Violet Play Therapy are committed to protect children from all sorts of abuse and neglect. It is also recognised that some children might be more vulnerable than others due to their negative life experiences, adverse circumstances, disabilities and special education needs. In order to provide full protection and safeguarding for children from danger and harm, we are committed to work closely with parent(s)/carer(s), teachers and any other agencies or third parties.

To be effective in identifying and dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues, Violet Play Therapy staff and volunteers are ensured hold an updated DBS check and are provided regular safeguarding training.

How to deal with disclosures:

- Respecting and valuing what a child says
- Listen carefully and do not jump to the conclusion
- Take it seriously and reassure the child that he/she has right to tell what has happened to him/her
- Keep careful records about what the child says and do not speculate or accuse anybody
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep
- After disclosure, explain to the child that you need to inform another adult who is responsible professionally for his/her protection
- If disclosure happens during play therapy session, end the session immediately and seek help. If the disclosure happens while working in the child's school, seek help through the school's designated safeguarding lead. Otherwise contact the Local authority children's social care immediately:

Cambridgeshire- 0345 0455203 (Monday to Friday, 8 am-5 pm)

Cambridgeshire emergency duty team-01733 234724.

When a child is in danger or need urgent medical intervention, then call the police on 101.

THE TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

There are four categories of child abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is described as hitting, throwing, shaking, poisoning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, burning and any other kind of physical harm to the child. This includes when a parent or carer causes ill-health to the child whom they are responsible of.

Physical abuse can be identified through some physical signs and behavioural changes in children. Physical symptoms are:

- 1) Injuries that the child is unable to explain and are not treated adequately.
- 2) Injuries on cheeks, chests or thighs that are unlikely to be accidental.
- 3) Bruises indicating hand or finger marks.
- 4) Human bite marks and cigarette burns.
- 5) Broken bones, especially in young children.
- 6) Scalds and tide marks.

Behavioural symptoms include:

- 1) Aggressive behaviour and temper tantrums
- 2) Being reluctant to contact to the parent(s)/carer(s)
- 3) Running away from home or demonstrates fears of going home
- 4) Overreacting when approached or touched
- 5) Reluctant to get undressed during sporting or other activities when required
- 6) Showing depressive behaviour

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is identified as the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child that hugely effects on her/his emotional development. This includes:

- 1) Constantly sending negative messages to a child and making him/her feel worthless, inadequate and not valued unless he/she meets the needs of another person.
- 2) Not giving opportunities for a child to express herself/himself.
- 3) Silencing her/him or making fun of what she/he says.
- 4) Interaction with her/him that does not reflect her/his developmental ability.
- 5) Overprotecting her/him.
- 6) Limiting her/his exploration and learning.
- 7) Preventing her/him from taking part in normal social interactions.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is described as forcing or luring a child or young person into sexual activities, whether the child is aware of it or not. This includes:

- 1) Physical contact via both penetrative (e.g, rape or buggery) and non-penetrative acts.
- 2) Non-contact activities, such as making a child look at sexual activities and pornographic materials or involve him/her in pornographic production, or encouraging him/her to demonstrate sexual behaviour and language.

NEGLECT

Neglect is identified as the consistent failure to provide for a child's basic physical and psychological needs. This is the most common type of child abuse and can be difficult to identify. Neglect can be described when a child is left hungry or dirty without adequate clothing, supervision, shelter or medical and health care; is put in danger or not being protected from any types of abuse; and not being provided love, care and attention he/she needs from her/his parent(s)/Carer(s).

Useful contact details

Violet Play Therapy Child Protection Officer, Sadiye Akalin: 07565 132317

Cambridgeshire Social Care Team: 0345 0455203 (Monday to Friday, 8 am-5 pm)

Cambridgeshire emergency duty team: 01733 234724

Cambridgeshire Police: 101

ChildLine: 0800 1111

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000