



Hitchin Speech Therapy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - January 2025

Hitchin Speech Therapy delivers independent speech and language therapy to children in their homes or in an educational setting. It is owned by Emily Wilson, Speech and Language Therapist.

Hitchin Speech Therapy does not employ paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff or students and therefore this policy applies only to Emily Wilson.

Emily Wilson acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring that safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice. Emily Wilson strongly believes that children have the right to be protected from harm, whether physical or psychological.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect children and young people from harm who receive Hitchin Speech Therapy's services; to ensure their safety and promote their welfare

The policy recognises that

- the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances.
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents and carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children are protected from abuse whilst receiving Speech & Language Therapy services.
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable from abuse
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately is a vital part of safeguarding

As part of the safeguarding policy Emily Wilson will

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- ensure that safeguarding training is up to date
- ensure that first aid training is up to date
- ensure that the appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern. This action may vary depending on whether it happens within an educational setting with its own safeguarding lead, or within a client's home
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation
- when visiting children in education settings, follow the relevant safeguarding policies and procedures of that setting

Duty of care and confidentiality:

- Emily Wilson has a duty of care to all children on their speech and language therapy caseload. Emily will maintain confidentiality except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk.

Procedure in the event of a disclosure or allegation:

If a child, young person, or adult makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or another child or young person, it is important that the person being told:

- Stays calm and listens carefully
- Reassures the child that they have done the right thing in telling them
- Does not investigate or ask leading questions
- Explains that they will need to tell someone else
- Does not promise to keep what they have told them a secret
- Informs the Safeguarding Lead if this occurs within an educational setting
- In all other locations, such as client homes, contacts the Local Children's Social Care Team or the Police
- Makes a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and signs and dates this record. This should be given to the Safeguarding Lead, or statutory services if a referral is made. Any such records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet
- The person about whom the allegation is made must not be informed if it is judged that to do so would place a child at increased risk

Procedure in the event of concern:

- If there is an immediate threat of harm the Police should be contacted. Where it is judged that there is no immediate threat of harm the following will occur:
- The concern will be discussed with the Safeguarding Lead if at an educational setting or the on-call representative in Children's Social Care Services in all other locations and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to statutory agencies
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and circumstances surrounding it. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory agencies if a referral is made.

Legal framework:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

Supporting Information:

- Emily Wilson is registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), the professional body that regulates the standards of proficiency for Speech and Language Therapists. Registration number: SL03033
- Emily Wilson is a member of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT). Membership number: RC0013337
- Emily Wilson is a member of the Association of Speech and Language Therapists in Independent Practice (ASLTIP). Membership number 2849
- Emily Wilson has an enhanced DBS check that is on the update service. Certificate number: 001610431932
- Emily Wilson has public liability insurance through the RCSLT; the certificate can be provided on request
- Emily Wilson is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a data controller

Contact Details for local Safeguarding Services:

- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk
- Hertfordshire County Council Children's Social Care - 0300 123 4043
- Prevent - prevent@herts.pnn.police.uk
- NSPCC - 0808 800 5000
- Police - Emergency 999, Non-Emergency 101

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed every year or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

This policy will be reviewed: January 2026