



Hitchin Speech Therapy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - January 2023

This policy applies to all staff, students or anyone working on behalf of **Emily Wilson, Independent Speech and Language Therapist (Hitchin Speech Therapy)**.

Hitchin Speech Therapy 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.

Hitchin Speech Therapy strongly believes that children have the right to be protected from harm.

The policy recognises that

- the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances.
- It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, 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.
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately is a vital part of safeguarding

As part of our safeguarding policy Hitchin Speech Therapy will

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning and supervision opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people

- ensure 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
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in Hitchin Speech Therapy. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

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 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016
- 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

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, 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 2024