

## Safeguarding policy

This policy is effective from 1st May 2023. Next review date is April 2025.

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Clap and Toot Ltd ('We' or 'our Practice') is a limited company offering the following services:

- Music therapy and Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) sessions for children and young people;
- Music therapy workshops for children and adults;
- Clinical supervision and professional consultations for therapists, counsellors and staff in educational settings.

1.2 Our Practice is based at 147 Station Road, London E4 6AG with company number 1253 1176.

### 2. Purpose of the Policy

2.1 In this policy, the term children shall mean any person under 18 years of age. This policy is written in accordance to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004, Children and Social Worker Act 2017, EU GDPR (2016) and Data Protection Act 2018.

2.2 Our Practice is committed to the protection of children. This policy is intended to provide overarching principles to those who represent the Practice on our approach to child protection and safeguarding.

### 3. The risks to children

3.1 Children can be vulnerable to different forms of abuse and harm. Our Practice recognise that safeguarding concerns can cover a wide range of circumstances and behaviour, including but not limited to the following (NSPCC 2023):

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Criminal exploitation and gangs
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Neglect
- Non-recent abuse
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

#### **4. Our professional responsibilities before client contact**

4.1 All therapists working on behalf our Practice are Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) registered Arts Therapists. You can check our registration on <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/check-the-register/> using our last names. We must comply with the professional standard set by HCPC and are required to inform our clients if the status of our registration has changed.

4.2 All therapists must have completed Safeguarding Children Level 3 and have a clear extended children and adult Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check prior to any client contact.

4.3 Wherever we deem it necessary and appropriate to permanently remove a therapist from a position of work due to safeguarding concerns, we are obligated to make a referral to the DBS and Merton Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

4.4 All therapists are required to familiarise themselves with the safeguarding policy if they offer service on behalf of our Practice for another organisations, including but not limited to schools, charity, supported residential homes, prior to client contact.

4.5 All therapists are given a copy of this Policy as well as our internal safeguarding procedure. All staff are required to familiarise themselves with the Policy and the internal procedure prior to client contact.

4.6 We are required to complete risk assessment form with parents, legal guardian or staff on site for each client prior to first session with the client.

4.7 We are required to communicate to parents, legal guardians and staff on site that while sessions are confidential, we have a duty to share relevant information to other professionals involved in the child's care when there is safeguarding concern regarding the child.

## **5. Our professional responsibilities during sessions**

5.1 Therapists will verbally communicate the confidential nature of sessions as well as their duty to share relevant information to other professionals in case of a safeguarding concern with the child or young person they work with in the first session.

5.2 Therapists will examine the room used for therapy session each time to safeguard children from potential physical or accidental harm.

5.3 Therapists will challenge inappropriate or harmful behaviour of any other adults working with the child and report these when appropriate.

5.4 Therapists will be present throughout the entirety of the session. In the unlikely event that the therapists need to step out of the room, they will ask for another adult to accompany the child in their absence.

5.5 Therapists will be mindful of materials used in sessions to ensure children are not exposed to inappropriate images or languages.

5.6 All personal information and clinical notes we process relating to children are stored in accordance with our privacy policy which can be located at <https://www.clapandtoot.com/privacy-policy>. All clinical notes are confidential except when the therapist has a safeguarding concern regarding the client.

## **6. Our professional responsibilities in case of a safeguarding concern**

6.1 We acknowledge that safeguarding concerns can arise in conversations in sessions, through therapists' observation both during and outside of sessions and through communications between therapists and the client's parents, legal guardian or responsible staff outside of sessions.

6.2 If a child is exposed to imminent danger or has active suicidal or self-harming ideation, our therapists would call 999 to safeguard the child's immediate safety.

6.3 If a safeguarding concern arise at a school or a property of another organisation:

6.3.1 our therapist will secure the child's safety and call for help if appropriate in the first instance. Our therapist will remind the child of their duty of care to share relevant information with people involved in their care. Our therapist will complete a safety plan with the child within the session where clinically appropriate.

6.3.2 Our therapist will inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) on site within 1 hour. Our therapist will comply with the safeguarding policy on site and complete a safeguarding report according to the timeframe set out by the organisation's safeguarding policy.

6.3.3 Parents or legal guardian will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

6.4 If a safeguarding concern arise during sessions at family homes:

6.4.1 Our therapist will secure the child's safety and call for help if appropriate in the first instance. Our therapist will remind the child of their duty of care to share relevant information with people involved in their care. Our therapist will complete a safety plan with the child within the session where clinically appropriate.

6.4.2 If parents are present, the therapist will remind them of our duty to share information with other professionals involved in the child's care. If parents are not present, the therapist will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

6.4.3 Our therapist will inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) at our Practice within 1 hour. Our therapist will complete a safeguarding report and submit it to the child's local authority's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

6.5 When completing safeguarding reports, our therapists will include when and where the incident happened, who was involved, a detailed and objective account of what happened, actions taken to keep the child safe at the time of the report and actions that will be taken in the coming days to continue to safeguard the child's safety.

6.6 If the safeguarding concern relates to an accusation made against an adult who work with children, our therapist will make a referral to local authority designated officer (LADO) at the borough where the adult's organisation is based.

6.7 If the safeguarding concern relates to an accusation made against a member of staff at our Practice, the therapist will raise their concern with the DSL of our Practice in the first instance. If the safeguarding concern relates to an accusation made against the DSL of our Practice, the therapist will raise their concern with the service manager of our Practice or contact Merton LADO.

## **7. Parents or other adults' responsibility to our clients**

7.1 Parents, legal guardian and adults on site must acknowledge that all adults have legal responsibility to safeguard children's safety and protect them from abuse and harm.

7.2 Parents, legal guardians or staff on site are required to complete the risk assessment form with the therapist prior to their child's first session. It is parents', legal guardians' or staff's responsibility to comply with the risk assessment process as honestly as possible. Failure to disclose previous safeguarding concerns, such as previous self-harming episodes, previous accusation made against legal guardian, can impact on our therapist's ability to make appropriate clinical decisions. Our Practice cannot be liable for potential harm our clients are exposed to as an indirect or direct result of the parents', legal guardians' or staff's decision to withhold safeguarding history.

7.3 Parents and legal guardians are required to sign a consent form to confirm they have read our Safeguarding Policy, to give consent for our Practice to liaise with other professionals involved in their child's care and to communicate

whether they give consent for video recordings for supervision purposes and/or for educational purposes prior to their child's first session.



Signed by: CRYSTAL LUK-WORRALL

Job title: Service manager at Clap and Toot Ltd

Date: 1st May 2023