



PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS FROM THE PUBLIC

PLAY THERAPY UK

contact@ptukorg.com
The Coach House – Belmont Road – UCKFIELD – TN22 1BP

Introduction

Play Therapy UK (PTUK) as an organisation takes their safeguarding responsibilities seriously at all times. As an organisation supporting children's mental health and well-being, we make it our priority to act on any behaviour which might put this at risk.

Definition

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment;
- preventing harm to children's health or development;
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Procedures

PTUK undertakes the following procedures to reduce any potential risk of harm to children and young people.

- Trainees: prior to their membership with PTUK, trainees must have an up-to-date Suitability Check* and also sign to confirm whether they have any Criminal Convictions, including 'spent' convictions.
- Registrants: during their annual revalidation process PTUK members are asked to confirm they have a current Suitability Check*, supplying the relevant suitability check number. Members also have to confirm that the Suitability Check is less than three years old at the point of renewal.
- PTUK provides members with updates in regard to safeguarding responsibilities and training available to upskill and develop knowledge.

*Suitability Checks are regional: In England and Wales it is an Enhanced DBS, in Scotland it is an Enhanced Scottish PVG Disclosure, in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland it is Garda Vetting and/or an Enhanced Access NI Certificate.

Reporting concerns

PTUK as an organisation has a responsibility to act on any safeguarding concerns reported to us by a member of the public.

Where a member of the public reports concerns about the behaviour and/or treatment of a PTUK member towards a child or young person, PTUK has a duty to act on this information by following their Complaints and Concerns Procedure.

In the first instance, the concern should be communicated to PTUK by either telephone or email: upon receipt of the concern the Professional Conduct Officer will communicate with the person reporting the concern to gather information. For further information regarding PTUK's Complaints and Concerns Procedure please visit [Complaints & Concerns Procedure - Play Therapy UK](#).

Where an allegation is made against a PTUK member who works with children or young people, PTUK being an awarding body and not an employer will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice on the referral matrix in all cases, but not exclusive to, as follows:

- PTUK member behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- PTUK member possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child;
- PTUK member exploited or abused a position of power over the child or young person;
- PTUK member behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicated they may pose a risk of harm to children;
- If a therapist has a close association with someone who could pose a risk to children;

A LADO is responsible for co-ordinating and overseeing the response to an allegation made against staff or volunteers working with children in their local authority.

In addition to the above, PTUK will work with the LADO where a member of the public reports a concern regarding a PTUK member's personal life in relation to the safety of child. This may include:

- A child they care for becomes a subject of child protection enquiries by Children's Social Care;
- A criminal investigation in relation to offences against children has been undertaken;
- A PTUK member has a drug and alcohol problem impacting on their ability to undertake therapy.

Where a member of the public makes allegations of historical abuse towards a child or young person these will be responded to in the same way as contemporary concerns. In such cases, it will be important for PTUK to ascertain whether the PTUK member against whom the allegation is made is still working with children and if so, to inform the person's current employer or voluntary/placement organisation.

PTUK members are based across the United Kingdom and so the Local Authority where the PTUK member lives will be contacted to report any concerns made.

PTUK will work with LADO as required to ensure the safety of children and young people is upheld and that PTUK members are fairly treated.

This policy links to:

PTUK Complaints and Concerns Procedure

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