



Safeguarding Policy

Business Name: Guided by... Adelle

Practitioner: Adelle Northall

Professional Membership: Registered Member of the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society (NCPS)

Role: Counsellor

Effective Date: 13 July 2026

Review Date: 13 July 2027

Version: 1.0

1. Purpose

Guided by... Adelle is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all clients. Safeguarding is fundamental to ethical counselling practice and underpins every aspect of the service provided.

This policy sets out the principles, responsibilities and procedures followed to protect children, young people and adults at risk from abuse, neglect, exploitation and significant harm.

The welfare, dignity and rights of every individual are central to my practice.

This policy aims to:

- Promote the safety and wellbeing of all clients.
- Protect children, young people and adults at risk from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are recognised, recorded and responded to appropriately.
- Provide clear guidance on confidentiality and lawful information sharing.

- Comply with UK legislation, statutory guidance and the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society (NCPS) Code of Ethical Practice.

- Support safe, ethical and accountable counselling practice.

This policy applies to counselling provided by Guided by... Adelle in:

- Private practice.
- Schools and educational settings.
- Charities and voluntary organisations.
- Workplace or employer-funded counselling.
 - Community settings.
 - Face-to-face counselling.
 - Online counselling.
 - Telephone counselling.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Children (under the age of 18 years).
 - Young people.
 - Adults.
- Adults at risk (sometimes referred to as vulnerable adults).
 - Parents and carers where appropriate.
 - Referring organisations.
- Any person who discloses concerns about the safety or welfare of another individual during counselling.

Safeguarding responsibilities apply regardless of a person's age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or socio-economic background.

3. Legal and Professional Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with current UK legislation and recognised professional guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.
- Care Act 2014.
- Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty where applicable).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (latest edition).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (where applicable).
 - UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
 - Data Protection Act 2018.
- National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society (NCPS) Code of Ethical Practice.

This policy will be reviewed whenever legislation, statutory guidance or professional standards change.

4. Safeguarding Principles

Guided by... Adelle is committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment where clients feel heard, valued and protected.

The following principles underpin all safeguarding practice:

- The welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount.
 - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Every person has the right to live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Concerns will always be taken seriously and responded to promptly.
- Decisions will be proportionate, evidence-based and in the individual's best interests.
- Information will only be shared when necessary, lawful and appropriate.

- Wherever possible, clients will be involved in decisions affecting them unless doing so would increase the risk of harm.
- Professional curiosity, accountability and good record keeping are essential to safeguarding practice.
- Counselling will always be delivered within the limits of professional competence.

5. Commitment to Safeguarding

Guided by... Adelle recognises that abuse can affect anyone and may occur regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, sexuality or personal circumstances.

I am committed to:

- Providing counselling in a safe environment.
- Promoting the wellbeing of all clients.
- Responding appropriately to disclosures, allegations, observations or suspicions of abuse.
- Working collaboratively with safeguarding agencies where appropriate.
- Maintaining appropriate safeguarding knowledge and professional development.
- Keeping accurate, factual and timely safeguarding records.
- Acting without unnecessary delay where someone may be at risk.

The safety of children, young people and adults at risk will always take priority over maintaining confidentiality where there is a legal or ethical duty to act.

6. Definitions of Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights and may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be intentional or unintentional and may occur in person, online or through digital technology.

Children and Young People

Safeguarding concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Neglect.
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE).
 - County lines exploitation.
 - Domestic abuse.
 - Online abuse.
 - Grooming.
- Radicalisation and extremism.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM).
 - Forced marriage.
 - Honour-based abuse.
 - Peer-on-peer abuse.
- Bullying and cyberbullying.
 - Self-harm.
- Suicidal ideation or suicide attempts.
- Missing education where safeguarding concerns exist.

Adults at Risk

Safeguarding concerns may include:

- Physical abuse.
- Emotional or psychological abuse.
 - Sexual abuse.
- Financial or material abuse.
 - Domestic abuse.
- Coercive or controlling behaviour.

- Neglect or acts of omission.
 - Self-neglect.
- Organisational or institutional abuse.
 - Discriminatory abuse.
 - Modern slavery.
 - Human trafficking.
 - Exploitation.

Abuse may occur within families, relationships, organisations, institutions, communities or online environments.

7. Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may arise through:

- A direct disclosure.
- An observation of behaviour or presentation.
 - Information provided by another person.
- Concerns raised by a parent, carer or organisation.
 - A pattern of behaviour observed over time.
- Information received during counselling sessions.

Indicators of abuse are not always obvious, and it is important not to make assumptions. All concerns will be considered carefully in the context of the information available.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

As an independent counsellor, Adelle Northall is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding responsibilities are met across all areas of practice.

These responsibilities include:

- Maintaining current safeguarding knowledge through regular training.
 - Working in accordance with the NCPS Code of Ethical Practice.
 - Maintaining appropriate professional indemnity insurance.

- Recognising signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Responding promptly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns.
 - Maintaining accurate, factual and contemporaneous records.
 - Sharing information lawfully where safeguarding requires it.
- Seeking advice from appropriate professionals where necessary.
 - Working collaboratively with statutory agencies and partner organisations where appropriate.
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries at all times.
- Engaging in regular clinical supervision to support safe and ethical practice.
- Reviewing safeguarding procedures regularly to ensure they remain effective and compliant.

9. Professional Standards

Guided by... Adelle is committed to providing counselling services that are ethical, professional and accountable.

This includes:

- Working within recognised professional competencies.
 - Respecting equality, diversity and inclusion.
 - Treating every client with dignity and respect.
 - Maintaining appropriate records.
- Protecting confidentiality while recognising its lawful and ethical limits.
- Acting in accordance with safeguarding legislation and professional guidance at all times.

Safeguarding is embedded within all aspects of professional practice and decision-making.

10. Children and Young People

For the purpose of this policy, a child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

Guided by... Adelle is committed to creating a safe, supportive and non-judgemental environment where children and young people feel listened to, respected and valued.

When working with children and young people, I will:

- Prioritise their welfare and best interests at all times.
- Explain confidentiality and its limits in an age-appropriate manner.
- Encourage children and young people to participate in decisions affecting them wherever appropriate.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Work within my level of competence and professional training.
- Respond appropriately to disclosures, observations or concerns relating to abuse or neglect.
- Work collaboratively with parents, carers, schools and other professionals where this is lawful, appropriate and in the child's best interests.

Parents and carers will be provided with clear information about confidentiality before counselling begins. Whilst parents have legal responsibilities for their child, children and young people also have rights to privacy and confidentiality, depending on their age, understanding and applicable law.

Information shared during counselling will not normally be disclosed to parents or carers unless:

- The child or young person provides informed consent (where appropriate).
- There is a safeguarding concern.
- Disclosure is required by law.
- There is a significant risk of harm.

11. Adults at Risk

Guided by... Adelle is committed to safeguarding adults who may be unable to protect themselves because of age, illness, disability, mental health difficulties or other circumstances.

Safeguarding concerns relating to adults at risk may include:

- Abuse.
- Neglect.
- Financial exploitation.
- Domestic abuse.
- Coercive or controlling behaviour.
 - Modern slavery.
 - Self-neglect.
- Discriminatory abuse.
- Institutional abuse.

Where concerns arise, I will:

- Assess the level of immediate risk.
- Consider the adult's wishes and capacity wherever appropriate.
 - Follow the principles of the Care Act 2014.
 - Seek advice where required.
- Make safeguarding referrals where necessary.
- Contact emergency services where there is an immediate risk to life or serious harm.

12. Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Confidentiality is fundamental to the counselling relationship. Clients have the right to expect that information shared during counselling will be treated respectfully and kept confidential.

However, confidentiality is not absolute.

Confidentiality may need to be breached where:

- A child is at risk of significant harm.
- An adult at risk is experiencing abuse or neglect.
- There is a serious risk of harm to the client.

- There is a serious risk of harm to another person.
- Serious criminal activity is disclosed, planned or likely to occur.
- I may become knowingly involved, complicit or placed at legal risk through a client's actions.
 - Disclosure is required by law.
 - A court orders disclosure.
- Information must be shared to prevent serious crime or protect public safety.

Wherever possible, and where it is safe to do so, I will discuss any proposed disclosure with the client before sharing information.

Only the minimum necessary information will be shared with the appropriate person or agency.

13. Information Sharing

Information sharing is an essential part of safeguarding.

When information needs to be shared, Guided by... Adelle will ensure it is:

- Lawful.
- Necessary.
- Proportionate.
- Relevant.
- Accurate.
- Timely.
- Shared securely.

Information may be shared with:

- Children's Social Care.
- Adult Social Care.
 - Police.
- Emergency services.
- NHS professionals.

- General Practitioners (where appropriate).
- School Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).
- Other safeguarding professionals involved in protecting an individual.

Information will only be shared with those who have a legitimate safeguarding need to know.

A record of all safeguarding decisions and disclosures will be maintained.

14. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously.

Where concerns arise, I will:

Step 1 – Listen

- Listen carefully and calmly.
- Allow the individual to speak freely.
- Avoid asking leading questions.
- Reassure the individual that they have done the right thing by speaking.

Step 2 – Explain

- Explain that confidentiality has limits.
- Never promise to keep safeguarding information secret.
- Explain what may happen next.

Step 3 – Record

As soon as possible I will make a clear factual record including:

- Date.
- Time.
- Location.
- Exact words used wherever possible.
- Observations.

- Actions taken.
- People spoken to.

Personal opinions will be avoided unless clearly identified as professional opinion.

Step 4 – Assess Risk

Consider:

- Is anyone in immediate danger?
- Does emergency action need to be taken?
- Is specialist safeguarding advice required?
- Does a statutory referral need to be made?

Step 5 – Report

Depending on the circumstances, concerns may be reported to:

- A school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Children's Social Care.
- Adult Social Care.
- Police.
- NHS services.
- Emergency Services (999).

Immediate risks to life will always be treated as an emergency.

15. Working with Schools and Organisations

Where counselling is delivered within schools, colleges, charities or organisations, Guided by... Adelle will work alongside that organisation's safeguarding procedures.

This includes:

- Following the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where appropriate.

- Attending safeguarding meetings if requested.
- Cooperating with safeguarding investigations.
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
- Sharing information lawfully and proportionately.

Before counselling begins, safeguarding arrangements and reporting procedures will be agreed with the commissioning organisation wherever possible.

16. Online Counselling

Safeguarding responsibilities apply equally to online and telephone counselling.

Before online counselling begins:

- Identity will be confirmed.
- Emergency contact details will be obtained.
- The client's current location will be confirmed where appropriate.
- Procedures for technological disruption and safeguarding emergencies will be discussed.

Clients are encouraged to:

- Attend sessions from a private environment.
- Ensure they can speak confidentially.
- Provide updated contact information if circumstances change.

If an immediate safeguarding concern arises during an online session, I may contact:

- The client's emergency contact.
- Emergency services.
- Relevant safeguarding agencies.

Where technology fails during a session involving safeguarding concerns, every reasonable effort will be made to re-establish contact promptly.

17. Working with Other Professionals

Safeguarding is often most effective when agencies work together.

Where appropriate, Guided by... Adelle will work collaboratively with:

- Schools.
- Colleges.
- General Practitioners.
- NHS Mental Health Services.
- Children's Social Care.
- Adult Social Care.
- Police.
- Charities.
- Other healthcare professionals.

Information will only be shared where there is a lawful basis and where it supports the safety and wellbeing of an individual.

Professional disagreements relating to safeguarding will be managed respectfully, with the welfare of the client remaining the primary consideration.

18. Professional Responsibilities

As an independent counsellor, Adelle Northall has a responsibility to maintain safe, ethical and professional safeguarding practice.

Guided by... Adelle will:

- Maintain appropriate safeguarding knowledge and understanding.
- Complete regular safeguarding training relevant to counselling practice.
- Maintain awareness of current safeguarding legislation and guidance.
- Work within the ethical framework of the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society (NCPS).
 - Maintain appropriate professional indemnity insurance.
 - Maintain clear professional boundaries with all clients.
- Recognise the limits of my role and seek advice when required.

- Use clinical supervision to support safe decision-making.
- Take appropriate action where there are concerns about abuse, neglect or risk of harm.
- Maintain accurate and secure safeguarding records.
- Review safeguarding procedures regularly.

Safeguarding decisions will always be made with the welfare and safety of the individual as the priority.

19. Professional Boundaries and Safer Working Practice

Maintaining professional boundaries is essential to safe counselling practice.

Guided by... Adelle will:

- Maintain a clear professional counselling relationship.
- Avoid dual relationships that may affect professional judgement.
- Maintain appropriate communication boundaries.
- Use professional contact methods only.
- Avoid inappropriate contact with clients outside agreed counselling arrangements.
- Ensure counselling environments are appropriate, safe and suitable.
- Treat all clients with dignity, respect and fairness.

Clients are encouraged to raise any concerns about boundaries, professional conduct or the counselling relationship.

20. DBS Information

Guided by... Adelle recognises the importance of appropriate safeguarding checks when working with children, young people and adults at risk.

Where required by the nature of the role or setting:

- An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be held.

- DBS information will be kept securely and handled confidentially.
- DBS status may be provided to schools, organisations or commissioning bodies where appropriate.
- DBS checks will be renewed or updated in line with professional requirements and organisational expectations.

DBS checks form one part of safeguarding practice and do not replace professional judgement, training, supervision or appropriate safeguarding procedures.

21. Safeguarding Training and Development

Guided by... Adelle is committed to maintaining appropriate knowledge, skills and awareness in safeguarding.

This includes:

- Completing safeguarding training relevant to counselling practice.
- Keeping knowledge up to date with changes in legislation and guidance.
 - Understanding indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Understanding responsibilities relating to confidentiality and information sharing.
- Maintaining awareness of local safeguarding procedures where working with organisations.
- Reflecting on safeguarding practice through professional development and supervision.

Training records will be maintained where appropriate.

22. Clinical Supervision

Clinical supervision is an essential part of ethical counselling practice.

Through supervision, Guided by... Adelle will:

- Reflect on safeguarding concerns and professional decisions.
 - Seek guidance where there are uncertainties.
- Ensure client welfare remains central to decision-making.
 - Maintain safe and accountable practice.

Client confidentiality will be respected within supervision. Identifying information will be limited wherever possible, and supervisors are bound by professional confidentiality requirements.

23. Record Keeping and Data Protection

Safeguarding records are maintained to support safe and accountable practice.

Records may include:

- Details of safeguarding concerns.
- Disclosures made by clients.
 - Risk assessments.
 - Actions taken.
 - Advice received.
 - Referrals made.
- Decisions and professional reasoning.

Safeguarding records will:

- Be factual, accurate and completed as soon as possible.
 - Be stored securely.
- Be protected from unauthorised access.
- Only be accessed where necessary.
- Be shared only on a lawful and need-to-know basis.

All records will be managed in accordance with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
 - Data Protection Act 2018.
- Guided by... Adelle's Privacy Policy.
- Record Retention Policy.

24. Whistleblowing

Guided by... Adelle recognises the importance of raising concerns where unsafe practice, poor safeguarding practice or professional misconduct is identified.

Concerns may include:

- A safeguarding failure.
 - Unsafe practice.
- Professional misconduct.
- Behaviour that places clients at risk.

Where concerns relate to another professional, organisation or service, appropriate action may include:

- Raising concerns through the relevant internal safeguarding process.
 - Seeking professional advice.
- Reporting concerns to the appropriate regulatory or safeguarding body.

The safety and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk remains the priority.

25. Complaints

If a client, parent, carer or organisation has concerns about safeguarding practice, they are encouraged to raise these directly with Guided by... Adelle.

Complaints will be handled in accordance with the Complaints Policy.

Concerns may relate to:

- How a safeguarding concern was managed.
- Confidentiality and information sharing.
 - Professional conduct.
- Communication or decision-making.

Where concerns relate to professional conduct, individuals may also contact the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society (NCPS).

26. Safeguarding Contacts

Counsellor

Name: Adelle Northall

Business: Guided by... Adelle

Email: info@guidedbyadelle.co.uk

Telephone: +44 7368 492101

Website: www.guidedbyadelle.co.uk

Emergency Services

Emergency: 999

Safeguarding Contacts

Safeguarding Lead

For private practice safeguarding concerns:

Name: Adelle Northall

Business: Guided by... Adelle

Email: info@guidedbyadelle.co.uk

Telephone: +44 7368 492101

Working with Schools and Organisations

Where counselling is provided within a school, college or organisation, safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the safeguarding procedures of that setting.

The relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) details will be confirmed and recorded before counselling services begin.

School / Organisation DSL:

Name: *To be completed by the relevant organisation*

Contact details: *To be completed by the relevant organisation*

27. Policy Review

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where there are:

- Changes to legislation.
- Changes to statutory safeguarding guidance.
- Changes to professional requirements.
- Changes to counselling practice or service delivery.

The review ensures that safeguarding procedures remain effective, appropriate and aligned with professional standards.

28. Policy Approval

Safeguarding Policy

Business Name: Guided by... Adelle

Practitioner: Adelle Northall

Professional Membership: Registered Member of the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society (NCPS)

Role: Counsellor

Policy Effective Date: 13 July 2026

Policy Review Date: 13 July 2027

Approved by: Adelle Northall

Signature: Adelle Northall

Date Approved: 13 July 2026