



Severnside Institute for Psychotherapy

# Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

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## SECTION 1: Safeguarding Policy

### 1. Purpose & Scope

The Severnside Institute for Psychotherapy (SIP) recognises that creating a safe and welcoming environment, where everyone is respected and valued, is at the heart of safeguarding. This document sets out the ways in which SIP seeks to prevent harm, harassment, bullying, abuse, and neglect for everyone who comes into contact with the organisation irrespective of context or role. It also makes clear how SIP will respond when concerns are raised.

SIP's Safeguarding policy, and the associated procedures, applies to all activities and events that SIP convenes and holds responsibility for, as well as anyone who can be considered to be:

- a SIP committee and board member
- a member of SIP's office staff or training personnel team, including those undertaking work on a freelance or voluntary basis
- a SIP member or associate, including Student Associates (i.e., a clinical trainee)
- a SIP pre-clinical student
- a member of a family and/or caregiver participating in Infant Observation with a SIP pre-clinical student
- a SIP introductory course participant
- a SIP CPD event attendee

The policy and procedure set out below relates to the work of SIP as a training and membership organisation, and to the role it provides in helping the public access psychotherapy. It is also a resource and source of support for SIP members and associates – including student associates – faced with safeguarding concerns that arise within their own private practice work, or in the work of others for whom they provide supervision or consultative support.

The British Psychoanalytic Council's (BPC) Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy Guidance states that for BPC registrants, "...wherever possible, it is preferable for there to be consultation with your organisation's safeguarding lead or with your supervisor or the BPC" (p. 12). SIP recommends that concerns that arise in the minds of members or associates of SIP, working with patients in their private practices, are first a matter for clinical supervision. Further consultation with SIP's Safeguarding Lead is available and should be sought when considered necessary, as is consultation with the BPC directly.

Although SIP does not provide a direct service to people under the age of eighteen, students enrolled on SIP's Infant Observation pre-clinical course will be in regular and close contact with an infant and their parents, guardians, and carers. **Concerns that arise in relation to Infant Observation should unequivocally be brought to the attention of the SIP Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.**

## 2. Legal Framework

This policy and procedure has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy, and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults in England.

A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from [nspcc.org.uk/childprotection](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/childprotection) (children) and [www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance) (adults). Additional resources are available from [the Social Care Institute for Excellence](#), [NCVO](#) and [Ann Craft Trust](#).

## 3. SIP Believes that

- everybody has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status.
- we have a responsibility to prioritise the welfare of everyone involved in or connected with our activities, and to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

## 4. SIP Recognises that

- safeguarding is the responsibility of everybody connected with our organisation and we are committed to ensuring safeguarding is at the heart of our culture and activities.
- there is a legal framework within which our activities need to work to safeguard everyone including those who have needs for care and support and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves, including children, and will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.
- the actions we take are likely to be most effective when they are guided by the principles of adult and child safeguarding and current best practice. More information about the guiding principles of safeguarding are available at the [gov.uk website](#) and the [Ann Craft Trust](#).

## 5. SIP will

- have a nominated Safeguarding Lead (SGL) and a Deputy Safeguarding Officer (DSGO) whose responsibility it is to oversee and co-ordinate safeguarding within our organisation and related activities.
- make use of a safeguarding policy and procedure that adopts child and adult safeguarding best practice, and which is regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.
- use safe recruitment practices and assess the suitability of staff and trainees to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in our organisation.
- ensure that everybody involved with our organisation is aware of the safeguarding policy and procedures and knows how to respond if they have a concern relating to their own welfare and wellbeing or that of someone else connected with SIP and its activities.

## 6. Contact Details

### **Safeguarding Lead**

Ben James

Phone: 07907 492118

Email: [post@drbenjames.co.uk](mailto:post@drbenjames.co.uk)

## 7. Policy review

This policy is reviewed annually. **This policy was last reviewed on: 22/12/2025**

## SECTION 2: Safeguarding Procedures

### 1. Introduction

This section sets out the actions to be taken in the event that safeguarding concerns arise in the context of SIP activities. It follows an easy to remember and well established 'Six Rs' approach to safeguarding.

### 2. Recognise

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and the first step is having a clear understanding of what the different signs and symptoms of potential harm, abuse and neglect are in adults and children. It is the responsibility of all individuals involved in SIP activities to recognise and be appropriately concerned when a potential safeguarding issue is witnessed, disclosed, or learned about in some way.

The Care and support statutory guidance identified ten types of abuse. These are:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Self-neglect

Signs of abuse can be difficult to detect. The Social Care Institute for Excellence has a quick and helpful guide to each of these with examples and further links for more information.

Similarly, there are recognised types of abuse and neglect which relate to children. The NSPCC website has information to help if you or someone else is concerned about a child. Useful information relating to children can also be found on the Social Care Institute for Excellence site.

There are three ways in which safeguarding concerns come to light:

- The person who has experienced some form of abuse or neglect tells someone about it.
- We see a sign or symptom of abuse or neglect which raises our concerns.
- A third party discloses something that he or she has seen, heard about, or been told by another person.

### 3. Respond

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in SIP activities to respond appropriately and promptly to an individual sharing information about him or herself or another person and to take one's own concerns seriously if any should arise.

If a person indicates that he or she is being harmed or abused, or information is received which gives rise to concern, the person receiving the information should:

- Take it seriously.
- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the person to continue at their own pace.
- Keep questions to a minimum. Only ask questions if you need to identify/clarify what the person is telling you.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Ask them what they would like to happen next.
- Explain that you will have to share the information.
- Ask for consent for the information to be shared.
- Make an arrangement as to how the SL/DSO can contact the person safely.
- Act swiftly to report and carry out any relevant actions.
- Promptly record in writing what was said using the person's own words (see below).

It may seem obvious, but it is important not to:

- Dismiss or ignore the concern.
- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Make assumptions, speculate, or come to your own conclusions.
- Make negative comments about the alleged perpetrator.
- Make or agree to any promises (e.g., to keep the information secret).
- Conduct your own investigation of the case.
- Confront the person thought to be causing harm.
- In the event of a third-party disclosure, contact the alleged victim before talking to the SL/DSO if the person allegedly causing the harm is likely to find out.

#### 4. Report

You should not keep safeguarding concerns to yourself. It may be helpful to remember that it is not your responsibility to prove or decide whether an adult or child has been abused or harmed. It is simply your responsibility to pass information on promptly.

- If someone has a need for immediate medical attention call an ambulance on 999.
- If you are concerned someone is in immediate danger or a serious crime is being committed, contact the police on 999 straight away. Where you suspect that a crime is being committed, you must involve the police.
- If the safeguarding concern relates to a child then contact the SL/DSO urgently.
- All other safeguarding concerns should be passed on to the SL/DSO as soon as possible.

## 5. Record

You should make a written record of any safeguarding concern that is disclosed to you from whichever source and if you have a concern of your own.

- Write the notes as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours of an issue being raised.
- If the record is handwritten then write in ink, sign, and date.
- Use the person's own words wherever possible and be clear and precise by making use of quotation marks.
- Differentiate between fact, opinion (if one is offered) and interpretation.
- If the disclosure is supplied in written form (e.g., email, Word document etc.) then save, print and include it.
- Give the record to the SGL/DSGO as soon as possible.

Please refer to the Safeguarding Concern form, included as an appendix, which can be used to collect and record all the relevant information.

## 6. Refer

This section describes the actions to be taken when making onward referrals of a safeguarding concern if that is considered the most appropriate course of action. Only the Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Officer should make the decision to refer on a safeguarding concern.

- Keep clear records of decision making, actions taken, and the outcomes achieved.
- Ensure any immediate actions necessary to safeguard anyone at risk have been taken.
- Contact 999 in an emergency. If this isn't an emergency but you suspect a crime has been committed, contact the Police on 101.
- If the disclosure is by a third party, decide if you need to contact the subject of the safeguarding concern to get more information (if safe and appropriate to do so).
- Ensure the person has been given information about the process and what will happen next.

If in doubt, and the safeguarding concern involves an adult with care and support needs or a child, it is good practice to consult with the Local Authority/the Police to help decide an appropriate course of action.

If a child is at risk, you must make a child safeguarding referral to the Local Authority. This includes all situations where there is domestic abuse within the household where the child lives.

- To report a concern about a child (in Bristol), visit <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/social-care-and-health/children-and-families/concerns-about-a-child>
- To report a concern about an adult with care and support needs, visit <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/form-contact-adult-care-services>

If a safeguarding concern is raised about someone within SIP, then decide the relevant policy and procedures the organisation will use to decide which actions will be taken (e.g., breach of code of conduct, disciplinary procedures, breach of contract, grievance etc.).

- If statutory agencies are involved, work together with them to agree the next steps.
- Attend and contribute to any safeguarding strategy or case meetings that are called by the Local Authority.
- If statutory agencies say that they will not be taking any action in relation to a referral this should not stop SIP taking internal steps to safeguard the person. The Police may decide not to pursue a criminal investigation where there is an allegation against someone, but the organisation should still follow its disciplinary procedure.
- Decide who in the organisation will maintain contact with the person to consult with them, keep them informed and make sure they are receiving the support they need.

Consider whether the safeguarding concern should be appropriately referred or flagged elsewhere.

The following questions may be helpful:

- Does SIP have a duty to refer the matter to the Disclosure and Barring Service?
- Does SIP have a duty to report the matter to the Charity Commission?
- Does SIP have a duty to refer the matter to a professional governing body or regulator?

## 7. Review

It is best practice to review how an organisation has handled a safeguarding concern in the hope and expectation that collectively we can learn from experience. This is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Officer, but help may be sought from other groups within SIP (e.g., the Trustees or Executive Committee).

## APPENDIX: Safeguarding concern form

Please use this form to record any safeguarding concern. In an emergency please do not delay in informing the police or ambulance service. All information must be treated as confidential and reported to the SIP Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. The form should be completed at the time or immediately following the disclosure, but after all necessary emergency action has been taken. Please complete the form as fully as possible. Try and report the facts of the safeguarding concern and avoid opinion or interpretation.

### Your details - the person completing this form

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Name          |  |
| Role in SIP   |  |
| Telephone No. |  |
| Email         |  |

### Details of the person affected

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Name          |  |
| Address       |  |
| Telephone No. |  |
| Email         |  |

### Details of the safeguarding concern - please describe in detail using only facts

**Other present or potential witnesses**

Name

Address

Telephone No.

Email

**Additional relevant information – detail anything else you believe to be important or helpful**

**Actions – Please state the immediate actions you took in response to the concern**

**Declaration – I have completed this form to the best of my knowledge**

Signature

Date