**Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy**

**Created: 01.09.23**

**Next Revision due: 01.09.24**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is fundamental in all my work with children and families. Outlined below are the key arrangements for ensuring the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people with whom I work with.

1. As a sole trader, I will research and keep myself up to date with legal developments and publications related to safeguarding children and procedures published nationally and by the local Safeguarding Children’s Board.

2. I will prioritise focusing on the child/children and listen to the child, promoting the child’s needs above all others including adopters/prospective adopters/other carers.

3. I will follow the procedures for the Service Personnel within Bristol City County Council as directed by the local Safeguarding Board. However, the following specific procedures will be followed.

**a. Current Abuse**: In the event that there is suspicion of a child or young person suffering current abuse of an emotional, physical, sexual nature or neglect then I will discuss these concerns with the referrer to the service and then, if appropriate, refer that matter to the Local Authority’s Children and Young People’s Service. If the referrer was a parent, I will discuss these concerns with any other professional agencies involved, or failing that, directly with the relevant Local Authority’s Children and Young People’s Service.

 If the suspicion arises from a ‘disclosure’ by the child, I will, dependent upon age and level of understanding of the child, attempt to talk to the child about the need to take this matter further.

If the referrer to the service is not available, then I will err on the side of caution and refer the matter directly to the Local Authority’s Children and Young People’s Service. In this event the ‘Local Authority’ would be that pertaining to the child and their adopters/prospective adopters/other carer’s locality.

 I will make myself available to participate in any multi-discipline meetings etc. in accordance with Working Together 2006.

**b. Historical Abuse:** In the event that a child or young person discloses historical abuse, then I will,

* Ensure that in accordance with the non-directive nature of the clinical approach taken that the child is listened to, but not questioned about the abuse by me, parents, or any other professional present.
* Make contemporaneous notes of what the child says.

(However, priority must be given to the child’s emotional well-being, i.e. the priority must be to comfort the child/young person. If it is thought that the process of taking notes contemporaneously may distract from the process of comforting the child, or cause any distress for the child, I will not cause further distress by taking notes but will make detailed notes of their recollection of what was said immediately after the session.)

* Discuss this issue with the child, if possible and appropriate, the referrer and adopters/prospective adopter/other carers/parents.
* Provide a written report of the disclosure together with an assessment of the child’s emotional and psychological status to the Local Authority’s Children’s and Young Persons Service. In this event the ‘Local Authority’ refers to the Local Authority responsible for the child at the time of the abuse.
* I will make myself available for any multi-disciplinary meeting subsequent to that referral and fully engage within that process.