



Independent Speech and Language Therapist
www.communicate-therapy.com

Safeguarding: Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jenny Treen-Smtih
 T:07939009105 E:jenny@communicate-therapy.com

<p>Wiltshire:</p> <p>Children's Social Care and Social Care referrals: Integrated Front Door (IFD)</p>	<p align="center">0300 4560 108 Integratedfrontdoor@wiltshire.gov.uk Or to ask advice IFDAdmin@wiltshire.gov.uk Mon-Fri 9.30-3.30</p>
<p>Wiltshire Adult Social Care Advice and Contact Team</p>	<p align="center">0300 456 0111 AdviceandContact@wiltshire.gov.uk Monday to Thursday 8.30am-5.20pm Friday 8.30am-4.20pm https://adults.wiltshire.gov.uk/ https://adultslas.wiltshire.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/referrals/safeguarding</p>

<p>Swindon:</p> <p>Children - Contact Swindon The front door for the Council's children's social care services</p>	<p align="center">01793 464646. contactswindon@swindon.gov.uk https://www.swindon.gov.uk/xfp/form/794</p>
<p>Vulnerable Adults Swindon Safeguarding Partnership referrals:</p>	<p align="center">01793 463555 adultsafeguarding@swindon.gov.uk Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 4.40pm Friday 8.30am to 4.00pm https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20011/adult_social_care_and_support/1120/report_a_safeguarding_concern_about_an_adult_at_risk_of_or_experiencing_harm/3</p> <p align="center">Outside office hours The Emergency Duty Service (EDS) is available 01793 436699</p>
<p align="center">If you believe a child or adult is in immediate risk of significant harm or injury, you must call the police on 999</p>	

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Statement of intent

Preface: in this document, any reference to the safeguarding of children also refers to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

Communicate is run for the following purpose:

- Speech and Language Therapy Services for children, adolescents, their families, and carers in home and/or educational setting, both face to face and in teletherapy.

Communicate works with adults, children, and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best possible start in life. In relation to children, young people, and vulnerable adults, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined in 'Working together to safeguard children' as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Communicate will fulfil local and national responsibilities by following guidelines set out in the following key documents:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2023) (statutory for Alternative Provision Schools)
- The procedures of the Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP)
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk in Wiltshire – Wiltshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Policy and Procedures (2019)
- Statutory framework for the early year's foundation stage (2021)
- Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)
- Every Child Matters (2004)
- Children & families Act (2014)
- Alternative Provision – Statutory guidance 2013

Aim of the policy

The aim is to ensure children and vulnerable adults in Jenny Treen-Smith's care are kept safe from harm through implementing this policy and promoting children's right to be strong, resilient, and listened to by:

- all learners are safe and protected from harm.
- safeguarding procedures are in place to help learners to feel safe and learn to stay safe.
- Adults in the organisation's community are aware of the expected behaviours and the organisation's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults and child protection.

Jenny Treen-Smith Speech and Language Therapy RCSLT HCPC cert.

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Scope

Safeguarding children is defined as:

- ensuring that children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.
- acting to enable all children to have the best life chances.
- preventing impairment of children's mental or physical health or development
- protecting children from maltreatment.

Safeguarding adults means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Safeguarding covers a range of measures that includes child protection procedures. It encompasses a preventative approach to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe. This incorporates learners physical and mental health and safety; behaviour management and preventing bullying; supporting learners with medical conditions; social economic education; providing first aid and site security.

Consequently, this policy should be read alongside the Privacy Policy.

For the purposes of this policy:

- *Parent* refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers and adoptive parents.
- *Child* refers to all children I work with and any child under the age of 18 who encounters this organisation. This includes unborn babies.

Any safeguarding concerns or disclosures of abuse relating to a learner, during or outside of operating hours are within the scope of this policy.

Safeguarding Principles

Professional Behaviour

Jenny Treen-Smith at Communicate is committed to positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for learners underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos and adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour. Jenny Treen-Smith will not use her position to gain access to information for her own advantage and/or a learner's or family's detriment.

Jenny Treen-Smith understands that:

- There is a position of trust in relation to all children (and learners over the age of 18) and to ensure that the power imbalance is never used for personal advantage or gratification. The organisation will avoid behaviour which might be interpreted by others as an abuse of the position of trust. This includes sharing personal contact details with learners or families.
- There is a legal duty to protect the interests of children and vulnerable adults and accept the obligations inherent in that responsibility.
- To not establish or seek to establish social contact with learners to secure a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- it is an offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003) for the organisation to engage in any form of sexual activity with a child under the age of 18.
- Certain behaviours are at odds with a position of trust. These include, but are not limited to:

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- Harassment or discrimination based on any characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010
- Loss of personal civility including, personal attacks or insults, displays of temper (such as throwing objects), unwanted physical contact (pushing, shoving, hitting) or the threat of the same.
- Not swearing, blaspheme or use offensive language in front of learners, nor use language which is discriminatory and demeaning in any way.

Communication with learners and parents, including social contact outside of the workplace

Jenny Treen-Smith will use professional judgement when requesting or accepting any social contact (including through social media) including:

- not accept any request from learners for contact via any social media platform.
- make a judgement about whether to maintain the connection in any cases where contacts were made before the learner started to work with her.
- To not engage in conduct outside work that could damage her professional reputation.

Jenny Treen-Smith will not make sexual innuendos or any comments of a sexual nature to any learner nor make any comments trivialising alcohol or drug abuse.

Occasionally, learners may develop an infatuation for a professional. In such situations, Jenny Treen-Smith will deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of the learner.

Physical contact including intimate/personal care and behaviour management.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one learner, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child or vulnerable adult. Any physical contact will be in response to the learner's needs, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, background and any agreed support or care plan.

Jenny Treen-Smith understands that:

- on a daily basis, it may be entirely appropriate and proper to have physical contact with learners and that it will be carried out in ways appropriate to the professional role and in relation to the learner's individual needs.
- some learners are more comfortable with touch than others and/or may be more comfortable with touch from some adults than others. Whenever possible, Jenny Treen-Smith will seek the learner's permission before initiating contact and are sensitive to any signs that the learner may be uncomfortable or embarrassed.
- There is a responsibility to ensure the way comfort is offered to a distressed learner is age appropriate.
- To never touch a learner in a way which may represent a misuse of authority or considered indecent.
- physical contact is to be never secretive, or for my gratification.
- cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to the issues of gender.

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If there is a belief that an action by Jenny Treen-Smith could be misinterpreted as abusive, then the incident will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or adult integrated front door (IFD).

Jenny Treen-Smith understands that a learner who has suffered previous abuse or neglect may associate physical contact with such experiences. Jenny Treen-Smith recognises that such a child or vulnerable adult may seek out inappropriate physical contact and know to deter the learner sensitively to help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Learners with disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements are understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the learner's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

If a learner's behaviour presents a serious risk to themselves or others, Jenny Treen-Smith will record the incident and subsequent actions and seek additional advice and support from partner agencies as appropriate.

One to one situations

Jenny Treen-Smith will carefully consider the welfare needs of learners when with them in a one-to-one situation. All learning spaces are set up to allow any activity to be easily observed by family members. Internal doors remain open when practicable.

If a learner is home alone when Jenny Treen-Smith arrives, Jenny Treen-Smith will not go into the house and if she is concerned that a child/young person is in the home inappropriately alone/unsupervised/in danger Jenny Treen-Smith will seek immediate advice from social care.

Responding to concerns/disclosures of abuse

Jenny Treen-Smith knows how to recognise the signs of neglect and abuse and follows the flowcharts provided by Wiltshire SVPP. Jenny Treen-Smith understands that she must NOT:

- take photographs of any injuries.
- postpone or delay the opportunity for the learner to talk.
- take notes while the learner is speaking or ask the learner to write an account.
- try to investigate the allegation.
- promise confidentiality e.g., say I will keep 'the secret'.
- approach or inform the alleged abuser.

Jenny Treen-Smith will record any concern about or disclosure by a learner of abuse or neglect using the standard form provided by Wiltshire SVPP. The voice of the learner is central to the safeguarding practice and learners are encouraged to express and have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them. Written records are made in a timely way and are held securely see separate document: Private Policy. In some circumstances, the Safeguarding Lead will seek advice directly from the IFD.

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Learners with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Learners with additional needs face an increased risk of abuse and neglect. Jenny Treen-Smith will take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect and will never assume that behaviour, mood or injury relates to the learner's additional needs without further exploration.

Jenny Treen-Smith understands that additional challenges can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in learners with SEND, including communication barriers.

Jenny Treen-Smith recognise that learners with SEND are also at a higher risk of peer group isolation and can be disproportionately affected by bullying.

Action

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children & vulnerable adults from:

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse or prejudice to the family
- Gender-based violence against women and girls
- Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- Child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Issues that may be specific to local area or population
- Domestic abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children
- Other issues not listed here but that pose a risk

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children and young adults from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education including:

- Children's health, safety and well-being
- The use of reasonable force
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Educational visits
- Intimate care and emotional well-being
- Online safety and associated issues to ensure children's security, taking into account the local context.

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The safeguarding Lead will work closely with social care and partner agencies to support learners in these circumstances and to identify those that may be at risk for the first time and/ or benefit from additional support.

Record keeping and information sharing.

Communicate clearly lays out the details in the Privacy Policy document and stipulates that Communicate will liaise with partner organisations e.g. schools and Wiltshire council to ensure any safeguarding records for children are shared on transition by the safeguarding lead.

For any learners with dual-registered in another setting Communicate will liaise regularly with the DSL at the base to ensure information is shared in the best interest of the learner.

Records will be clearly written using a standard recording form, with a body map, including actions taken and outcomes as appropriate.

Jenny Treen-Smith is committed to work in partnership with parents and carers of children and of vulnerable adults. In most situations, Communicate will discuss initial concerns with them. However, Jenny Treen-Smith will not share information where there are concerns that if so doing would:

- place a learner at increased risk of significant harm.
- place any adult at increased risk of serious harm.
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime.
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

Escalation of concerns

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between agencies. Jenny Treen-Smith can professionally disagree and challenge decision-making as an entirely legitimate activity; a part of my professional responsibility to promote the best safeguarding practice and press for re-consideration if a decision to act/not act in response to a concern raised about a learner is wrong. In such cases the Wiltshire SVPP case resolution protocol is used if necessary.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing procedure, which are reflected in our HCPC Code of Conduct or through RCSLT are in place for such concerns to be raised. If an individual feels unable to raise an issue with the Safeguard Lead, Jenny Treen-Smith or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed other whistleblowing channels are open to them: The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 from 08.00 to 20.00 Monday to Friday or email help@nspcc.org.

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Supporting Information

The welfare of all learners is of paramount importance.

The safeguarding Lead, Jenny Treen-Smith is registered with the following professional bodies that regulates standards of Proficiency for Speech and Language Therapists:

- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)
- Association of Speech and Language Therapists in Independent Practise (ASLTIP)

Jenny Treen-Smith has an enhanced DBS check for both children and adults and is registered on the annual update service.

Jenny Treen-Smith has completed Safeguarding Level 3 in April 2024. This is updated every two years as a minimum.

Jenny Treen-Smith knowledge and skills are refreshed at least annually e.g., via e-bulletins or safeguarding networking events within and around Wiltshire.

Accessibility of this document

This document is available to be viewed at www.communicate-therapy.com and can be emailed to clients who use Communicate services on request.

Monitoring and review

Policy agreed and published:	September 2024
Next review:	September 2025

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