

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Ambroise Therapies Limited occupational therapists providing nature-based interventions, are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all therapeutic activities conducted in natural environments, including forests, parks, and other outdoor settings. It encompasses all interactions with clients, their families, and any third parties involved in the provision of services.

3. Legal and Professional Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- *Children Act 1989 and 2004*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*
- *Care Act 2014*
- *Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics*
- *Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) Professional Standards*

4. Definitions

- **Safeguarding:** Protecting children and vulnerable adults from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, and ensuring safe and effective care.

- **Abuse:** Forms of maltreatment including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Therapist:** As the sole practitioner, I am the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for implementing this policy, recognizing signs of abuse, and taking appropriate action.
- **Clients and Families:** Encouraged to communicate any concerns regarding safety or wellbeing during therapy sessions.

6. Recognising Abuse

I am trained to identify signs of abuse, which may include:

- Unexplained injuries
- Changes in behavior or mood
- Reluctance to participate in activities
- Disclosures of harm

7. Responding to Concerns

If I suspect abuse or receive a disclosure:

1. **Immediate Safety:** Ensure the immediate safety of the individual. Call 999 if it is an emergency.
2. **Record Keeping:** Document the concern factually, including dates, times, and observations.
3. **Reporting:** Contact the appropriate local authority safeguarding team or the police if necessary. Oxfordshire -MASH on 0345 050 7666 during office hours. Outside office hours- Emergency Duty Team on 0800 833 408. Oxfordshire LADO- 01865 810603

Buckinghamshire - MASH 01296 383 962 -office hours.0800 999 7677 -out of office
Emergency Duty Team.

Online referral Oxfordshire <https://www.oscp.org.uk/concerned-about-a-child/>

Buckinghamshire

<https://www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/reporting-a-concern/>

4. **Confidentiality:** Maintain confidentiality, sharing information only with relevant authorities.

8. Outdoor Environment Considerations

Given the nature-based setting:

- **Risk Assessments:** Conduct thorough risk assessments for each outdoor location.
- **Supervision:** Ensure appropriate supervision ratios and clear boundaries during sessions.
- **Emergency Procedures:** Have clear procedures for emergencies, including first aid and evacuation plans.

9. Training and Continuing Professional Development

I commit to:

- Completing regular safeguarding training.
- Staying updated with changes in legislation and best practices.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant changes in legislation or practice.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Everyone attending sessions at Ambroise Farm have responsibility to protect their own and other group members' health, safety and well-being.

We aim to promote:

- Self-esteem
- Self-awareness of personal abilities and limitations
- Respect and care for oneself, other people and the natural environment
- Co-operation and non-violent communication

Ground Rules, site boundaries and risks and hazards will be discussed prior and during sessions. A full risk assessment for individuals attending OT groups and/or 1:1 sessions will be completed prior to activities at Ambroise Farm. This risk assessment is subject to adjustments by the assigned OT at any point during therapy.

Behaviour expectations for all staff

- 1) Be a positive role model for participants, particularly with regards to respecting each person and the environment
- 2) Encourage and reinforce caring and nurturing behaviour
- 3) Be vigilant with regards to common sense safety
- 4) Facilitate from an egalitarian approach avoiding unnecessary rigidity or petty rules
- 5) Avoid coercive or manipulative behaviour management, or that based on personal negative messages, as these damage morale, motivation and self esteem and are counterproductive to the Ambroise Farm ethos and vision.

Encouraging Positive Behaviour

To allow the greatest potential for each participant's experience at Ambroise Farm to be transformational, each participant is welcomed from an open and unbiased viewpoint with regards to their behaviour and abilities. Boundaries and guidelines are presented clearly to all participants. Participants will be supported to contribute to the boundaries and guidelines of the session. Listening and respecting all participants' feelings and opinions will support the sessions to be a safer and more enjoyable experience.

De-escalation

If a situation arises in which participants are behaving in a way that threatens the safety of themselves or others, the session leader will ensure that the following steps are taken:

- 1) Recount the facts of the incident as observed in simple language and without judgment. Remind the participants involved of any guidelines they have not followed.
- 2) Provide containment and a safe space for the participant to calm down.
- 3) Listen to the involved party or parties, if necessary gently separate them from the group for this. Listen and empathise with the participant to help them express

themselves and take responsibility for their feelings. Ask them to consider how their behaviour has affected everyone else.

4) Try to establish what their needs were in the situation and how they were not being met. Discuss what their needs currently are and ask them to consider the needs of the rest of the group.

5) Help them to express their needs clearly and in a positive language.

6) Encourage discussion of new strategies so that if similar situations arise the participants feel able to communicate their needs without resorting to negative behaviours.

Recording and reporting

The session leader will record the incident and inform parents and carers. Where relevant any significant issues or incidents will be discussed with parents or carers in a private conversation, when the participant is not present.

This Policy was last reviewed March 2026 - be be reviewed again March 2027