

Safeguarding Policy

Title: Sounds that Grow Safeguarding Policy

Prepared by: Margaret Nicholson, HCPC Registered Music Therapist

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1. Introduction

1.1 Sounds that Grow is the trading name used by Margaret Nicholson (known as Moggs), an HCPC registered Music Therapist, offering the following services:

- Individual music therapy sessions
- Group music therapy sessions

1.2 Services are delivered to the service user on-site.

1.3 Services are offered to, but are not limited to, children, young people, and adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Learning Difficulties.

1.4 Sounds that Grow postal address is:

Sounds that Grow
4th Floor, Silverstream House/
45 Fitzroy Street, Fitzrovia
London
W1T 6EB GB

2. Purpose of the Policy

2.1 This policy sets out our guidelines on how Sounds the Grow will keep service-users safe and respond to safeguarding concerns.

2.2 This policy is written in accordance with HCPC's Standard of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (revised 2024), Care Act 2014, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*, Children Act 1989 and 2004, Children and Social Worker Act 2017, EU GDPR (2016), and Data Protection Act 2018.

3. Defining Learning Disability and Learning Difficulty

3.1 Learning Disabilities:

Mencap defines learning disability as:

“a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities – for example household tasks, socialising or managing money – which affects someone for their whole life. People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand complicated information, and interact with other people.”

The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) of Leicester and Rutland notes:

“Mild learning disabilities can be difficult to diagnose as the adult will often socialise well with other people, can manage most daily tasks and require only limited support. However, they may need support in some areas, such as completing forms or finding a job. Adults with a severe learning disability or a profound and multiple learning disability (PMLD) will have greater needs for care and support, including mobility, personal care and communication, especially if they also have a physical disability or disabilities. People with a moderate learning disability may also need support in these areas, but that is not always the case.”

Sounds the Grow recognises that learning disabilities can be mild, moderate, or severe and that the presence of any level of disability can expose service-users to abuse.

3.2 Learning Difficulties:

The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) of Leicester and Rutland note:

“A learning disability is different from a learning difficulty, as a learning difficulty does not affect general intellect. A learning disability affects somebody across all areas of their life. Specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, only affect a subset of skills and are not the same as a learning disability.”

Sounds the Grow recognises that Learning Difficulties affecting aspects such as reading, writing, information processing, spatial awareness, and understanding numbers can contribute to a person being vulnerable to abuse.

4. The Risk of Abuse

Sounds the Grow recognises that persons with Learning Disabilities and/or Learning Difficulties are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation in different forms.

4.1 Risks to Service Users: Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Difficulties

The *Care and Support Statutory Guidance* (Department of Health and Social Care) identifies the following types of abuse and neglect, all of which can affect adults with learning disabilities or difficulties. Sounds the Grow recognises that safeguarding concerns can cover a wide range of circumstances and behaviour, including but not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational / institutional abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission

- Self-neglect

If an adult with a learning disability or difficulty has communication needs, this may make them more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

4.2 Risk to Service Users: Children

Children can be vulnerable to different forms of abuse and harm (NSPCC 2023). Sounds the Grow recognises that safeguarding concerns can cover a wide range of circumstances and behaviour, including but not limited to:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Criminal exploitation and gangs
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Neglect
- Non-recent abuse
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

5. Sounds the Grow's Responsibilities Before Client Contact

5.1 Margaret Nicholson is a Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) registered Arts Therapist. You can check her registration on [HCPC Register](#). She must comply with the professional standard set by HCPC and is required to inform you if the status of her registration has changed.

5.2 Margaret Nicholson, trading as Sounds the Grow, must have completed Safeguarding Children Level 3 and Safeguarding Adults Level 3, and have a clear extended children and adult Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check prior to any client contact.

5.3 Margaret Nicholson, trading as Sounds the Grow, is required to familiarise herself with the safeguarding policy if offering services on behalf of or for another organisation, including but not limited to schools, charities, supported residential homes, prior to client contact.

5.4 Sounds the Grow is required to complete a risk assessment form with parents, legal guardians, or staff on-site for each client prior to the first session.

5.5 Sounds the Grow is required to communicate to parents, legal guardians, and staff on-site that while sessions are confidential, we have a duty to share relevant information with other professionals involved in the service-users' care when there is a safeguarding concern.

6. Sounds the Grow's Professional Responsibilities During Sessions

6.1 Sounds the Grow will verbally communicate the confidential nature of sessions, as well as the duty to share relevant information with other professionals in case of a safeguarding concern, during the first session.

6.2 Sounds the Grow will examine the room used for therapy sessions each time to safeguard service-users from potential physical or accidental harm.

6.3 Sounds the Grow will challenge inappropriate or harmful behaviour of any other adults working with the service-user and report these when appropriate.

6.4 Sounds the Grow will be present throughout the entirety of the session. In the unlikely event that the therapist needs to step out of the room, they will ask for another adult to accompany the service-user in their absence if the service-user is a child, or if the service-user is an adult who is usually accompanied by a carer or caregiver.

6.5 Sounds the Grow will be mindful of materials used in sessions to ensure service-users are not exposed to inappropriate images or language.

6.6 All personal information and clinical notes processed relating to service-users are stored in accordance with Sounds the Grow's privacy policy and GDPR compliance statement. All clinical notes are confidential except when Sounds the Grow has a safeguarding concern regarding the client.

6.7 Sounds the Grow understands the importance of safeguarding by actively looking for signs of abuse and harm.

7. Sounds the Grow's Professional Responsibilities in Case of a Safeguarding Concern

7.1 Sounds the Grow acknowledges that safeguarding concerns can arise in conversations in sessions, through therapists' observation both during and outside of sessions, and through communications between therapists and the client's parents, legal guardian, or responsible staff outside of sessions.

7.2 If a service-user is exposed to imminent danger or has active suicidal or self-harming ideation, our therapists would call 999 to safeguard the service-user's immediate safety.

7.3 Where the safeguarding concern occurs during sessions at an organisation, institution, or any setting that is not a private home:

- **7.3.1** If a service-user is in imminent danger, Sounds the Grow will remind the service-user of their duty of care to share relevant information with people

involved in their care.

- **7.3.2** Sounds the Grow will inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) on site within 1 hour. Sounds the Grow will comply with the safeguarding policy on site and complete a safeguarding report according to the timeframe set out by the organisation's safeguarding policy.
- **7.3.3** Parents or legal guardians of the service-user will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

7.4 Where the safeguarding concern arises during sessions at a private home:

- **7.4.1** Sounds the Grow will secure the service-user's safety and call for help if appropriate. Sounds the Grow will remind the service-user of its duty of care to share relevant information with people involved in their care.
- **7.4.2** If parents, carers, or legal guardians are present, Sounds the Grow will remind them of our duty to share information with other professionals involved in the service-user's care.
- **7.4.3.1** In the case of the service-user being a child: Sounds the Grow will complete a safeguarding report and submit it to the relevant local authority's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- **7.4.3.2** In the case of the service-user being an adult: Sounds the Grow will complete a safeguarding report and submit it to the relevant local authority's Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB).

7.5 When completing safeguarding reports, Sounds the Grow will include when and where the incident happened, who was involved, a detailed and objective account of what happened, actions taken to keep the child safe at the time of the report, and actions that will be taken in the coming days to continue to safeguard the child's safety.

7.6 If the safeguarding concern relates to an accusation made against an adult who works with children, Sounds the Grow will make a referral to the local authority designated officer (LADO) at the borough where the adult's organisation is based.

8. Parents or Other Adults' Responsibility to Our Clients

8.1 Parents, legal guardians, or staff on-site are required to complete the risk assessment form with Sounds the Grow prior to their child's first session. It is parents', legal guardians', or staff's responsibility to comply with the risk assessment process as honestly as possible. Failure to disclose previous safeguarding concerns, such as previous self-harming episodes, or previous accusations made against legal guardians, can impact our therapist's ability to make appropriate clinical decisions. Sounds the Grow cannot be liable for potential harm our clients are exposed to as an indirect or direct result of parents', legal guardians', or staff's decision to withhold safeguarding history.

8.2 Parents and legal guardians are required to sign a consent form to confirm they have read our Safeguarding Policy, to give consent for Sounds the Grow to liaise with other professionals involved in their child's care, and to communicate whether they give consent for video/audio recordings prior to their child's first session.

Signed by: Margaret Nicholson

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