

UKCP Standards of Education and Training

Guidelines for Section and Institutional Members for the Development of Codes of Practice and Professional Conduct for Working with Children

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1. Purpose

- This document provides a template for Section and Institutional Members who are providing trainings or registration in Child Psychotherapy and or Psychotherapeutic Counselling for children to create their own Ethical Principles and Codes of Practice
- The following headings form a framework for the assessment of Codes of Practice developed by member organizations within their respective Section and Institutional Members
- Section, Institutional Members and Member Organizations have a responsibility to ensure that their Code of Practices remain in line with government policy and the law as it relates to children and young persons and reflects the UKCP Guiding Principles for Child Psychotherapy

2. Aims of Codes of Practice

To define the practice of child psychotherapy as a distinct field that recognizes the nature, needs and circumstances specific to psychotherapeutic work with children The aims of a Code of Practice for working with children and young persons are to define the ethical principles and their practical application in three key areas:

- To ensure good standards of practice including issues of diversity and equality
- Safeguarding children
- Informing complaints procedures

3. Terms of Reference

The task of the Section and Institutional Members and Member Organizations is to draw up Codes of Practice for Psychotherapy with Children and Young Persons which take into consideration the following:

- The overall framework of the ethical principles upheld by the UKCP
- The specific modality framework represented by the Section and Institutional Member
- Guidelines for Section and Institutional Members for the Development of Training Standards in Child Psychotherapy
- The UKCP Code of Ethics
- Diversity and Equalities considerations and legislation.
- Current legislation pertaining to Children and Young Persons
- Every Child Matters government policy documents
- Data Protection legislation

4. Code of Practise

This template has been divided into five Section and Institutional Members which Section and Institutional Members need to consider in creating their own Codes.

5. Definitions

5.1 Definition of Child Psychotherapy

In this context, the term ‘Child Psychotherapy’ refers to those who are registered or in training within UKCP recognized trainings specific to children irrespective of modality. This includes Psychotherapeutic Counselling with children.

Section and Institutional Members and Member Organizations must define the term ‘Child Psychotherapy’ within their own specific modality.

5.2 Definition of a Child

The legal age of maturity is 18 in the UK, and accordingly, a child is any person under the age of 18. Within this, it is recognized that there are different levels of maturity and competence and this needs to be recognized in developing any Code of Practice.

6. What the Public Expects

The term ‘What the Public Expects’ refers to the standards of practice and level of competence, training and supervision for Child Psychotherapists that can be reasonable expected from a recognized professionally trained child psychotherapist. This includes the following areas:

- Professional and personal conduct
- Avoidance of False or Deceptive Statements
- Upholding the integrity of the profession
- Safeguarding children
- Non-discriminatory practice

7. Responsibilities of the Therapist

The underlying guiding principle of Codes of Practice for psychotherapeutic work with children is that the welfare of the child is paramount (Children’s Act 1989). Section and Institutional Members need to ensure that this principle is reflected clearly in defining the responsibilities of the therapist. This includes the following key areas:

- Awareness of the implications for practice of specific legal responsibilities in different therapeutic contexts e.g. private practice, multi-disciplinary agencies, schools etc.
- Ensuring client safety
- Provision of an appropriate therapeutic environment
- Avoiding harm
- Non-exploitative practice
- Avoidance of dual relationships
- Compliance with the law with regards previous criminal convictions
- Indemnity Insurance
- Fitness to practice
- Working within level of competence
- Knowledge of assessment and referral procedures
- Knowledge of diversity and equalities issues in relation to working with children and young people
- Supervision within the UKCP guidelines for working with children
- CPD within the UKCP guidelines for working with children
- Personal support
- Professional will

8. Working Arrangements with Children and Young Persons

Section and Institutional Members need to take into account the context of the child's life and that a child can rarely be considered in isolation. Section and Institutional Members will need to develop guidelines that reflect their specific approach in negotiating working arrangements with children, young persons, their parents, carers and any other legitimately involved parties.

Safeguarding Policy

- Knowledge of procedures
- Government law and guidelines
- Touch policy

Service Information

- Description of services offered
- Terms and conditions – qualifications, fees

Contracting with children and young people

Section and Institutional Members should be aware of the differing needs of children dependent upon their age, circumstances and understanding.

- Informed consent
- Contracting with parents/carers & other stake holders
- Safety contract
- Confidentiality

- Limits to confidentiality
- Information sharing
- Breaking confidentiality – disclosures and consent

Record Keeping

- Data Protection
- Security and storage of records
- Access to records
- Tape/video recording of session

9. Training, Research and Publication

In all activities in which information about the client may be used for training, supervision, research and publication purposes the following principles must be considered:

- Informed consent
- Identity protection

In the case of research, ethical approval of procedures must be set out and approved by the relevant research body. Where research is a piece of personal work similar procedures should be undertaken with the practitioner's supervisor.