



Lone Working and Professional Boundaries Policy

For Independent Music Therapy Practice with Children and Young People

Name of therapist/practice :Emma Packer

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Mid Cornwall Music Therapy

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1. Purpose

As a lone-working music therapist, I recognise that working individually with children and young people requires clear professional boundaries and appropriate safety arrangements.

This policy supports safe, respectful and professional music therapy practice.

It should be read alongside the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Safeguarding Procedures.

2. Lone-working principles

Before beginning work with a child or young person, I will consider:

- where the session will take place;
- who else is present or nearby;

- how the child or young person arrives and leaves;
- whether the environment is suitable;
- whether doors, windows and visibility arrangements are appropriate;
- how I will summon assistance if necessary;
- emergency arrangements;
- the child or young person's individual needs;
- any known safeguarding concerns;
- whether another adult should be present.

Where possible, sessions will take place in a professional setting with appropriate visibility and access to other adults.

I will avoid arrangements that create unnecessary secrecy or isolation.

Sessions that take place in The Sorting Room, Probus (my professional therapy space) will be introduced thoughtfully and carefully. Access and visibility are shared and obvious.

3. Working in family homes

When working in a family home, I will agree appropriate arrangements in advance.

This will include, where appropriate:

- where the session will take place;
- who is expected to be present;
- how the child or young person will be brought to and collected from the session;
- how other family members will be managed during the session;
- what to do in an emergency.

I will maintain professional boundaries even when working within a family's home.

4. Arrival and departure

I will establish clear arrangements for children and young people arriving at and leaving sessions.

Where appropriate:

- parents/carers will bring and collect children and young people;
- the person responsible for collection will be identified;
- changes to collection arrangements will be confirmed;

- I will not allow an unfamiliar person to collect a child or young person without appropriate confirmation;
 - concerns about collection arrangements will be treated as safeguarding concerns where appropriate.
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5. Transport

I will not routinely transport children or young people in my personal vehicle.

If transport is professionally necessary, it will be subject to an appropriate risk assessment and clear arrangements.

6. Professional relationships and boundaries

The therapeutic relationship is professional and must remain focused on the needs of the child or young person.

I will:

- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
 - communicate respectfully;
 - maintain appropriate confidentiality;
 - avoid inappropriate personal relationships;
 - avoid unnecessary physical contact;
 - avoid private or secret communications;
 - use professional communication channels;
 - avoid personal social media contact with children and young people;
 - not use children or young people for my own emotional support.
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7. Physical contact

Music therapy may sometimes involve appropriate physical contact, for example in therapeutic musical activities.

Any physical contact must:

- be professionally appropriate;
- have a clear therapeutic purpose;
- take account of the child's or young person's wishes and preferences;
- take account of communication and sensory needs;

- be appropriate to their age and development;
- be proportionate and necessary.

I will avoid physical contact where it is unnecessary.

If there is uncertainty about whether physical contact is appropriate, I will seek advice.

8. Gifts

I will avoid giving or receiving personal gifts that could blur professional boundaries.

Any therapeutic or musical materials provided to a child or young person will have a clear professional purpose.

If a child or family offers a gift, I will consider its appropriateness and, where necessary, discuss it with the relevant organisation or professional body.

9. Communication with children and young people

Communication should normally take place through agreed professional channels.

I will:

- use professional email or other appropriate professional communication systems;
 - avoid using personal social media accounts;
 - avoid unnecessary messaging;
 - keep communication relevant to the therapeutic relationship;
 - maintain appropriate records where communication is significant to the child's or young person's care.
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10. Online music therapy

Where online sessions are provided, I will:

- use an appropriate professional platform;
- ensure that I am working from an appropriate private setting;
- consider who may be present at either end of the session;
- establish arrangements for what happens if the connection is lost;
- consider how the child or young person can obtain help if they become distressed or unsafe;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;

- follow safeguarding and data protection requirements.
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11. Risk assessment

I will undertake appropriate risk assessments for lone working.

These will consider:

- the location;
- access to assistance;
- emergency arrangements;
- the physical environment;
- travel;
- transport;
- online work;
- individual needs;
- known safeguarding concerns;
- professional boundaries;
- arrangements for arrival and departure.

Risk assessments will be reviewed when circumstances change.

12. If I feel unsafe

If I feel unsafe while working, I will prioritise my own safety and the safety of the child or young person.

Depending on the circumstances, I may:

- end or pause the session;
 - move to a safer location;
 - contact another professional or responsible adult;
 - contact emergency services;
 - report the incident afterwards;
 - review the risk assessment before continuing work.
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13. Safeguarding and professional boundaries

If a child or young person behaves in a way that makes me uncomfortable, or if I become concerned that my own boundaries may be becoming unclear, I will seek professional supervision or safeguarding advice.

I will not manage significant safeguarding concerns alone simply because I work independently.

14. Supervision and professional support

Lone working does not mean working without professional support.

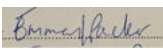
I will maintain appropriate access to:

- professional supervision;
- safeguarding advice;
- relevant professional networks;
- children's social care advice where necessary;
- appropriate professional registration or regulatory support.

I will use supervision to reflect on safeguarding, boundaries and any situations that may have caused concern.

15. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and following any significant incident or change in practice.

Signed: _____ 

Date: _____ 09/2026 _____

Next review: _____ 09/2027 _____