

Leamington Square Orthodontics: Safeguarding Policy

Leamington Spa Orthodontics Ltd is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Our team accepts and recognises our responsibilities to develop an awareness of the issues which may cause children and vulnerable adults harm.

We endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by

- Being aware of safeguarding guidelines and adopting these in our practice procedures and policies
- A code of conduct for the dental team.
- Making staff and patients aware that we take safeguarding matters seriously and respond to all concerns
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately
- Following practice procedures for staff recruitment and selection and, where appropriate, requesting enhanced criminal records checks and ISA Adult First checks
- Effective management of staff, ensuring access to supervision, support and safeguarding training.

The following practice principles reinforce this policy:

- Patients have access to information and knowledge to allow them to make an informed choice about their treatment
- Patients are given the opportunity to consider the various treatment options available to them and are encouraged to participate fully in their care at the practice
- Patients are supported in making decisions about their treatment and can give or withhold consent to treatment. No one can give or withhold consent on behalf of another adult unless they are authorised to do so by law
- Information about patients held by the practice is managed in accordance with data protection legislation and all members of the team understand the need for confidentiality
- The individual needs of each patient are respected
- The background and culture of all patients is respected
- Practice procedures ensure the safety of patients at all times
- Safe recruitment and selection procedures at the practice are followed routinely and all required checks are carried out.

Other practice policies relevant to this safeguarding policy include

- Confidentiality policy
- Consent policy
- Equality policy
- Patient safety policy
- Recruitment policy

Donna Campbell, the practice safeguarding lead, is responsible for ensuring our procedures for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are kept up to date and is our point of contact for raising concerns.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice standards at regular intervals.

SUPPORTING GUIDANCE

Patients should be kept safe from harm and danger. All members of the team should know what to do to keep patients safe and what action to take if they think that someone is being harmed.

DEFINITIONS

- A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday
- A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services or is resident in a continuing care facility by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness or who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

SIGNS OF ABUSE

Members of the dental team may observe the signs of abuse or neglect or hear something that causes them concern about a child or vulnerable adult. Team members are not responsible for diagnosing child abuse or neglect but must share concerns appropriately. All team members should be aware of the local procedures for child protection.

Abuse or neglect may be suspected as a result of:

- A direct allegation ('disclosure') made by the child, vulnerable adult, a parent or some other person
- Signs and symptoms suggestive of physical abuse or neglect
- Observations of child behaviour or parent-child interaction, or observation of the vulnerable adult and the relationship they have with their carer.

IF ABUSE OR NEGLECT IS SUSPECTED

It is uncommon for dentists to see patients with signs of abuse. If you have concerns about a patient who may have been abused and there is no satisfactory explanation, you should:

- Discuss your concerns with Donna Campbell, or Daisy Dale
- If you remain concerned, you should seek informal advice from the local social services department - Warwickshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01926 414144 without disclosing the child's name to help you decide whether a formal referral is needed
- Seek permission from the patient to refer, unless
 - doing so would put the patient at greater risk
 - the parents or carers are being abusive or violent and discussion would put others at risk
 - you suspect sexual abuse by a family member

Where there is serious physical injury arising from suspected abuse, you should:

- Refer the individual to the nearest hospital A&E department, with the consent of the person having parental responsibility or care of the child.
- Advise the A&E department in advance that the patient is being sent.
- If consent is not obtained, contact the duty social worker at the local Social Services Department or the police, so that action can be taken to safeguard the welfare of the individual.

RECORDS

Records of the incident should be maintained and be restricted to:

- The nature of the injury
- Facts to support the possibility that the injuries are suspicious.