

Erin Eley Counselling and Psychotherapy

Privacy Policy and GDPR Agreement

I take your privacy seriously and am committed to protecting your personal data in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. I also work in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), which emphasise confidentiality, professionalism, and integrity.

This policy explains how your personal information is collected, stored, used, and protected.

Your Personal Information

I collect and store personal data necessary for the provision of psychotherapy services. This includes contact details, appointment information, and brief clinical notes.

Your data is stored securely using a password-protected and encrypted practice management system. Any electronic information not stored within this system is held on an encrypted, password-protected device. Paper records are scanned and securely stored electronically and then shredded, or kept in a locked container.

As part of my duty of care, I will ask for contact details for your GP. These details are stored securely and accessed only by me.

Retention of Records

Your clinical records and personal data are held for the duration of your therapy. After therapy ends, clinical records are securely deleted after **three years**, and any paper records are destroyed.

I am required to retain a record of your **name and client reference number for seven years** after the end of therapy. This is to allow for appropriate responses to any future requests relating to your treatment or records, in line with professional and legal requirements.

I do not share your personal data with third parties for marketing, sales, or research purposes, and your data is used only for the administration of the therapy service, including arranging appointments and processing payments.

Confidentiality and Therapy Sessions

Everything discussed in therapy is confidential. Confidentiality may only be broken if there is a serious concern about your safety or the safety of others, or if I am required to do so by law or a court order. Wherever possible, I will discuss this with you first.

I attend regular clinical supervision to ensure safe and effective practice. Any discussion of clinical work in supervision is confidential, and you will not be identifiable.

For online or telephone sessions, I work from a private, confidential setting and use platforms that offer end-to-end encryption. While I take all reasonable steps to protect privacy, I cannot be held responsible for breaches caused by failures in third-party technology.

Communications and Data Retention

Emails, text messages, and other written communications between us are used only for therapy-related purposes, such as arranging or amending appointments. Routine communications are **deleted on a weekly basis**, unless they contain clinically relevant information, in which case they are securely stored as part of your therapy record.

All devices used to handle your personal data are encrypted, password-protected, and secured with appropriate antivirus software.

Your Rights Under GDPR

Under UK GDPR, you have the following rights in relation to your personal data:

1. Right of Access

You have the right to request access to the personal data I hold about you. This includes contact details and appointment records. If you would like to view your session notes, please discuss this with me. Requests after therapy has ended can be made by email.

2. Right to Rectification

You have the right to request corrections to inaccurate or incomplete personal data at any time while records are held.

3. Right to Erasure (the 'Right to be Forgotten')

You may request that your personal data is deleted. This request will be honoured unless:

- the data is required to continue providing therapy

- I am legally required to retain it
- the data is needed to establish, exercise, or defend legal claims

Requests can be made by contacting me directly.

Data Breaches

In the unlikely event of a data breach, I will notify you and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) within **72 hours**, and take immediate steps to address the issue.

Raising Concerns

If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, please raise these with me in the first instance. You also have the right to contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

<https://ico.org.uk>

Agreement

By agreeing to the terms and conditions of therapy, you confirm that you have read and understood this Privacy Policy and consent to the processing of your personal data as described. If there are any elements you do not agree with, please contact me so we can discuss a tailored privacy arrangement, provided it remains in line with my ethical and legal obligations.