



Privacy Policy

Forks and Spoons

Practice Name: Forks and Spoons

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1. Introduction

This Privacy Policy explains how personal information is collected, used, stored and protected when you contact Forks and Spoons and participate in online counselling services.

Forks and Spoons is committed to protecting your privacy and handling your information in a transparent, lawful and secure manner in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Forks and Spoons is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a data controller. ICO registration number: [insert number].

2. Commitment to Privacy and Respect

At Forks and Spoons, your privacy matters. Any personal information you share is treated with care, respect and sensitivity. Information is only collected where it is necessary to provide counselling safely, ethically and in line with legal and professional requirements.

Claire Kerridge is the Data Controller and is legally responsible for ensuring that your personal data is handled lawfully, securely and transparently.

3. What Information Is Collected

Forks and Spoons collects only the information necessary to provide counselling services safely and ethically. This may include:

- Name, date of birth and contact details
- Emergency contact details
- GP surgery details
- Information shared during the assessment process
- Brief session notes written by the counsellor
- Appointment records
- Correspondence
- Payment and invoice records
- For clients under 18, parent or carer contact details will also be collected.

No unnecessary data is collected.

4. When Information Is Collected

Information may be collected:

- When you make an enquiry
- Prior to and during the assessment session
- Throughout the counselling process
- In relation to appointments, payments or correspondence

This Privacy Policy applies to all stages of contact, including initial enquiries, assessment and ongoing therapy.

5. Lawful Basis for Processing

Under UK GDPR, a lawful basis is required to process personal data. Forks and Spoons relies on the following:

- Article 6(1)(b): Processing is necessary for the performance of a contract (provision of counselling services).

Article 6(1)(c): Processing is necessary to comply with legal obligations, including safeguarding and financial record-keeping.

Article 9(2)(h): Processing of special category data (including mental health information) for the provision of health and therapeutic care.

Your information is used to:

- Maintain accurate clinical and administrative records
- Communicate regarding appointments, payments and practical matters
- Ensure continuity and quality of care

Personal data is not used for marketing purposes.

6. Confidentiality and Sharing Information

All personal information is treated as confidential.

Information will only be shared without consent where:

- There is a serious concern about your safety or the safety of others
- There is a legal obligation to disclose information

Where possible and appropriate, this would be discussed with you before information is shared.

Information is not shared with parents, carers, schools or other professionals without consent unless required for safeguarding or legal reasons.

As part of ethical practice and in line with professional requirements, anonymised information may be discussed in professional supervision. Supervisors are bound by confidentiality and data protection obligations.

In work with children and young people, decisions about information sharing take into account the young person's level of understanding and capacity (including principles of Gillick competence), alongside safeguarding responsibilities.

7. Session Notes and Records

Brief session notes are kept as a professional memory aid. These notes:

- Are factual and concise
- Are stored securely in electronic format
- Are not shared without consent (unless legally required)

Sessions are not recorded by Forks and Spoons. Clients are also expected not to record sessions.

8. How Information Is Stored

Electronic records are stored on password-protected and encrypted devices and/or secure practice management systems. Where cloud-based services are used, providers are selected for their compliance with UK GDPR and appropriate security standards.

Email communication is conducted using secure, password-protected accounts. Online counselling platforms are selected with consideration to privacy and encryption standards; however, absolute security cannot be guaranteed when using digital communication.

Appropriate technical and organisational measures are in place to protect personal data from unauthorised access, loss, misuse or disclosure.

In the unlikely event of a personal data breach that poses a risk to your rights and freedoms, this will be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) within 72 hours where legally required, and you will be informed without undue delay.

9. How Long Information Is Kept

Records are retained in line with professional and legal guidance:

- Adult clients (18+): 7 years after counselling ends
- Child clients (under 18): Until the client reaches age 25

After this period, records are securely deleted.

Some information may be retained for longer if required by law.

10. Your Rights Under UK GDPR

Under UK GDPR, you have rights relating to your personal data. You have the right to:

- Request access to the personal data held about you
- Request correction of inaccurate or incomplete data
- Request erasure of data (where legally appropriate)
- Request a copy of your data in a portable format where applicable
- Request restriction of processing in certain circumstances
- Ask questions about how your data is used

There may be situations where data cannot be deleted due to legal or professional obligations. If this applies, this will be explained clearly.

Parents or carers do not have an automatic right to access session notes, even if a child is under 18. Information will only be shared with consent from the young person, or where required for safeguarding or legal reasons.

11. Communication and Online Working

Counselling is provided online. Reasonable steps are taken to protect privacy when using digital platforms, though absolute security cannot be guaranteed in online communication.

Clients are encouraged to access sessions in a private space where they feel comfortable and are unlikely to be overheard.

12. Concerns or Complaints

If you have questions or concerns about how your data is handled, you are encouraged to raise these directly with the counsellor in the first instance.

If concerns cannot be resolved, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Website: <https://www.ico.org.uk>

13. Consent

By proceeding with counselling services, you confirm that:

- You have read and understood this Privacy Policy
- You understand how your personal data will be collected, used and stored
- You consent to your personal data being processed as described above