

Poodle Talk

Privacy & Safety Overview — an honest, evidence-led document

This document summarises how Poodle Talk handles privacy, data, AI processing and child safety. It is written in plain English for parents, teachers, nursery and school leaders, SEND professionals, charities, and any safeguarding-focused partner who would like to understand how the app works before sharing it with the children in their care.

This is not legal text — it is an honest overview of the choices we have made as a small, UK-based, family-led project. We collect almost no data, we never store chat content on our servers, and we design every feature with the UK Children's Code (Age-Appropriate Design Code) as a guiding lens.

At a glance: No chat content stored · No third-party trackers · No advertising · No biometrics · No data sold or shared · AI provider does not train on our messages · All children's input is treated as plain text only.

Companion document: **AI Safeguarding Stress Test Report** — 54 high-risk scenarios with verbatim AI responses, available at poodletalk.poodlesandfriends.uk/safeguarding_stress_test.pdf

1. Who we are

Poodle Talk is made by **Poodles & Friends**, a small UK family project that creates gentle media and tools for children, with a particular focus on SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) accessibility. We are not a clinical service, not a large platform, and not funded by advertisers.

- Website: poodlesandfriends.uk
- App: poodletalk.poodlesandfriends.uk
- Contact: hello@poodlesandfriends.uk
- Country of operation: United Kingdom

2. What data we do — and do not — collect

We have intentionally designed Poodle Talk so that **chat content is never stored on our servers**. The poodle's reply is generated in real time and forgotten as soon as the conversation moves on.

What we do not collect from children

- No name, age, school, location, or contact details
- No photographs, no microphone recordings, no uploaded files

- No behavioural tracking across other websites
- No advertising identifiers
- No chat content saved on our servers
- No third-party analytics (no Google Analytics, no Facebook Pixel, no Mixpanel, no Hotjar)

What we do store, and only where strictly necessary

Data	Where	Why	Who can see it
Anonymous device ID (UUID)	On the child's device (localStorage)	So the free-trial credit count travels between sessions on the same device	Only that device
Total messages used (a number)	Our database (against an anonymous device ID or signed-in family account)	To run the credit system fairly	The Poodle Talk admin only
Parent email at purchase	Stripe + our database	To send the credit code by email	The Poodle Talk admin and Stripe
Google name and email (only if a parent chooses to sign in)	Our database	So a family's purchased credits follow them between WiFi and mobile data	The Poodle Talk admin only
Mood check-ins (if used)	The child's device only (localStorage)	A private mood diary for the child	Only that device — never transmitted

We hold no clinical, biometric, or special-category data of any kind.

3. How the AI works

The poodle characters are powered by **Claude Sonnet 4.5**, an AI model created by Anthropic.

- Messages are sent to Anthropic over an encrypted (HTTPS) connection, receive a reply, and are then released. No long-term memory is kept on our side.
- We use Anthropic's commercial API. Per Anthropic's published data policy for API customers, messages sent through the API are **not used to train AI models**.
- The poodle character is shaped by a strict, child-safe system prompt written by us. It deliberately refuses to give medical, legal, religious, or therapeutic advice, and gently redirects children to a trusted adult in any sensitive situation.
- The AI is intentionally never positioned as a child's only source of support, nor as a replacement for parents, teachers, or professionals.

A full **AI Safeguarding Stress Test Report** documenting 54 high-risk scenarios (self-harm, abuse disclosure, predator-style approaches, identity questions, religious tensions, eating concerns and more) is published separately at:

poodletalk.poodlesandfriends.uk/safeguarding_stress_test.pdf

4. How we handle child input safely

Everything a child types or taps is treated as **plain text only** by the application. We have audited this at multiple layers:

- The chat interface uses React, which automatically escapes any text the user enters. HTML tags, scripts, and code are rendered as literal text; they cannot run.
- The application **does not use** `innerHTML` or `dangerouslySetInnerHTML` anywhere in the chat flow.
- The browser session cookie is marked `HttpOnly` (cannot be read by JavaScript), `Secure` (HTTPS only), and `SameSite=Lax` (resistant to cross-site request forgery).
- No file uploads of any kind are accepted from the chat interface.
- No external links submitted by children are rendered as clickable links in the chat bubble; only the poodle's own responses can include pre-approved links (Childline, Samaritans, the Poodles & Friends website, etc.).

5. Cookies and analytics

Poodle Talk uses no advertising cookies, no third-party analytics, and no cross-site trackers.

The only cookie we set is the session cookie used to keep a parent signed in (if they choose to sign in via Google) so that purchased credits follow them between WiFi and mobile data. This cookie is essential to the service and therefore exempt from cookie-banner requirements under UK ePrivacy Regulations and the EU ePrivacy Directive.

We do keep a small number of anonymous, aggregated engagement counters, purely to help us improve the app for SEND learners — for example, which picture-card categories are tapped most often, or which age mode (Tiny / Kids / Teens) is used most. **These are counts only.** They contain no chat content, no names, and no personal data.

6. Email communication

When you purchase credits or sign in to Poodle Talk, you may receive an email from us (sent via our email partner, Resend). These emails include basic open-and-click tracking so we can see whether the email reached the inbox and whether the link was used. This helps us understand whether schools and parents engaged with our outreach.

You can unsubscribe at any time using the link at the bottom of any email. We never sell or share email lists with any third party.

7. Children's privacy — UK GDPR / EU GDPR / COPPA

Poodle Talk is designed to be safely used by children, but it is **the parent or supervising adult** who is treated as the data subject for any data we hold.

- **UK GDPR / EU GDPR:** lawful bases used are **legitimate interest**

(anonymous device ID for the free-trial credit count), **consent** (optional Google sign-in), and **contract** (Stripe purchase). Data minimisation is applied throughout.

- **COPPA (US):** we do not knowingly collect personal information from

children under 13. Sign-in and purchasing are designed for parents and supervising adults only. The chat itself collects no personal information from the child.

- **Children's Code (UK ICO Age-Appropriate Design Code):** applied as a

design lens — high privacy by default, no nudging, no profiling, no geolocation, no behavioural advertising, transparent in plain language.

8. Your rights and how to use them

Under UK / EU data protection law you have the right to:

- access the personal data we hold about you
- correct or update it
- have it deleted ("right to be forgotten")
- object to or restrict its processing
- request a copy in a portable format

To use any of these rights, please email hello@poodlesandfriends.uk with the subject line including the words **"DATA REQUEST"** and a brief description of what you'd like us to do. We will respond within 30 days. There is no cost.

Because we collect so little personal data in the first place, most requests can be fulfilled within a day or two.

9. Safeguarding stance

Poodle Talk is a gentle communication tool, **not a therapy product, not a clinical AAC tool, and not a replacement for adult support**. We are genuinely careful about how we describe what the app does.

- It will never claim to diagnose, treat, or replace professional support.
- It will always defer to a trusted adult, a crisis line, or emergency

services when a child shares something serious.

- It is designed around UK safeguarding norms first (Childline 0800 1111,

SHOUT 85258, Samaritans 116 123, 999) and gracefully falls back to findahelpline.com for international users.

- Picture cards include safety prompts that surface crisis numbers when tapped (for example, "Someone hurt me", "I feel scared").

10. Updates to this document

This Privacy & Safety Overview is reviewed each time we ship a meaningful change to the app. If you would like to receive a fresh copy whenever it changes, please email us at hello@poodlesandfriends.uk.

— Louise and the Poodles & Friends team ■■

Updated May 2026

Reviewed regularly. To request the latest version, email hello@poodlesandfriends.uk.