

Educational Psychology Service Therapeutic Offer 2018 - 2019

All North Tyneside Educational Psychologists (EPs) are registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). As child psychologists we have an in-depth understanding of child and adolescent development and mental health. In addition, we have counselling skills and a range of qualifications and experience using a variety of therapeutic approaches.

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) offers integrative therapeutic support which draws upon a wide knowledge base of different types of psychological therapies. Integrative therapists hold the view that a range of approaches and media can be used to provide therapeutic support and that different people may interact better with different approaches, in different situations.

Value of Therapeutic Support

We believe the main purpose of therapeutic support is to assist children / young people to express and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, behaviours, relationships and life experiences. We believe that access to therapeutic support can help children / young people to:

- Externalise their inner world of thoughts and feelings either verbally or non-verbally through the use of play and creative media
- Appreciate the connections between their thoughts, feelings and behaviours
- Reflect on environmental influences and how these impact upon their sense of self
- Gain a sense of mastery over events which they are experiencing or have experienced
- Experiment with a different way of being
- Develop emotional regulation and make informed behaviour choices
- Gain an acceptance of self and an improved sense of self-worth
- Consider their aspirations for the future
- Notice strengths in their situation (resource within themselves and beyond themselves), which can help them to move closer towards their goals and aspirations.

Core Principles of the EPS Therapeutic Offer

The EPS integrative therapy offer rests upon the following core principles, which all psychologists respect in their daily practice:

- ✓ people are more than just their behavior; the problem is the problem not the person
- ✓ people are capable of change and want to fulfill their potential
- ✓ people are active participants in their own lives and can make choices to bring about change
- ✓ people create their own meanings from their own experiences
- ✓ people should be viewed with 100% positive regard.

What does the EPS Therapeutic Offer provide access to?

The EPS Therapeutic Offer provides access to a range of psychological techniques and approaches including:

- Counselling : therapeutic conversations
- Drawing and Talking Therapy
- Talking therapy using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) principles
- Play-based therapy (including activities based on Theraplay ® principles)
- Creative media therapy:
 - sand tray work
 - puppet work
 - working with stories including therapeutic story writing with the young person
 - use of collage and construction
- Strength-based work such as competency profiling
- Motivational Interviewing
- Life journey work
- Narrative therapy techniques, which can enable the young person to engage in the use of metaphor to explore emotions and externalise rather than internalise problems
- Solution focused brief therapy techniques, which can support goaling and planning next steps towards desired outcomes
- Solution Oriented © approaches
- Group therapy on particular issues such as transition, bereavement, friendship, social media, assertiveness or self-esteem.

Terms and conditions of the EPS Therapeutic Offer

When an EP agrees to offer therapeutic support to a child or young person the school can expect the EP to:

- Maintain confidentiality unless they become aware that the young person may be at risk of harm; at risk of harming others; or involved in illegal activity. In such cases the EP will share relevant information with the designated

safeguarding person in the school / referring agency. When necessary the EP will also make direct contact with NTC Front Door.

- Maintain professional boundaries and set 4 basic rules for the psychologist and client to adhere to in any session:
 1. psychologist and client respect each other: no-one gets hurt
 2. psychologist and client respect the environment: no property/ equipment gets damaged
 3. psychologist can end the session if either rule 1 or 2 is broken.
 4. client can request to end the session at any time.
- Contract with the young person to ensure clarity about the purpose and duration of the intervention. Contracting allows discussion about what the young person hopes to get out of the intervention and the type of therapeutic approach they would like to explore
- Provide regular weekly sessions at the same time and on the same day each week;
- Offer a minimum of four x 1 hour sessions and an optional 1 hour feedback meeting, which the young person will get the opportunity to prepare for and attend. The feedback meeting aims to provide the young person with the opportunity to share their experience of the intervention and any desired goals, aspirations or hopes that they would like to share with key adults. The duration of an intervention and the structure of sessions will, however, be dependent upon the contracted goals and the specific therapeutic approach being offered. Theraplay ® for example will typically require the participation of a key adult from the school staff team. A drop-in model of counselling can be offered, but specific arrangements would need to be carefully negotiated with the setting and parameters made clear to children / young people from the outset.

When a school commissions an EP to offer therapeutic support to a child or young person they are expected to:

- Provide a quiet comfortable room; ideally the same room each week
- Ensure that disruptions to the therapeutic sessions are kept to an absolute minimum
- Inform all necessary staff of the young person's therapeutic commitments, so that they are not challenged about missing lessons
- Provide additional curriculum support as needed to ensure that any lessons missed do not have negative implications for the child.

Is parental consent required?

- For young people up to the age of 16 years old, parental consent will typically be sought prior to the therapy sessions commencing. However, a young person, aged between 13 – 16 years old, can request therapeutic support without parental consent if they are deemed to be 'Gillick Competent'. (Cretney, S., *Family Law* (2000) Sweet & Maxwell; Herring, J., *Family Law* (2004), 2nd Edition, Longman Publishing; nspcc.org.uk).

