

Rossendale School – The Role of Therapy

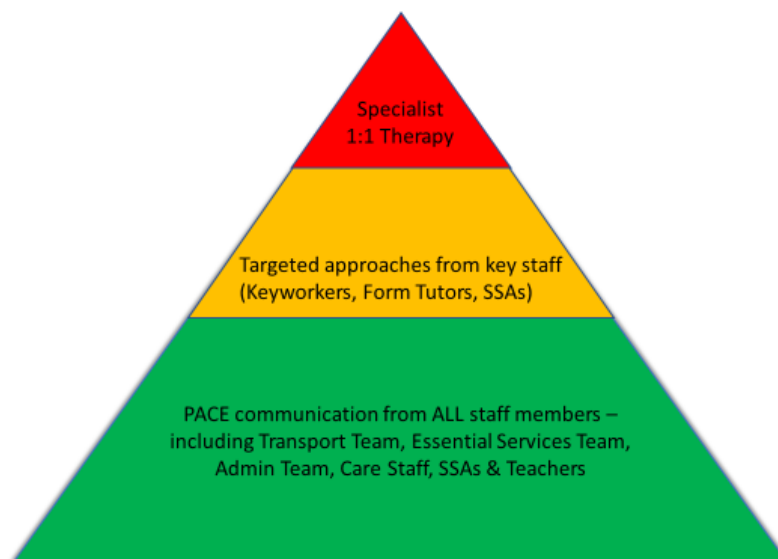
Rossendale has developed its own Therapy Team. We now employ, or contract, on a part time basis: one Clinical Psychologist, one Art Psychotherapist, one Neuro developmental family support worker, one SALT therapist and two sensory trained Occupational Therapists.

With this wide team of therapists, we are able to ensure all pupils receive the therapy they need as they progress through school. The needs of a young person may change over time, so even if a particular therapy need is not identified on the EHCP we have an internal referral system whereby a member of the school team can request that a young person's need or suitability for therapy be considered at the fortnightly Triage meeting. Elisabeth Kane, the Deputy Head teacher, oversees the therapeutic provision and we have recently appointed a Therapy Co-ordinator who ensures excellent lines of communication between the therapists, key workers, teachers and parents in relation to the therapy a young person is receiving.

However, it is important to note that the ethos of the school will be to deliver education to its pupils, whilst maintaining a therapeutic environment to foster a sense of security and safety to allow for the development of the emotional wellbeing of each pupil. Thereby ensuring all pupils benefit from the therapeutic approach.

Each pupil has an EHCP that will reflect their identified needs, and how our provision may meet those needs. Given that a large number of our pupils have had difficult early experiences with their previous education settings, it is imperative that they have the opportunity to be nurtured and well-understood in whilst attending Rossendale School.

One example of this is by adopting the principles of 'PACE' communication, our staff will be responding to a pupil's emotional needs first and foremost. Using 'PACE' (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity & empathy) supports the building of trusting relationships between staff and pupils and develops skills in emotional regulation. This allows our pupils to more readily access their education, as they feel safe and secure.



All staff have had training in the principles of 'PACE' communication, and it is embedded into how staff will interact with pupils.

At times, pupils may experience more difficult moments of emotional disruption for various reasons (external life events, new pupils arriving, worries about exams etc.). At these such times, pupils are supported at a greater level from staff they have the closest relationships with. This may include taking time out of their school day to meet with a staff member to have space and time exploring their current difficulties.

If a pupil is displaying significant levels of emotional distress, both at school and home and it is impacting on their mental health, the pupil will have the opportunity to meet with one of our on-site therapists for specialist 1:1 input

We have seen time and again the positive benefit of therapy for our young people, we see this in their educational achievements as well as in their overall well-being. Anxieties are reduced, communication skills are improved and young people become skilled at knowing how to self-regulate their emotions when faced with challenges in day to day life.