

Devon and Cornwall services

Introducing our therapy services



A REAL AND LASTING DIFFERENCE FOR EVERYONE WE SUPPORT

Welcome to our Devon and Cornwall therapy services

We are delighted to introduce you to the range of therapy services provided at our specialist education and care services across Devon and Cornwall.

Our vision across our Devon and Cornwall services is rooted in thinking holistically about the children and young people that we support, in order that they can achieve the best possible outcomes. Our therapy services are designed to further support children and young people with a range of needs. This includes autism, social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties and complex needs.

Alongside our specialist education and care services, the children and young people often require access to high levels of therapeutic support. The education, care and therapy that we provide are fully integrated and form a cohesive, consistent and whole package of support to the children and young people to meet their needs and achieve positive outcomes. All of our environments are conducive to our therapeutic approach; all of our sites are set in the glorious south west, and we place emphasis on using outside spaces creatively, to promote enhanced sensory experiences.

Trauma informed practice is at the forefront of everything we do. Our leadership teams participate in the Trauma Informed Schools leadership training to ensure all of our establishments implement trauma

informed and mentally healthy practices into everyday life and that all our leaders have the knowledge, skills and understanding to optimise this crucial ethos. There is an embedded training program for staff ranging from whole staff training meetings to the specialist 10 day diploma in Trauma (Practitioner status).

Our therapy services are led by a highly skilled senior practitioner within the senior regional leadership team. We aim to provide the highest standards of support services offering a range of opportunities to develop interests, aspirations, social and emotional resilience, communication skills, self-esteem and confidence, whilst tailoring specialist and personalised programmes for those with needs that are more complex. These may involve 1:1 specific work or group sessions with set objectives, including helping our young person to understand how their diagnosis affects them, providing strategies to manage this and any associated difficulties. These will be reviewed regularly by our multidisciplinary team.

We also facilitate a range of assessments for the children and young people, in order to identify and meet therapeutic needs.



Supporting the needs of the young people

All of our staff teams work ‘therapeutically’. Our training programmes ensure that all staff can be specialists. We help the children and young people to reach their full potential by ensuring that their daily environment is a safe, nurturing space where they can thrive. In addition, our therapy team offer a holistic, cohesive and co-ordinated approach to specialist interventions.

The therapy services support young people with a wide range of needs including autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), trauma and attachment difficulties. They assist with issues such as low self-esteem, anger, impulse control and relationship difficulties.

Our experience shows that therapy helps young people to feel better about themselves, as well as promoting personal growth. Therapy can support students by:

- Providing clarity if they are feeling confused about something
- Working through complex emotions
- Working through traumatic experiences
- Challenging negative thinking patterns
- Teaching new techniques to help them to cope in difficult situations
- Helping them to focus on and develop socially and emotionally with prompt access to specialist therapeutic services

Our highly trained, motivated and well-qualified team of caring professionals undertake thorough and regular assessments to identify and then meet each child’s therapeutic needs.

The team has clear provision mapping in-line with education, health and care plan (EHCP) outcomes including Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) plans and placement assessments. By creating personalised therapeutic education plans, our services fully support the social, emotional and personal development of each learner. During the school day, young people have access to group wellbeing sessions and 1:1 sessions for social and emotional support.

The therapy team work collaboratively with the educational and residential teams to achieve the best outcomes for the child at school and at home. The team provides ongoing training to ensure that the whole staff team can support young people in a therapeutic and holistic way, sharing their knowledge and expertise in areas such as trauma-informed practice, attachment, sensory processing, autism and PBS.

Introducing our specialist therapy team

The Therapy Manager is key in leading, developing and delivering the local therapeutic initiatives and provides operational leadership to the therapy team. The team includes:

- A creative Art and Play Therapist who specialises in attachment focused therapy (AFT), using dyadic developmental psychotherapy (DDP) and sensory skills
- A highly experienced School Counsellor who specialises in working with children with a diverse range of social, emotional and behavioural challenges
- Access to a Psychotherapist who specialises in trauma and attachment
- An Occupational Therapist who supports improvement of sensory, motor, cognitive and independent living skills (including sensory diets)
- Speech and Language Therapists
- A team of pastoral support staff offering a nurture base and daily support
- Outdoor learning and bushcraft with a high level of pastoral support
- External agencies who extend the therapy provision to include equine therapy and music mentoring
- Bespoke training for team members and clinical supervision



One-to-one and small group therapy

We can select from a wide range of individual and small group therapies to meet the specific needs of our young people. These include:

- Art for creativity
- Creative visualisation for understanding and thinking
- Storytelling for morals and spiritual development
- Sand-tray for emotional development
- Music for communication
- Dance and movement for physical development
- Drama therapy for social relationships
- Puppets and masks for self-care
- Attachment focused therapy
- Creative arts and play therapy
- Nurturing Attachment and Foundations in Attachment programmes
- Therapeutic counselling based on an integrative model
- Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Positive behavioural interventions
- Structured 1-2-1 talking therapy that teaches the importance of boundaries
- Work on the causes of lack of self-acceptance, low self-esteem, depression and anxiety
- Sensory assessment and diet
- Emotional regulation and self-soothing techniques, addressing negative self-referencing resulting from trauma



Occupational therapy

Our Occupational Therapist helps children and young people to develop the functional skills they need for everyday life. They assist with:

- Self-care and life skills
- Fine motor skills
- Sensory processing skills
- Gross motor and coordination skills
- Visual perception skills
- Play skills
- Specialist equipment needs

Individual assessments are completed by observing the young person and obtaining information from their family members, teaching staff and those that support them. This is followed up with individual clinics or therapy sessions with the young person, or group sessions as appropriate.

Where necessary training and support is provided to school staff, parents and carers, to help them fully support the needs of the young person.



Speech and language therapy

The team includes Speech and Language Therapists who support the development of students' communication skills. They help with a wide range of communication difficulties, including speech and language disorders and dysfluency (stammering).

Following assessment of their speech, language and communication needs, the support provided can be individually tailored therapy sessions to work towards a student's targets, or group therapy to work towards shared targets, such as social interaction.

Speech and language therapy can make a life-changing difference to students. It helps increase a young person's confidence in communicating, boosts their self-esteem and reduces frustration. Students are then more likely to make expected academic progress and achieve their potential.



Equine therapy

Located in a picturesque and tranquil setting, the therapy ponies offer a safe way to interact with animals, creating a sense of calm and wellbeing. Therapy animals can reduce the anxiety and confusion our young people may feel, providing non-judgemental encounters and creating positive memories.

When a young person is grooming or interacting with an animal, the focus is no longer on their own issues, which can provide a much-needed respite, helping them to feel refreshed and energised. Students can also learn how to care for the animals, understanding their needs and how to keep them happy and healthy.

All sessions are tailored to the individual needs of each young person and this can involve working towards a specific goal, or simply taking some time out.

Music mentoring

Music sessions can bring comfort, happiness and connection and these are used to develop confidence and self-worth in our young people. Our highly experienced Music Mentor supports and mentors students, so that they can find well-being and achieve a positive mind-set.

This is achieved by teaching and experiencing music one to one, in small groups and with the whole class. Our Music Mentor is a Trauma Informed Practitioner (TIS) who uses a PACE (play, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) approach to make young people feel safe and comfortable. Work is child-led, creative and collaborative and students are offered the space to talk about their thoughts, feelings and goals.





Get in touch

For more information on our Devon and Cornwall therapy services or to make a referral, please contact us today.

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