



ARUN COURT

THERAPY & EDUCATION

*'Resilience and Perseverance lead to success'*

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## Therapy & Well-Being Policy

### Policy Purpose and Intention

Although many of our students have special educational needs, they have been placed with us due to high anxiety and diagnosed mental health conditions which can be greatly improved, therefore our priority for our students is to support their mental health. This is where our highly qualified and skilled therapy & well-being team take the lead to support our young people; some of whom may have been out of formal education for months and even years.

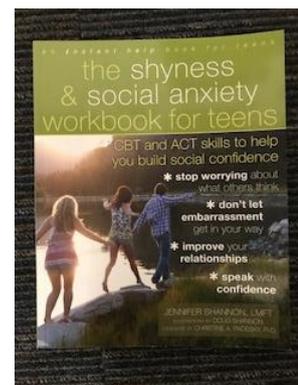
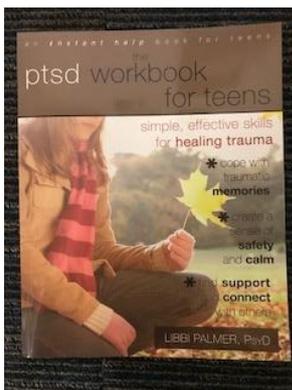
This Policy lays out the process for the assessment and delivery of therapy or well-being approaches and shows the current offer available.

Please see our separate policy on how we assess the effectiveness of these approaches and monitor progress.

## Assessment and Delivery of therapy

Assessments of therapy needs are completed through a range of formal (OT and psychologist lead) and informal methods to identify the specific objectives of each student. We support students in addressing their depression, psychosis, low self-esteem, anger and in some cases self-harm or suicidal thoughts through a range of therapeutic and calming approaches, and work closely with CAMHs as well as our own attached psychologist. Every student has time with an occupational therapist, and we create a 'sensory diet' for each student as extreme anxiety always results in sensory processing needs with students either becoming overly sensory seeking or overly sensory intolerant. We use the sensory diet to support students in gradually re-balancing, and being able to slowly exercise less control over others and more personal control in regards to their emotional regulation. In more extreme cases of 'control' and sensory needs we work with students who have OCD, eating disorders and self-harm. Therapy sessions occur in individual and group settings, to meet each student's needs and maximise their achievement. Tutors then support the students' needs with the use of appropriate therapy resources in class. Therapy staff work closely with school staff to ensure an integrated approach to the students' needs. Therapy staff can provide training to staff as and when required.

A checklist is used in the initial assessment of what the student can and cannot do indicating where the student is emotionally and physically. The checklist is based on verbal, written and emotional literacy; learning tolerance; life skills; sensory processing; and social skills. Progress is monitored and assessed by completing these checklists every half term. They will highlight areas the students are progressing in and areas in which they require more therapy.



## **Approaches Offered**

### **Clinical Psychology**

Clinical psychology is the branch of psychology concerned with the assessment and treatment of mental illness, abnormal behaviour, and psychiatric problems. This field integrates the science of psychology with the treatment of complex human problems

Clinical psychologists usually have a doctorate in psychology and receive training in clinical settings. The educational requirements to work in clinical psychology are quite rigorous, and most clinical psychologists spend between four to six years in graduate school after earning a bachelor's degree.

There are two different types of degrees available in clinical psychology—a Ph.D. and a Psy.D. Generally speaking, Ph.D.

Our Clinical psychologist is Dr Vikki Petch, and as well as providing support directly to students she provides supervision to the therapy team.

### **Solution-Focussed Coaching**

This is very effective at addressing anger management issues, control issues such as OCD and in supporting students with anxiety. Students take control of the session and are facilitated in looking at the issues from the outside, to start to form solutions. The techniques can combine concept mapping, elements of CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) and a workbook approach, meaning that students have resources to refer to in new situations. Our practitioners combine SFC with visualisation coaching, further supporting students with ASD needs or those who are naturally visual learners.

### **Indian Head Massage**

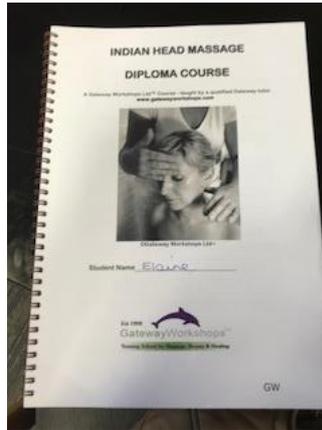
Indian head massage is a therapy that can support a variety of physical and emotional difficulties and concerns. It can also be used as a relaxation tool for those students who are anxious and/or depressed.

Massaging the head is one of the best ways of lifting one's mood and reducing anxiety. This increases the supply of oxygen to the brain which helps you to think creatively and clearly.

Some of the students who suffer from sleeplessness, restlessness and insomnia can also benefit from Indian Head Massage as these are often the side effects of stress and anxiety. It promotes relaxation by attacking the physical symptoms of stress and anxiety allowing for a deeper sense wellbeing, opening the student's body to a better rest. It can also boost energy levels.

In addition, Indian Head Massage can boost memory capacities. Students sometimes have short-term memory difficulties as their brains are overloaded with disorganised thoughts which makes it difficult for them to 'record' and 'collect' thoughts. Indian Head Massage relaxes the student and sensual awareness takes over, thoughts quieten, and awareness is brought to the forefront. It is like a 'reset' button being pressed.

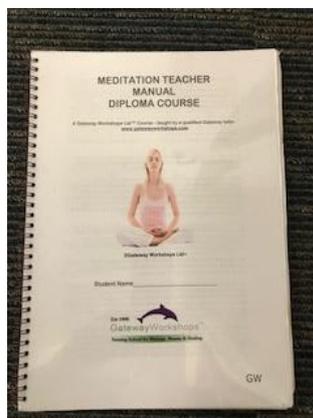
We have four qualified therapists at the centre who are trained in Indian Head Massage.



## **Meditation and Mindfulness**

Meditation provides a supportive and creative space for the reduction of everyday stresses and tensions, thus promoting a state of balance, contentment, and personal well-being.

Mindfulness meditation, in particular, has become more popular in recent years. The practice involves focusing on your breathing while sitting comfortably, and then bringing your mind's attention to the present without drifting into concerns about the future or past. This strategy is very useful with the students at the centre as it reduces levels of stress and anxiety; encourages deep relaxation and feelings of peace; focuses the mind and promotes deep sleep; increased concentration; enhances creativity and opens the mind to new ideas; identifies and balances emotions; can create a deeper understanding and awareness of other people; and can help with creating your day and making grounded decisions. At the centre, we practise guided meditation. These are visual guided journeys to aid with relaxation, empowerment and spiritual awareness. Most of our staff have completed training and are qualified teachers of meditation.

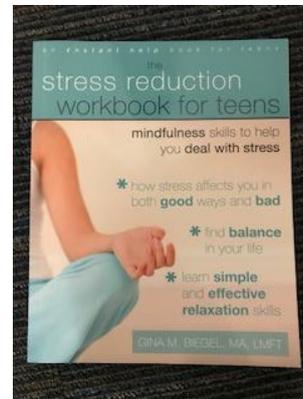


### Stress management coaching

Stress management coaching helps the students to stop and gain control of their life. The coaching relationship creates a place where the student can reflect on what is happening and come up with ways to regain serenity. This is particularly relevant to those students sitting exams as it allows them to take control of the situation and find ways to find solutions. Coaching sessions take place on an individual basis and in group sessions.

Stress management coaching helps the student to:

- Figure out the sources of stress
- Learn to be mindful
- Reduce stressful situations
- Adopt calming practices like meditation
- Seek solutions



### Counselling

Counselling offers the student a space to talk and think about difficulties and problems with someone who is not a friend or a family member. Many students find this helpful and tend to open up in the safe space. Counsellors are not doctors or psychiatrists, and therefore cannot prescribe medication. It is not about giving advice, but about helping the student understand difficulties. The counsellor will work with the student to help them make decisions and changes that may work better for them.

Some difficulties the student may raise:

- problems with anxiety and stress including social anxiety;
- depression and loneliness;
- adjusting to a new culture or environment;
- problems with family, friends, or relationships;
- sexuality;
- phobias;
- unwanted thoughts;
- bereavement and loss;
- study problems, including difficulties with writing, speaking, procrastination and perfectionism;
- racism and harassment;
- sexual abuse; coping with trauma; sexual harassment;
- sexual assault;
- disability;
- feeling suicidal;
- eating disorders; and
- addictions.

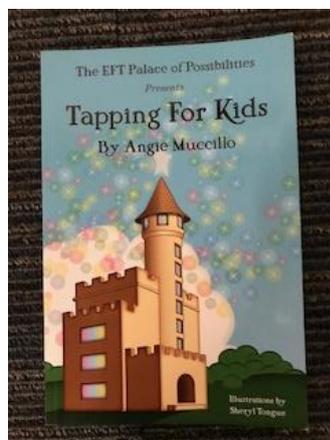
## Phobia management services

A phobia is a persistent, excessive and unreasonable fear of an object or situation. It is thought 5% of children and 16% of teenagers have a phobia in the UK.

Phobias are different from normal fears as they normally become more severe as the student gets older. Students with phobias can feel enormous shame about their fears as others may view them as being silly or overreacting. By addressing the student's thought patterns, it can help them to formulate healthier coping mechanisms.

## EFT – Emotional Freedom Techniques

Tapping puts the extraordinary power of EFT Emotional Freedom Techniques firmly into the hands of students as a tool for life. It helps them overcome their fears, worries, and everyday traumas as well as build their self-esteem. It makes fear, sadness, anger, confusion and low self esteem a thing of the past.



## Weighted Therapy

Weighted therapy is the use of weight to happy deep pressure to the body. The weight and pressure stimulate the proprioceptive sense helping those who are “sensory seeking” to relax, focus, and develop a greater awareness of their body.

Weighted therapy...

- can have a calming effect, promoting a sense of wellbeing
- can improve body awareness
- can improve focus and concentration
- can reduce repetitive sensory-seeking behaviour
- is safe and effective
- is non-invasive and discreet



Weighted therapy is recommended by Occupational Therapists and is a safe and effective treatment for sensory integration disorder, making an enormous difference to the lives of sufferers and their families. Many of our students who are on the autistic spectrum have sensory processing issues, and many have benefited from the use of weight therapy blankets, jackets, neck weights and leg weights.

Weighted therapy can also help those with Cerebral Palsy, Asperger's syndrome, ADHD and those with learning and communication difficulties.

### **Arts Counselling**

Art as therapy uses the creative process of making art to improve a student's mental, physical, and emotional well-being. It involves expressing one's self artistically and can help students to resolve problems as well as develop and manage their behaviours and feelings, lessen stress, and improve self-esteem and awareness.

Art based counselling is timetabled for everyday and each week students who benefit and enjoy the process they are engaged in. We have one qualified practitioner currently.



### **Animal therapy**

At the centre, we practise animal therapy with the students. We have two rabbits, Bugs and Peter, as well as a dog, Adam, who help students to reduce their anxiety, relax and destress. Students say that interacting with these animals can be very mood lifting. Activities alternate between a calm cuddling space and playing with the rabbits which provides exercise through an assault course. There are 10 groups of students which run on rotation every day.

Some of the benefits include:

- lifts spirits and lessens depression.
- lowers feelings of isolation and alienation.
- encourages communication.
- provides comfort.
- increases socialisation.
- lessens boredom.
- reduces anxiety.
- reduces loneliness.



## Forest School

Forest schools originated in Sweden in the 1950s and was adopted in Denmark as an important part of early years provision. Forest school attendance has been observed to help young people develop control over their behaviour; improve concentration and independence; and develop social and emotional skills. Forest school aims to develop, where appropriate, the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the learners. This is by offering students regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland environment. Our students learn to respect and use a range of tools and develop bush craft skills in a safe environment. A select group of students attend forest school once a week, this then rotates so that all students get a chance to participate over the course of a year.



## Lego Therapy

Lego therapy is a flexible intervention and combines behaviour therapy, peer modelling and communication strategies. It develops a range of skills, for example, turn taking, eye contact, question asking, sharing, non-verbal and verbal communication. The task is divided into joint interactive jobs and conflict resolution rules are provided. This therapy is successful as the materials are interesting and engaging to students. The therapy is carried out with a group of 3 students, once a week and each session lasts 30 minutes for 6 weeks. Each student is allocated ones of the roles, The Engineer, The Supplier and The Builder. The role of the adult is to facilitate the students to reflect and problem solve. A baseline assessment is carried out before the first session and again at the end of the six sessions. Linda, our specialist, has gone on to develop further courses aimed at continuing the work of the initial process and making it relevant for older learners.

Lego Role Cards	
1. <b>ENGINEER</b> I have to read the instructions and tell the Supplier where to put the bricks.	
2. <b>SUPPLIER</b> I have to look after the bricks and give them to the Builder when they ask for them.	
3. <b>BUILDER</b> I have to listen to the Engineer and choose the right bricks to put together.	
4. <b>ENGINEER</b> I have to tell the Supplier which bricks to choose.	
5. <b>SUPPLIER</b> I have to listen to the Engineer and choose the right bricks.	
6. <b>BUILDER</b> I have to listen to the Engineer who will tell me where to put the bricks.	
7. <b>ENGINEER</b> I have to tell the Builder where to put the bricks.	
8. <b>SUPPLIER</b> I have to give the right bricks to the Builder.	
9. <b>BUILDER</b> I have to listen to the Engineer who will tell me where to put the bricks.	

ENGINEER	SUPPLIER	BUILDER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My job is to read the instructions.</li> <li>I have to tell the Supplier which bricks to choose.</li> <li>I have to tell the Builder where to put the bricks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My job is to look after the bricks.</li> <li>I have to listen to the Engineer and choose the right bricks.</li> <li>I have to give the right bricks to the Builder.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My job is to put the bricks together.</li> <li>I have to wait for the Supplier to give me the right bricks.</li> <li>I have to listen to the Engineer who will tell me where to put the bricks.</li> </ul>