



## Dream Catcher Play & Creative Arts Therapy

### Private referral Information Sheet

#### What is Play & Creative Arts Therapy?

When children are experiencing big emotions they are finding hard to manage, they are often unable to explain with words exactly how they are feeling. This can lead to further frustration and distress for both the child and the adults around them. Using creative mediums such as: play, art, storytelling, music and movement; children are able to play out past or current events in a way that developmentally makes sense to them. They are able to see their concerns more clearly, which offers relief in the same way adults can when 'talking through' their issues. The therapist provides a warm and non-judgemental relationship and is able to 'hold' challenging feelings and thoughts so the child feels accepted and can safely explore these to find strategies to move forward.

#### Who is Play & Creative Arts therapy for?

This effective therapy supports a wide variety of issues. It can support children and young people from 4 -14 years who are struggling with any of the following issues:

##### Emotional

Anxiety  
Low self esteem  
Difficulties with regulation  
Peer difficulties  
Low resilience

##### Behavioural

Aggression  
Withdrawn  
Inattentive  
Antisocial behaviour

##### Environmental

Family breakdown  
Bullying  
Bereavement  
Abuse  
Trauma

#### What is the referral process?

Parent/carer expresses interest.  
Therapist sends referral information sheet  
and conducts initial phone call.

Therapist meets with parent/carer and  
recommends number of sessions required based  
on SDQ\* scores and additional information.

Therapy begins at the same place  
and at the same time each week.

Midpoint review meeting with parent/carer to review  
progress and confirm number of remaining sessions

Therapy ends. Evaluations and SDQ  
scores are completed.

Post therapy meeting with  
parent/carer. Therapist issues end report.

\* SDQ – Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire  
(approved measurement tool).

### **What will happen in the pre therapy meeting?**

The therapist will listen carefully to your concerns about your child and family. In order to fully support your child throughout the process, the therapist will ask for background information and find out about the difficulties the family have been through to then help your child to make sense of it.

An assessment tool called the Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) will be used to identify the areas of concern and level of difficulties to help determine the number of sessions required. Further details about the process and how to explain it to your child will also be covered. All information provided is managed in accordance to GDPR and will not be shared with any third parties without consent.

### **How many sessions are required?**

Play & Creative Arts Therapy sessions are conducted one to one, once a week, at the same time and place and last between 30 - 45 minutes depending on the child's age and developmental level. At the time of referral, an SDQ Assessment Tool will be used to understand the difficulties the child is experiencing and to advise a suitable length of intervention. For mild to moderate concerns, the minimum number of sessions is 12. For problems that have persisted for a long time or are complex, a longer length such as 20+ sessions may be recommended.

### **What happens in the Play & Creative Arts Therapy sessions?**

Your child will be given the opportunity to use a selection of play and arts materials with three rules: 1) The therapist and child keep each other safe, 2) the child will not (on purpose) break or damage the materials or room, 3) if the child discloses that someone is hurting them, or they are hurting someone else - then the therapist will have to report this (following Dream Catcher's Safeguarding Policy). The sessions are predominately child-led and they will be supported to express themselves without having to provide verbal explanations.

### **What can the therapist tell you about a session?**

The therapist is able to feedback to parents about a child's 'progress' in Play & Creative Arts Therapy, but not their 'process'. This means that they are able to tell you in general terms the themes that might be occurring in therapy, but they will not tell you specific things that have happened in the session. In order to engage in the process freely, children need to be able to trust the therapist and believe that they will provide a safe and secure space, confidentiality ensures this trust remains intact. The therapist will only break confidentiality if they believe there is a safeguarding issue and the child will be made aware of this. This can be frustrating for parents/carers but it is an essential part of the therapeutic process. However, your child is free to talk to you if they wish to about any aspect of the process.

### **How can the parents/carers support the process?**

Parents/carers are extremely important to the success of the process. The following advice is useful to follow throughout the therapy: 1) be consistent and encouraging to your child about attending sessions regularly, 2) resist the urge to ask your child what they did, as this will put pressure on them to comment on something they may have difficulty understanding themselves, 3) please don't ask your child to 'be good'. Therapy is not about being 'good' or 'bad', 4) during any therapeutic intervention behaviour may appear to get worse before it gets better. (As advised by the British Association of Play Therapy).

### **What will Play & Creative Arts Therapy cost?**

Each session costs £50.00 (this includes any room hire charges). A one off payment of £100 is required prior to the commencement of sessions to cover all pre, review and post therapy meetings with parent/carers (typically 3 meetings are required - dependant upon duration of therapy), supervision costs\* and end report.

\* All therapists/counsellors must regularly attend supervision with a recognised supervisor to ensure ethical principles and procedures are adhered to for all clients.

### **What is the evidence that Play & Creative Arts Therapy works?**

Recognised assessment tools are used to monitor progress such as SDQs, in addition to the requested goals from parents/carers. Play Therapy UK data\* shows that between 74% and 83% of children receiving play therapy, delivered to PTUK standards, show a positive change. To date\*\*, Claire Twomey's results shows that between 85% and 93% of children show a positive change. \* 2011 data \*\*2016 - 2019 data

### **Parent/carer testimonials:**

*"...he felt at ease throughout the weeks of having the sessions and afterwards we have seen a massive shift in his ability to self regulate".*

*"my son's confidence grew in social situations. He really enjoyed the sessions."*

*"It has helped her to express emotion and become less angry."*

### **School testimonial:**

*"The school has hugely benefited from Claire's Play therapy sessions. Claire is highly committed to improving the lives of young children and her passion shines through. Claire ensures she works closely with parents and conducts the sessions in a private and confidential way so that pupils feel safe in the sessions. The improvements in the pupil's well-being that have received Play therapy is testament in itself; fully demonstrating how it supports both the child and the family." Leah Wren, Co-Acting Headteacher, South Hill School, Hemel Hempstead*

### **Children's feedback:**

*"I can be myself in play." "My confidence and happiness has improved"*

*"I now feel happier at home." "It was hard to start with, but by the end I enjoyed it."*