



Camphill School Aberdeen

Social Pedagogy in Practice

[www.camphillschool.org.uk](http://www.camphillschool.org.uk)

Charity SC015588

# Therapies and Therapeutic Activities



## **Therapies and Therapeutic Activities**

Camphill School Aberdeen can offer a wide choice of individual therapies, as recommended by the interdisciplinary team working with the child or young person. These include speech, movement, therapeutic art, riding, therapeutic music, massage, bath, play and counselling.

Therapeutic support is available to all the children and young people attending school in Camphill as well as for those who are part of the Young Adult Programme and Individual Therapeutic Programme.

Physiotherapy can be arranged through the GP of the child or young person.

Therapies and Therapeutic Activities take place in a one to one situation unless stated otherwise.

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## **Therapeutic Art**

Therapeutic art activities aim to strengthen confidence, resilience and harmony through the joy of being creative, mainly using painting, drawing and clay modelling. In one to one sessions the therapeutic relationship is fostered, providing a safe space for engaging, exploring and communicating.

When a child or young person first comes to the art room there are no aims or expectations. In the first sessions activities are tried out, anxieties eased through a gentle playful approach. Interests are identified and developed. Cardboard boxes, tape, wool, crayons, cloth, string, coloured paper, sticks etc. are often used to make wishes real and get absorbed in an activity.

Gradually, first aims are identified. Painting on damp paper with diluted water colours can bring dynamic flow and help to harmonise breathing. The cool calming blues can help to find peace, and active orange and reds to create life, warmth and fun. Clay modelling can help to feel grounded, observation drawing can strengthen focus and involvement with life. The activities are all embedded in imagination.

Each therapeutic journey is unique to the individual, as is the approach and level of guidance of the practitioner. Working artistically is bound up with our emotions and can help express and explore feelings that might otherwise be difficult to share. Issues are only addressed when brought up by the individual.

Sessions are once or twice a week, lasting 20 to 50 minutes and for a minimum of two terms up to a year or more.



## **Therapeutic Music**

Therapeutic music sessions are carried out by creating live music on a wide range of instruments. Live music can be used with various therapeutic intentions. These include promoting dialogue with another person, connection to inner feelings evoked by the mood or atmosphere of a piece of music, expression and perhaps release from tension, and dexterity in using musical instruments.

Therapeutic music offers ways to enhance various human capacities:

Folk tunes, either played or sung with the warmth of the voice may touch the feelings with their resilient simplicity.

Beautifully structured classical music played live on acoustic instruments can encourage positivity and relaxation.

Melodies played and heard at varying speeds exercise the mind's processing skills.

Music making, rehearsed or improvised, gives a chance for creative emotional expression.

Sharing music, either by creating together or taking turns to play, nurtures the ability to give and take in relationships.

The child or young person usually attends for half an hour once or twice a week for a minimum of one term.



### **Eurythmy Movement Therapy**

The art of eurythmy is the expression of speech and music in movement. Eurythmy is described as visible speech or visible music. When a person speaks, the larynx and related speech organs perform intricate, fine movements that are specific for each single vowel or consonant in language. In eurythmy these movements are expressed by the whole body, especially arms and legs.

Eurythmy as therapy is developed from artistic eurythmy. The eurythmy gestures and movements are modified, intensified and are exercised repeatedly, whereby they stimulate healing, restore inner and outer balance, support bodily functions and have a beneficial effect on the harmony between body, soul, and spirit. Eurythmy gestures are often practiced together with rhythm exercises, walking geometric forms or exercises with copper balls and copper rods. Currently music or song is often used to support the flow of movement.

The length and frequency of the sessions generally last 15-30 minutes and take place 1 – 2 times per week. A block of eurythmy therapy lasts at least one term and can continue throughout the year.



## **Therapeutic Speech**

Therapeutic Speech is an artistic therapy for both speaking and non-speaking children and young adults that uses speech and drama as its therapeutic medium.

Specific sounds and sound sequences accompanied by expanding and contracting arm movements may be used to release and deepen the breathing. A healthy breathing pattern is the foundation for physical and emotional wellbeing.

Focussed work on the articulation activity of specific sounds has a range of effects such as boundary strengthening, focussing attention and facilitating engagement according to the qualities of the sounds and their articulation placement ie lips, tongue-teeth or palate.

Different rhythms of poetry can be used to calm or invigorate, centre or harmonise.

Enhancing vocal nuance through effective use of dramatic gestures supports flexibility of thinking and expressive language development.

Verses and poems are also chosen for their content in order to support developmental steps through images and imagination.

Whilst therapeutic speech is used to address a wide range of speech specific disorders and developmental delays, healthy speech and breath use are so central to our health and wellbeing that the therapy can also be used to address a range of other developmental, emotional, behavioural and physical challenges.

Sessions typically last half an hour, and are offered once or twice weekly for a minimum of a term. A programme of specific speech sound exercises and rhythmical verses and poems combined with a range of movement activities is tailored to the needs and potential of the individual.



## **Speech and Language Therapy**

Speech and Language Therapy involves working with individuals who have speech, language and communication difficulties and also with those who work closely with these individuals. This includes youngsters with speech sound difficulties (phonological delay/disorder, articulation challenges, dysarthria, and dyspraxia); delayed/disordered language development (both understanding and expression); social communication difficulties.

A limited number of individual sessions are available with those for whom it is felt that 1:1 input would be beneficial. Targets can be set for all levels of communication including pre-verbal skills, non-verbal and verbal communication. From taking turns and single word production/comprehension to higher-level processing (problem solving, reasoning).

Speech and language therapy also looks at all individuals within the schools, advising on appropriate visual support systems to enable our young people to access the curriculum and become more independent in their communication skills. These supports can take the form of visual timetables, Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS), social stories, photographs, symbols, real objects and often, a combination of these.

Regular meetings with all those involved with each young person are integral to the work of the speech and language therapist in order that appropriate advice can be given and recommendations made for the development of communication across all environments. The speech and language therapist works in close collaboration with the Communication Support Facilitator who produces a range of visual supports from PECS symbols, photographs, sequencing strips to social stories and visual timetables, each tailored to meet the needs of the individual and their environment. She is also available for advice and information regarding the implementation of all supports.



## **Therapeutic Exercises**

Therapeutic exercises aim to support general development, health and wellbeing through the media of movement and sensory integrative methods. Therapeutic exercises involve aspects of developmental movement, rhythm, balance, coordination, concentration, and sensory play. The therapy aims to support bodily and spatial awareness, flexibility, adaptive skill, and a sense of achievement.

For individuals with movement and/or sensory integration issues the sessions can help to find a better relationship to the body and help the physical interacting with the environment.

Physical play and movement give proprioceptive feedback which improves the body scheme. Exercises are designed to help individuals feel more present through balancing movements and gentle workouts. Through conscious grading of movement greater skill and self control is achieved.

Sessions can also include activities promoting tactile integration and discrimination and hand-eye coordination. Coordination games and exercises can be accompanied by songs or poems, with e.g. calming or invigorating rhythms. The approach is playful, aiming to enhance the individual's own sense of exploration and initiative.

Through facilitating rightly pitched challenges which can be managed successfully, a sense of empowerment and confidence in one's own ability can grow, which in turn can form a basis for new learning. Individuals generally show enhanced wellbeing at the end of a session.

30-60 minute sessions are given once or twice weekly, usually throughout several terms.



### **Equine Assisted Therapeutic Activity**

Equine Assisted Therapeutic Activities offer a multidimensional approach used for the purpose of contributing positively to the child or young person's well-being and enhancing aspects of development. The emphasis is on providing therapeutic benefits to the individual whose experience is more of a pleasurable one. Areas in which individuals can be referred to are: Therapeutic Riding, Ground Work and Riding Skill all of which can be used to stimulate or enhance the following:

- Cognition: Riding influences understanding through participation in sequences, activities and exercises.
- Speech and language: For those with speech impairments the different rhythms of the walk and trot can facilitate regulation of breathing and promote speech.
- Balance and Coordination: Riding influences motor co-ordination. It can help establish dominance, correct posture and balance to body positions, while giving body awareness and can improve sensory integration. Riding bareback enhances contact with the horse and prompts direct transfer of warmth, which provides relaxation for some physical conditions.
- Emotional and social wellbeing: Riding can facilitate the building of identity, self-esteem, confidence, self-regulation or help counteract depression. This therapy involves contact with another living entity, which is also important for many children or young people with additional needs who struggle to differentiate between the living world and the world of objects.

Ground work includes grooming, equine care, stable management, feeding and the understanding of animal behaviour.

Riding Skill allows pupils to learn to ride independently giving a sense of achievement and freedom. Individuals can participate to their maximum ability in atmosphere of support and structure.



### **Rhythmical Massage Therapy**

Rhythmical Massage Therapy is a therapeutic form of massage using a gentle rhythmical quality of touch. The oils and ointments used for the massage are individually chosen for their specific healing qualities by the therapist.

Rhythmical Massage Therapy harmonises the child/young person's breathing, eases muscle tensions and increases their wellbeing. The physical and emotional development is supported through the strengthening of healthy rhythmical processes within the body, e.g. the sleeping-waking cycle and functioning of the digestive system. It can therefore be used to address sleep disturbances, respiratory conditions especially asthma, headaches of various origins, constipation and metabolic disturbances, rheumatic disorders and neurological conditions.

A massage session lasts from 10 to 45 minutes including a therapeutic rest period . A course of massage sessions are usually given once or twice a week throughout the year with regular breaks.



### **Therapeutic Baths and Footbaths**

Therapeutic baths are given at a specific temperature with therapeutic substances, usually oils added or dispersed through a special apparatus. The child/young person is immersed in the water for 10 – 20 min allowing the skin to absorb the substances individually chosen for their healing qualities by the therapist.

After the bath the child/young person is usually warmly wrapped to rest for up to 40 minutes.

Therapeutic baths and footbaths have a range of benefits, for example stimulating the body's warmth, improving poor blood circulation, boosting the immune system and supporting the experience of the body's boundary. The bath therefore promotes physical and emotional wellbeing.

Normally a course of baths are given once or twice a week for one term.



## **Child-Centred non-directive Play Therapy and Therapeutic Play approaches**

Through the medium of play, children are able to express their inner feelings and emotions and, in an imaginative, safe way, act out their concerns and fantasies. They are able to build bonds and relationships which enhance their overall development, including physical, cognitive, language and communication, social and emotional, as well as spiritual.

### *Child-centred non-directive play therapy:*

Play therapy aims to bring about the emotional and social growth of the child in a balanced way. It seeks to harmonise the child's experience of self with the child's experience of and relationship to the environment. The child is also able to explore his emotions through play and to explore his own unconscious experiences. Strengthening of self through acceptance and reflection can then be achieved. The therapist reflects aspects of the play process back to the child which leads to the development of greater self-awareness. This therapy is provided by qualified play therapists.

### *A range of therapeutic play activities including therapeutic play and intensive interaction:*

*Therapeutic play* aims to facilitate the child's development through increasing physical skills, emotional and social growth, and language and understanding. Therapeutic play is a directive play process that leads the child through the normal phases of development.

*Intensive interaction* aims to facilitate the initial building of relationship and communication between two individuals. It replicates the relational process which is developed in the first year of life between an infant and their main carer as the basis for bonding and the development of social relating and understanding of the world.

The therapy sessions are usually held once a week but individual children may require more sessions per week. The sessions last up to one hour depending on the needs and abilities of the child. The duration of each therapy is rarely less than six months and might continue for one or more years.



### **Therapeutic Counselling**

This person centred therapeutic activity has developed out of the need of some children or young adults to participate in a one to one relationship and therapeutic process of helpful/healing conversations. Within these conversations through talking and listening, they can work together to find ways to share concerns or search for ways to learn and with understanding and encouragement, grow stronger.

Through the process it is hoped to strengthen and develop self-awareness, identity, and confidence which facilitates healing and positive changes to the balance of health and wellbeing. Specific areas of physical, emotional or mental health, relationships to self and others, or conflict scenarios in relation to specific events affecting the individual may be explored as appropriate. Questions of relationships to self and others, social relationships in school, work or other settings may be explored to enhance the quality of personal life, sense of responsibility and ability to affect change in one's own life.

Sessions are normally between 40 minutes to an hour in length and take place weekly. The duration of this therapeutic activity is dependent on individual need.



### **Listening Space Therapeutic Movement Activity**

Listening space is a group therapeutic activity involving music and eurythmy movements. The music is played on a recorder and a modern lyre. The clarity and warmth of tone produced by the lyre gives special emphasis to an inward listening quality.

The session begins with the element of rhythm. The children/young people move forwards to lively, quick music which is then gradually brought into balance by moving backwards to slow music. As the latter becomes more dominant, stillness is achieved. This is followed by sitting down and listening to a piece of lyre music, composed especially to help harmonise breathing. To conclude the session the individuals move their arms to the rising and falling pitch of a melody played on the recorder. This requires a degree of concentration that has been developed through the previous activities in the therapy.

Listening space is mainly for children/young people who are restless and hyperactive, but can also be beneficial for those who are easily over stimulated by sensory impressions.

It takes place once a week at the beginning of the school morning and lasts 15 minutes.



### **Coloured Shadow Therapeutic Activity**

Colour, movement and sound work together, to form this therapeutic activity which is calming and harmonising and, if necessary, stimulating.

Colours are produced on a screen by daylight streaming through coloured acetate sheeting. Behind this screen, movements and gestures are formed, giving a changing coloured display that can be synchronised to music and speech.

Coloured shadow therapeutic activity can be beneficial for a wide range of reasons. It harmonises sense impressions and breathing processes, it soothes restlessness, induces relaxation and helps alleviate emotional stress. The quality of peace and harmony experienced can then be carried into daily life.

Sessions take place once a week in a group setting and last usually 10-15 minutes.



## **Speech Eurythmy**

Speech Eurythmy is a performance-based group therapy that aims to stimulate and support speech development, especially in non-speaking individuals.

A programme of artistic speech and eurythmy movement that reflects the healthy speech development process is presented in a low sensory stimulation environment. Each spoken element of the programme is followed by the related eurythmy movement thus addressing the auditory and visual senses separately. As each vowel or syllable is consciously expressed by the speaker, the inner imitation activity of the audience builds neural pathways in the brain for speech activity. This effect is enhanced by seeing elements of the formative activity of speech in movement directly after.

Calming rhythms and deep, slow breathing are used for the speech, creating a peaceful atmosphere in the group to optimise perceptual engagement. The session is completed with the performance of a humorous poem using both speech and drama to facilitate comprehension and enhance enjoyment. This also promotes imagination and flexibility.