

St Dominic's School

Therapy Policy

<i>Written by:</i>	St Dominic's Therapy Team
<i>Reviewed & ratified by:</i>	Governing Body
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Speech and Language Therapy & Occupational Therapy

Pupils and students at St Dominic's School have an Education, Health and Care Plan that states their primary diagnosis and outlines the required provision to meet their needs. Over 90% of the pupils and students have a primary diagnosis of ASD.

Pupils and students with ASD present with all or some of the following:

- Social communication difficulties,
- Difficulties with understanding and using language,
- Difficulties behaving and thinking flexibly,
- Sensory processing difficulties,
- Motor coordination difficulties,
- Anxiety,
- Low self-esteem.

St Dominic's School has been awarded Autism Accreditation at the Advanced Level by the NAS. The aims of this accreditation are:

- To provide a unified standard of excellence in both policy and practice for individuals with ASD,
- To present a systematic framework for organisations to continuously self-examine and develop their practice.

In order to provide pupils and students with the best possible outcomes and meet the standards for Autism Accreditation, St Dominic's School:

- Offers a broad and balanced needs led curriculum that can be tailored according to the individual profile of learners. In addition to the academic curriculum, this includes focus on language and communication and functional independence.
- Regularly updates the knowledge and understanding of all school staff with regard to ASD and individual pupil needs.
- Uses a consistent whole school approach to behaviour management and views all behaviour as communication.
- Has developed a Social Communication Programme which provides a structured approach to supporting the development of learning strategies and to aid social communication across the day.
- Provides an adapted environment to minimise the impact of sensory processing difficulties on functional performance.
- Has staff that are trained and experienced in monitoring and adapting language.
- Has small classes with a high ratio of staff to pupils and students.

- Uses visual support to aid understanding across the school. This includes visual timetables, TEACCH and a 'change triangle' to give pupils and students prior warning of change.
- Carries out observations and Learning Walks by therapists to monitor the use of sensory strategies, specialist equipment and language delivery, vocabulary and levelled questioning.
- Provides access to Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy support on an individual and small group basis. Input is needs led and constantly adjusted to ensure it remains appropriate.
- Assesses all pupils and students formally and informally to ensure provision is appropriate and progress is monitored holistically.
- Gives pupils and students access to small groups to address specific issues such as anger management and anxiety. These are arranged flexibly according to need.
- Produces a 'Pupil Profile' document for all pupils and students which is accessible to all to ensure that staff are aware of needs and appropriate strategies to progress learning and achievement.
- Gives all new staff training that outlines difficulties associated with ASD.
- Encourages pupils and students to become independent enquirers and to develop their functional independence skills across the waking day.
- Supports pupils and students through all transitions throughout their school life. This includes between lessons, across key stages and to future placements.
- Works with outside agencies (including the Local Authority, CAMHS, other Specialist Settings and Professionals involved in pupil and student care) to ensure an integrated approach to planning and intervention.

Occupational Therapists (OTs)

The scope of intervention for the Occupational Therapists may include:

Knowledge and Skills	Mode of Delivery		
	Class Based	Small Group	One to One
Gross and fine motor skills			
Emotional regulation			
Attention and listening			
Self-care and personal hygiene			

Puberty and body changes			
Personal safety and welfare			
Functional independence and preparation for employment			
Sensory modulation			

The Occupational Therapists work within the parameters of their professional qualification and receive regular supervision. They all adhere to the standards of the **Royal College of Occupational Therapists** as well as the **Health and Care Professionals Council**. These standards include the requirement to keep detailed and timely intervention records and maintain confidentiality. They are required to evidence their adherence to these standards during periods of audit as determined by these bodies. Pupils and students with ASD will need explicit teaching in needs led areas and therefore the OTs will talk openly and honestly about subjects such as keeping yourself clean, managing puberty and personal safety. It is important that pupils and students are able to gain this information from safe sources and staff work to ensure that they have built a therapeutic relationship that allows for questioning in a safe and respectful space. All Occupational Therapists work within the national statutory guidance as well as St Dominic's Schools safeguarding procedures and understand the need to escalate issues of concern or safeguarding whilst maintaining pupil and student trust and the therapeutic relationship.

Relevant standards from the Health and Care Professions Council for Occupational Therapists:

2.2 promote and protect the service user's interests at all times

2.3 understand the importance of safeguarding by actively looking for signs of abuse, demonstrating understanding of relevant safeguarding processes and engaging in these processes where necessary

2.5 respect and uphold the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of service users, including their role in the assessment, diagnostic, treatment and/or therapeutic process

2.6 recognise that relationships with service users, carers and others should be based on mutual respect and trust, maintaining high standards of care in all circumstances

6.3 recognise and respond in a timely manner to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users, carers and/or the wider public

13.20 understand the need to meet the emotional, social, psychological, cognitive and physical health-based occupational needs of service users, across a range of practice areas and how this can vary across a range of practice areas

15.3 empower and enable individuals (including service users and colleagues) to play a part in managing their own health

Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs)

The scope of intervention for the Speech and Language Therapists may include:

Knowledge and Skills	Mode of Delivery		
	Class Based	Small Group	One to One
Understanding of spoken language			
Use of Spoken Language			
Social Communication*			
Puberty and Body Changes			
Friendships			
Intimate relationships (including sex education)			
Positive and healthy body image			
Emotional Regulation			
Speech Sounds			
Stammering			

* Social communication will include: inference, prediction, body language and non-verbal communication, turn taking, topic maintenance.

The Speech and Language Therapists work within the parameters of their professional qualification and receive regular supervision. They all adhere to the standards of the **Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists** as well as the **Health and Care Professionals Council**. These standards include the requirement to keep detailed and timely intervention records and maintain confidentiality. They are required to evidence their adherence to these standards during periods of audit as determined by these bodies. Pupils and students with ASD will need explicit teaching in needs led areas and therefore the SaLTs will talk openly and honestly about subjects such as managing puberty, relationships and sex education. It is important that pupils and students are able to gain this information from safe sources and staff work to ensure that they have built a therapeutic relationship that allows for questioning in a safe and respectful space. All Speech and Language Therapists work within the safeguarding guidelines at St Dominic's School and understand the need to escalate issues of concern or safeguarding whilst maintaining pupil and student trust and the therapeutic relationship.

Relevant standards from the Health and Care Professions Council for Occupational Therapists:

2.3 understand the importance of safeguarding by actively looking for signs of abuse, demonstrating understanding of relevant safeguarding processes and engaging in these processes where necessary

2.5 respect and uphold the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of service users, including their role in the assessment, diagnostic, treatment and/or therapeutic process

2.6 recognise that relationships with service users, carers and others should be based on mutual respect and trust, maintaining high standards of care in all circumstances

6.3 recognise and respond in a timely manner to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users, carers and/or the wider public

13.15 understand health education and how it relates to communication and swallowing

15.3 empower and enable individuals (including service users and colleagues) to play a part in managing their own health

Appendix 1

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:

The Health and Care Professions Council standards for Occupational Therapist (updated Sept 2023)

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/occupational-therapists/>

The Health and Care Professions Council standards for Speech and Language Therapist (updated Sept 2023)

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/speech-and-language-therapists/>

The national statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf

Government Guidance on Relationships and Sex Education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

St Dominic's School Relationships and Sex Education Policy

<https://stdominicsschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Relationships-Sex-Education-Procedure.pdf>