

The Hawthorns School

Job Description and Person Specification

Job Title:	Occupational Therapist
Grade:	Local Government Pay Scale dependent on experience and NHS Band if relevant
Based at:	The Hawthorns School
Reports to:	Headteacher
Liaison with:	Headteacher, Assistant Headteachers, team, parents/carers, pupils
Job Purpose:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specialist OT responsible for planning and providing skilled specialist service for children and young people who need extra support. Pupils will have highly complex needs and require assessment, support and input.
Principal Accountabilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide skilled specialist assessment and therapy for individuals and groups. Provide specialist advice and knowledge and development for all staff to include CPD, coaching, support and drop-in advice To support and contribute to meetings relating to pupils. Initiate and undertake audit and service evaluation aimed at increasing and maintaining clinical effectiveness in own working area, and meeting the requirements of the organisation. Contribute to the growing ethos and vision of the school, helping to shape its therapeutic culture. Highlight gaps and suggest initiatives for service development to line managers. Undertake evidence-based practice (EBP) and continuing professional development (CPD). May undertake research. Provide and participate in training workshops/seminars in multidisciplinary/agency settings.

1. ROLE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

- The Occupational Therapist provides high quality, effective and equitable Occupational Therapy for our pupil cohort. This may extend to staff.

2. DIMENSIONS

2.1 Overview

- Responsible to Headteacher.
- Operationally Accountable to the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.
- The post holder works autonomously within professional guidelines and school policies and procedures.

2.2 Clinical Caseload

The post holder maintains their own caseloads and is responsible for their own administration, records and transparent liaison with SLT.

Provide an Occupational Therapy intervention programme for each referred individual.

Pupils will all have a diagnosis of autism and associated challenges with social communication, sensory needs and attention plus high levels of anxiety and possible low self esteem. There may be other diagnoses such as ADHD, dyspraxia, dyslexia. Some pupils may have anxiety disorder or other emotional, wellbeing and mental health issues.

2.3 Non Patient / Patient Contact Duties

- Writing case notes agreement with the school.
- Detailed assessment review reports at end of assessment period.
- Detailed ongoing therapy reports / discharge reports.
- Meetings with parents/carers prior to any therapy or any meetings deemed appropriate in agreement with SLT.

3. KEY RESULT AREAS

3.1 Patient / Patient Care

- The post holder has specialised skills to independently assess patients with highly complex needs and difficulties for suitability for individual and group Occupational Therapy. Assessments will be based on appropriate use, interpretation and integration of complex data including direct/indirect observation and semi-structured interviews, which take into account all current circumstances, risks and likely outcomes of treatment.
- Formulate, plan and provide individual and group Occupational Therapy programmes, which are based on an appropriate conceptual framework of the patients' problems employing methods based on evidence of efficiency across a full range of care settings.
- Manage difficult situations in individual and group sessions, recognising seriously emotive expression, including hostile, antagonistic and challenging behaviour, while tactfully dissipating the situation enough to maintain a safe environment and facilitate reflection on the process within the session.

- Assess risk, provides reports, and makes judgements on the appropriate treatment based on the analysis and reviews throughout therapy episode, taking into account patient, family/carers, child and public safety. This will include responsibility for own caseload.
- Will undertake ongoing evaluation of the therapy and advise on discharge and follow up plans. This includes providing feedback of a complicated and sensitive nature providing professional opinion, both verbally and in written format, demonstrating Art Therapy formulation.
- Offer highly specialist input to patients' review meetings involving carers, referrers and primary care agencies where relevant. The post holder will provide and receive complex, sensitive information, which is considered in order to develop the most appropriate treatment plan.
- Maintain patients' records and provides relevant and comprehensive case administration, e.g. assessment reports, discharge summaries, contributes to multidisciplinary notes and communication with other agencies.
- Maintain confidentiality in dealing with patients, their therapy and care, analysing and making decisions for self when that confidentiality needs to be breached, e.g. when patient or family at risk and the need to inform social services immediately becomes clear.
- Accept and respond to requests for post holder's clinical opinion, and provides appropriate professional / clinical judgements when necessary.

3.2 Policy and Service Development

- Responsible for prioritising need and deploying defined Occupational Therapy resources within own working area.
- Attend and contribute to service development and promotion of Occupational Therapy at various forums as agreed with SLT.
- Implement policies and changes to working practices and procedures in own working area, e.g. in consultation and negotiation with local stakeholders, implement changes to local referral feedback procedures.
- Input into the development of service provision e.g. Occupational Therapy service provision in integrated teams.
- Adhere and contribute to all relevant procedures, including Health and Safety, Data Protection etc.

3.3 Financial and Physical Resources

- Responsible for monitoring and regular upkeep of the stock of art equipment, and ordering replacements in work locality (orders require authorisation by Headteacher)
- Participate in risk assessments and reviews on the therapy environment so that it is well maintained and secure. Ensures that instruments are used in a safe manner, and the therapy room and the equipment remain secure ensuring access to confidential material is restricted and maintained securely within confidential boundaries.
- Report all accidents and complaints using correct procedures, completing incident forms and informing all relevant parties where appropriate, and notifying the SLT as appropriate.

3.4 Human Resources

- Regularly organise workload and provides clinical supervision for Occupational Therapy students on training placements.

3.5 Information Resources

- Regularly inputs data and statistics into central information systems, and regularly operates computers, responding to e-mail communication.
- Regularly updates clinical records in integrated, electronic patient records.
- Contribute to the development of computerised documents recording patients' work, ensuring all information is treated according to national, local and professional confidentiality guidelines and protocols.

3.6 Continual Professional Development

- Uphold CPD requirements in line with State Registration with Health Professions Council (HPC)
- Participate in regular Occupational Therapies clinical supervision, participate in, promote, and actively contribute to all supervisory meetings, whether individual or group based. Ensure other supervision needs and requirements are met in line with professional recommendations.
- Responsible for maintaining good progressive OT practice by keeping in touch with developments in current advances in OT theory and practice and other related disciplines.
- Attend all mandatory organisational training, including risk assessment, health and safety, control and restraint, breakaway, child and adult protection, and cultural awareness.
- The postholder will have an annual PMR, termly review of caseload by arrangement and regular informal meetings with a member of SLT.

4. SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

- Organise the space to be used for Occupational Therapy, taking into account patient need.
- Arrange safe storage, maintenance and cleanliness of equipment.
- Maintain confidential patient records, input to multidisciplinary case records and departmental records, as required by national/local guidelines.
- Use video technology, digital camera, film camera, etc to record patients' work.
- Develop systems for recording and retrieving personally generalised information (e.g. excel spreadsheets) for audit.
- Follow standard administrative procedures, e.g. Sickness and Absence Monitoring (to phone Headteacher before 7am on the first day of sickness absence).

5. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK

- The post holder exercises autonomous professional responsibility for the assessment, treatment and discharge of patients in liaison with SLT. The use of initiative is required in prioritising cases, need and other aspects of the workload, targeting resources in the context of local circumstances where they are likely to be most effective.

6. COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

6.1 With Mental Health patients and people with Learning Disabilities experiencing high levels of emotional, psychiatric and psychological disturbance

- Communicate and explain to patients the nature and purpose of Occupational Therapy; the reason(s) for referral; aspects of treatment, and negotiates therapeutic boundaries, e.g. confidentiality, length of treatment, storage of work. (The post holder takes care to assist patients to fully understand this information, especially when their condition affects their comprehension).
- Listen; empathise; provide acknowledgement and encouragement to patients in a mode geared to the patients' requirements.
- Working with a directive or non-directive approach as assessed appropriate to patient requirements. At times the therapist needs to maintain the focus of therapy despite patients' resistance or wish to avoid some issues.
- Pay close attention to conscious and unconscious communications (transference/counter-transference) in therapeutic work, and assess optimum therapeutic time to communicate thoughts and impressions back to patients to demonstrate empathy/understanding in language/mode patients can understand.
- Acknowledge and provide a sense of containment for feelings of distress, anger and sadness expressed by patients in individual sessions, or groups.
- Encourage the safe expression of, at times, very hostile/volatile feelings often felt/expressed towards the therapist (and/or other patients in groups) in order to facilitate self-exploration and understanding.
- Demonstrate a high level of therapeutic awareness, patience and sensitivity when working with resistance and psychic defences in patients where barriers to understanding exist, and where concentration and focus is affected by their condition.
- Most communication will take place face-to-face both with individuals and groups. There is a requirement to attend to all aspects of the verbal / non-verbal communication (i.e. art, speech and body language).
- The Occupational Therapist will also communicate with pupil's families in a format agreed with SLT, for instance, by letter, information leaflets / poster, and occasionally survey the patient's views through questionnaires, using mode of communication geared to patient's level of comprehension, e.g.. Boardmaker.

6.2 With parents/carers

- Provide clear information/explanation regarding Occupational Therapy and treatment aims.
- Demonstrate attentiveness, understanding and diplomacy with parents/carers and/or relatives who may present with anxieties; fears; different expectations regarding Occupational Therapy intervention and who may exhibit direct or indirect hostility towards the post holder and/or other team members.
- Maintain clear boundaries between psychotherapeutic work with the patient and other intervention(s) with family/carers. Within this, support appropriate communication of patients' needs and experiences to facilitate understanding and insight into problems within the family.
- Balance confidentiality with family/carers' right to know, risk management and protection issues.

6.3 With staff and other professional groups

- Present and communicate aspects of treatment clearly and concisely.
- Discuss; negotiate; explain and explore, in depth, work on individual cases to support effective joint working.
- Collaborate with medical staff in solving problems of patient care.
- Provide regular information, opinions and advice on cases in reports, assessments, in MDTs, case discussions and care planning meetings, etc.
- When sharing information externally with other services involved, hold the patient's welfare as paramount: balancing the need for confidentiality with risk management and protection issues.
- Record accurately information and actions to be taken discussed with co-workers and professionals from other services.
- Communicate with staff professionally, recognising that emotive cases can arouse strong personal reactions, which can create or reveal powerful and contradictory tensions in staff that require highly developed communication skills.
- Establish good working relations with agencies such as social services to create the best multi-agency support possible for patients, recognising tensions that can exist between different services.
- Exercise diplomacy and approach all aspects of cases with careful thought and balanced view.
- Consultation on use of art equipment by other disciplines.

The duties above are neither exclusive nor exhaustive and the post-holder may be required by the Headteacher to carry out appropriate duties within the context of the job, skills and grade.

The SEAX Trust and all of its academies are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be required to complete a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) application, medical checks and references.

The job description will be reviewed annually and may be subject to change or modification at any time after consultation with the post-holder. It is not a comprehensive statement of procedures and tasks but sets out of the main expectations of the Trust in relation to the post-holder's professional responsibilities and duties.