

Dear New Parents/ Carers,

Welcome to Richard Cloudesley School. The therapy and health provision at Richard Cloudesley School consists of:

- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- School Nurse
- Therapy Assistants
- Health Care Assistants
- Dietician
- CAMHS (Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services)

We've written this letter to explain a bit about how our services work, and to answer some frequently asked questions.

Are therapists employed directly by the school?

Therapy and Health services are not employed directly by the school – but are commissioned through Whittington Health, to provide health services for children registered with an Islington GP.

There are many children who attend Richard Cloudesley from other boroughs, and in these cases Health and Therapy support is arranged separately from the school placement with the Local Authority.

How do Therapists work with the Students, and with the School?

Students receive a package of care from Therapists depending on their individual needs. Each student's needs are prioritised taking into account a range of factors including:

- risks (e.g. eating & swallowing difficulties, child protection issues, risk of contractures, pain)
- Identified potential for change
- Significant discrepancy between a child or young person's abilities (e.g. cognitive and communication)
- Impact on learning
- Changed individual or environmental circumstances (e.g. operation, change of school team, availability of new equipment, transition stages)

Each student will be given individual functional targets which relate to overarching aims around communication, independence and daily living skills. Targets and strategies are set jointly with the school team and reflected in the Individual Education Plan setting process.

Multi-disciplinary and Multi Agency working is built in at different levels to encourage consistency of practice and generalisation of skills. Therapists work in collaboration with parents and carers, local therapy services including wheelchair services, school,

respite centres and external agencies. This includes training, contributing to supporting skills and management at home, attending meetings, providing copies of written guidelines and support and advice re implementation of guidelines. Within schools, it includes training and supporting staff, induction policy development, contributing to schemes of work and curriculum.

Some students may also receive more direct input involving blocks of individual therapy or group therapy working on specific skills, as well as fabrication of resources, splints, orthoses or customised communication systems, and assessment and issue of equipment for use at school and home (Islington students)

What happens if a therapy session is missed?

We often need to prioritise caseloads according to safety issues, children in need, or to attend clinical or other meetings. Children also miss appointments due to illness or conflicting schedules. It would disrupt the future schedule too much if we attempted to reschedule all missed sessions. Often we find that things even-out with respect to time spent, as there may be times when sessions take longer or particular assessments or training sessions are required.

However, if it is with respect to a child where a certain number of therapy sessions are funded - and specified on their EHCP, then therapists will consider this on an individual basis.

Will my child have the same therapist for his/her school career?

To support joint working with the school, we have class based therapists and so your child's therapist is likely to change when your child moves class or if therapists change class due to various external influences such as staffing.

We also have some therapy staff members who are rotational and work at the school as part of their development as a therapist. Those on rotation will move every 4-8 months depending on their level of experience.

We will endeavour to inform you of any changes in therapist with good notice.

Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns?

Your child's Therapists are always happy to discuss your child's progress and therapy plans with you by phone or email. You may also contact them to arrange a suitable time to meet in person. One of your child's Therapists will be also named as Health Co-ordinator. As well as co-ordinating our annual review reports, they can also act as a central point of contact to help answer any queries.

Christine Hale, is the Team Leader for the Additional Needs and Disability Service based at Richard Cloudesley, and can be contacted on chale@nhs.net or on 020 7786 4805 (RC Primary) or 020 7704 8127 (RC Secondary).

Should Christine be unavailable, or should you wish to discuss any other issues regarding Therapy or Health provision, you may also contact:

Laura Perez Adamson, Head Paediatric Therapy and Specialist School Nursing

Whittington Health, Northern Health Centre
580 Holloway Road
N7 6LB

Tel: 0203 316 1879

l.perez-adamson@nhs.net

We look forward to working with you and your child.

Sincerely,

Christine Hale
Team Leader, Islington Additional Needs and Disability Team