



FIVE ACRE WOOD SCHOOL

Growing and Learning Together

THERAPY NEWSLETTER

Term 1—2021

Meet the Therapy Team

Our team of 3 Speech and Language Therapists, 2 Occupational Therapists and a therapy assistant work alongside external professionals including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, music therapists, play therapists and an art therapist.

Therapy Provision at Five Acre Wood School

Therapy is fully integrated into the curriculum and across the school day.

If a pupil is experiencing challenges that cannot be supported by their specialist classroom team, a referral can be made to the therapy team.

Occupational Therapy

We develop our pupils' participation and independence in everyday activities through support with:

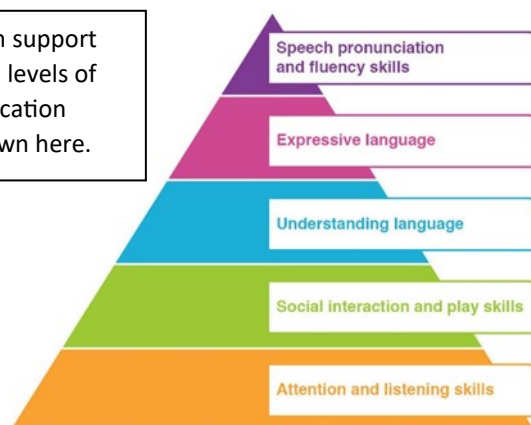
- Self-help skills (feeding/dressing)
- fine motor skills
- seating and posture
- developing sensory skills



Speech and Language Therapy

We follow a Total Communication Approach where words, signs, symbols, objects and sensory cues are used to create an inclusive communication and learning environment for each pupil to reach their full communication potential.

The SaLT team support students at all levels of the 'communication pyramid', shown here.



Some of our students, like those pictured, are supported by the SaLT team to use symbols to aid and develop their expressive language.

How to receive support:

- Contact us on therapy@five-acre.kent.sch.uk or 01622 743925 (ext. 1161/1146)
- Attend one of our Parent Support Groups
- Find us at Parent's Evening



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Meet the Therapy Team

Speech and Language Therapists:



Carol Parry



Sian Williams



Zoe Thompstone

Occupational Therapists:



Charley Whittaker



Gem Byrne

Therapy Assistant:



Gemma Allen



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THE THERAPY NEWSLETTER

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Speech and Language Therapy Stammering

International Stuttering Awareness Day takes place on 22nd October each year, with this year's theme being 'Speak the change you wish to see'. The day was originally established with the aim of 'Creating a world that understands, accepts, and supports people who stutter'.

What is stammering?

Stammering (or stuttering) is a neuro-developmental condition, strongly (but not entirely) influenced by genetics. Research shows there are differences in the way the brain is wired between children who stammer and those who don't. As children's brains are constantly developing, most children will go on to talk fluently. The amount a person stammers can vary, so there may be times when they stammer more or less than usual.

What does stammering look like?

Stammering can take different forms, but these are the most common features of stammering:

- Lengthening of a single sound: "fffffish and chips"
- Repeating a single sound: "c-c-c-coffee"
- Blocking (the mouth is in position but no sound comes out)
- Repeating whole words: "can can can can we go home now?"

You may also see:

- Tension around the eyes, nose, lips or neck
- Repetitive body movements, such as toe or finger tapping



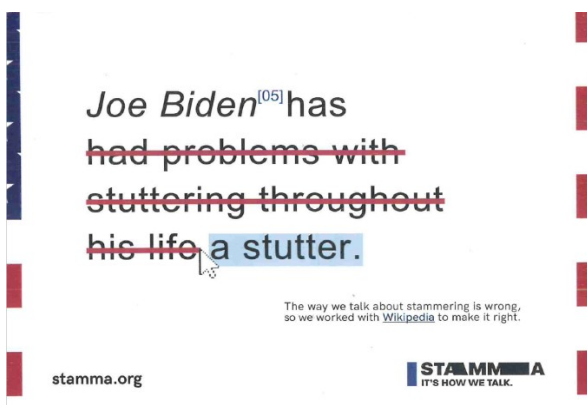
Speech and Language Therapy

How can we support someone who stammers?

Do:	Don't:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and be patient Keep natural eye contact Focus on what they are saying, not how they are saying it Let them know you're listening Slow down your speech/take pauses to give a helpful model Provide praise and encouragement, not just about speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give advice Say 'slow down/relax/breathe' Interrupt or speak over them Finish their words or guess what they are going to say Stare, laugh or make jokes

Where to find out more:

- Contact the school Therapy Team: 01622 743925 or therapy@five-acre.kent.sch.uk.
- Visit the Kent Community Health Trust (NHS) website for short video workshops and general advice: <https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/childrens-therapies-the-pod/speech-and-language-therapy/stammering/>
- The British Stammering Association website is also an excellent place to find out more – follow them on social media to keep up to date with research and campaigns: <https://stamma.org/>
- The Michael Palin Centre for Stammering have lots of advice and support available for parents: <https://michaelpalincentreforstammering.org/>
- The International Stuttering Awareness Day website: <https://isad.isastutter.org/home/>



According to Ed Sheeran, he credited rapping^[03] for helping him to get rid of his stammer less.

The way we talk about stammering is wrong, so we worked with Wikipedia to make it right.



Images from the British Stammering Association's 'Stamma' campaign: "The way we talk about stammering is wrong, so we worked with Wikipedia to make it right".



Occupational Therapy Sensory Behaviour

Sensory Seeker

under-stimulated responses



- I love making **noise**
- I love to **smell** things
- I love **bouncing** and **spinning**
- I love being **massaged**
- I love to **chew** on things
- I tend to **get into accidents** a lot
- I love **jumping** from high up and **crashing** into things
- I don't notice if my **hair is in my face** or my **clothes are on wrong**

Sensory Avoider

over-stimulated responses

- I don't like **being touched**
- I am very **sensitive to smells**
- I am bothered by **loud noises** and **bright lights**
- I **won't eat certain foods** and might seem like a very "picky" eater
- I am extremely bothered by **tags**, **fabrics** and certain **types of clothing**
- I don't like having my **hair brushed**
- I tend to get **overwhelmed** and **anxious**

Mix
some of
each
(may change
regularly)

Strategies for **sensory seekers**:

- ✓ Variety of different textured and strong flavoured food/drink that provides oral feedback
- ✓ Activities in a play area: monkey bars, swinging, climbing, jumping
- ✓ Different smells to identify different environments; can use reed diffusers, essential oils, candles, etc.
- ✓ Designated 'squeeze' spot where they can squish into a tight space safely
 - ✓ Lots of tight bear hugs
- ✓ Carrying a heavy rucksack/bag when going out and about
- ✓ Loud music and dancing/movement for a designated time every day
- ✓ Sensory play: water, sand, slime, play-doh, finger painting (but prepare for mess!!)

Strategies for **sensory avoiders**:

- ✓ Ear defenders/headphones with music at the ready if going out and about
 - ✓ Regular hand-washing opportunities
- ✓ Wall push-ups or the yoga tree pose can help get the sensory system "ready"
- ✓ Designated 'quiet and dark' zone where they can go to calm down when over-stimulated
 - ✓ A choice of well-liked snacks for them to choose dependant on how they feel that day
- ✓ Stick with loose, cotton and plain clothing where able
- ✓ Minimise tight hugs or hand holding if able to (but use a firm touch when needed – a soft touch is aggravating for them)
- ✓ Playing 1:1 rather than in a big group or loud places

You know your children best! Their behaviour may swap between the two, depending on environment, people they are around, and their level of arousal that day. You can mix-up strategies multiple times a day if that is what is needed



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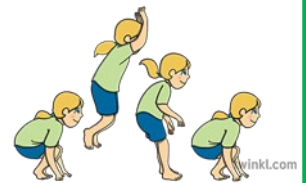
Sensory Circuit Ideas for Home

****Make sure these are done in the order alerting – organising – calming****

Suggested order: 2 alerting, 2 organising, 1 calming

Alerting:

- Star-jumps/jumping like a frog/jogging on the spot
- Running up and down (relay style, timed, obstacle courses)
- If you have a swing, then swinging for 2 minutes with support from adult
- Skipping using a rope, jumping on trampoline, bouncing on gym ball
- Spinning in circles (no more than 10 seconds at a time)



Organising:

- Laying on tummy over gym ball and use your hands to walk forwards and backwards. You can add in a task, e.g. picking something up, or moving a toy from one place to another while they are doing this
- Sitting on floor and rolling ball/toy to adult. You can chat while doing this, or count the number of rolls if this helps with concentration
- Wall push-ups x10
- Bear walking from one target to another
- Games that follow instructions or require thought/processing, e.g. head, shoulders, knees & toes; Simon Says; I-Spy



Calming:

- Laying on tummy on something soft, e.g. duvet or blanket and being wrapped up like a burrito
- Deep pressure from a 'bear hug' or a big squeeze for 5 second intervals. Do this as many times as tolerated/works for you
- Carrying a heavy rucksack (or wearing a weighted jacket/blanket if you have one)
- Laying on back on carpet/beanbag/duvet with your eyes closed, do 10 belly breaths in and out – do this with an adult for prompting and demonstrating
- Listening to calm, mellow and rhythmic music
- Yoga poses with help from an adult: tree pose, warrior pose, lotus pose, cobra pose
- Hand fidgets, e.g. fidget spinners, putty/play-doh





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"We will provide therapy in collaboration with teaching staff, parents and other relevant professionals through a holistic and integrated approach that places the pupil at the centre of everything we do."



Music Therapy



Hello, I am Lib, the music therapist and this is an update on what I have been doing.

Since the last newsletter in June I had regular weekly half hour sessions with the students. It continues to be such a privilege to be working with the students face to face. Making music, responding directly to their tiniest movements, hearing their varied sounds and seeing the excitement on their faces has been fantastic! I now fully appreciate being able to be in this position, in contrast to working via a screen.

All the students at Five Acre Wood School have their own unique and varied needs, some have more profound learning and physical difficulties and others find it hard to access their feelings and emotions. Making music together is an experience that is universal and overrides these areas of difficulty. This term my timetable has included working with some of the students in pairs and small groups. This is exciting as the students experience their music making in relation to fellow students and through turn taking, improvising, using their voices there is a sense of togetherness which is grounded in the music.

As a music therapist I believe that music making is for everyone and it is so exciting that this is once again possible to do working directly with the students.

'My student looks forward to his sessions pointing to the photo of the instruments on his schedule as soon as he arrives at school in the morning'.



New Team Members



Charley; Hello, I'm Charley and I joined FAW as an OT just before the start of the new school year. I have worked as an OT in a hospital for the last three years, but really felt I needed a change, and what better place for that than FAW! I have previous experience working with children, young people and vulnerable adults and I am so looking forward to getting to know everyone here and getting stuck in to my new role.



Gemma B; Hi, I am Gemma one of the new OTs at FAW. I have recently graduated from St George's University, London and have always had an interest in working with children. I can't wait to meet all the lovely pupils at all sites of FAW.



Gemma A; I'm Gemma and I've worked here at FAW for over 8 years as both a TA and senior TA. I'm really looking forward to this change working with the therapy team, expanding my knowledge of therapy and learning more about how I can get stuck in and support the OTs and speech therapists with their work.

Important Dates and Parent / Carers Information

Learning Opportunities for parents/carers:

Kim Griffin is an Australian OT and she offers a **free** sensory course for teachers, parents/carers and professionals who want an introduction to sensory processing disorder. You will learn about the eight senses, rather than the classic five you might have heard of, and it may help you link some of your child's behaviours to the sense that is being targeted.

<https://www.griffinot.com/sensory-processing-disorder-training/free-sensory-course-sensory-integration/>

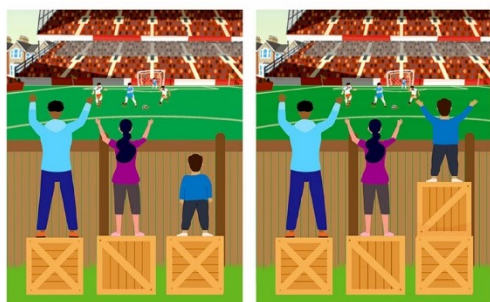
Other **free** courses and learning opportunities:

<https://www.derby.ac.uk/short-courses-cpd/online/free-courses/understanding-autism-aspergers-and-adhd/> (for understanding of Autism, Asperger's and ADHD)

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/science-maths-technology/understanding-autism/content-section-overview?active-tab=description-tab> (longer course from the Open University about understanding Autism)

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/education> (small snippets of tips, tricks and advice for different parts of your day)

<https://senbitesize.thinkific.com/courses/motivate-and-engage> (talks about motivation and how to engage your child with learning at home)



Equality

Equity



- Occupational Therapy Week 1st -7th November 2021 and the theme is 'Health Equity'
- National Sensory Processing Awareness Month—October 2021.
- International Stuttering Awareness Day – 22nd October 2021
- World Autism Awareness Day 2nd April 2022—<https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/world-autism-awareness-day>