

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.

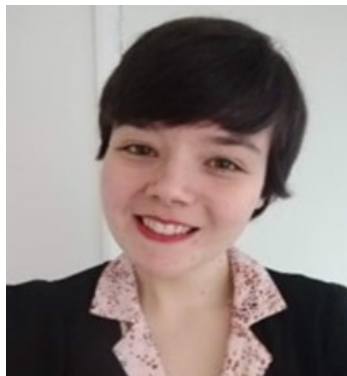
How to receive support:

- Contact us on therapy@five-acre.kent.sch.uk or 01622 743925 (ext. 1161/1146)

Speech and Language Therapists



Carol Parry



Sian Williams



Zoe Thompstone

Occupational Therapists



Charley Whittaker



Gem Byrne

Therapy Assistant



Gemma Allen



FIVE ACRE WOOD SCHOOL

Growing and Learning Together

THERAPY NEWSLETTER

Term 3 2022

Speech and Language Therapy

Social Stories

What are social stories?

Social stories are short stories written in a specific style and format. They describe what happens in a specific social situation and why. They describe what is obvious to most of us, but not obvious to those with impaired social understanding. Social stories were developed by Carol Gray in 1994. Social stories are short, simple, concrete and specific. They contain mostly **descriptive** sentences, (basic facts) and **perspective** sentences (people's views and feelings). They have just one or two **directive** sentences, which prompt the child's behaviour.

Social stories can be illustrated with pictures or symbols, as in the examples shown.

How can social stories help?

- To prepare for a new situation or experience
- To help a child understand how to behave in a particular situation
- To help a child cope with changes to routine and distressing events

How can I find out more?

You can find a lot of information about social stories online, for example on the National Autistic Society website:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/communication/communication-tools/social-stories-and-comic-strip-conversations>

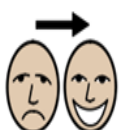
Remember, social stories are always more effective when they are personalised for your child. If you want to learn more about social stories, you can attend the Parent Support Group training on Wednesday 2 March. Please contact vgeylani@five-acre.kent.sch.uk for more details. If you think a social story may help you with your child, you can contact the Speech and Language Therapy Team. We are always happy to try to help!



Medicines can help people who are poorly.



Sometimes I may be poorly.



Adults may give me medicine to help me feel better.



Taking medicine that adults give me is a good idea.



Sometimes I feel angry



It is ok to feel angry



It is not ok to hurt my brother



When I feel angry I can stamp my feet

Speech and Language Therapy

Intensive interaction

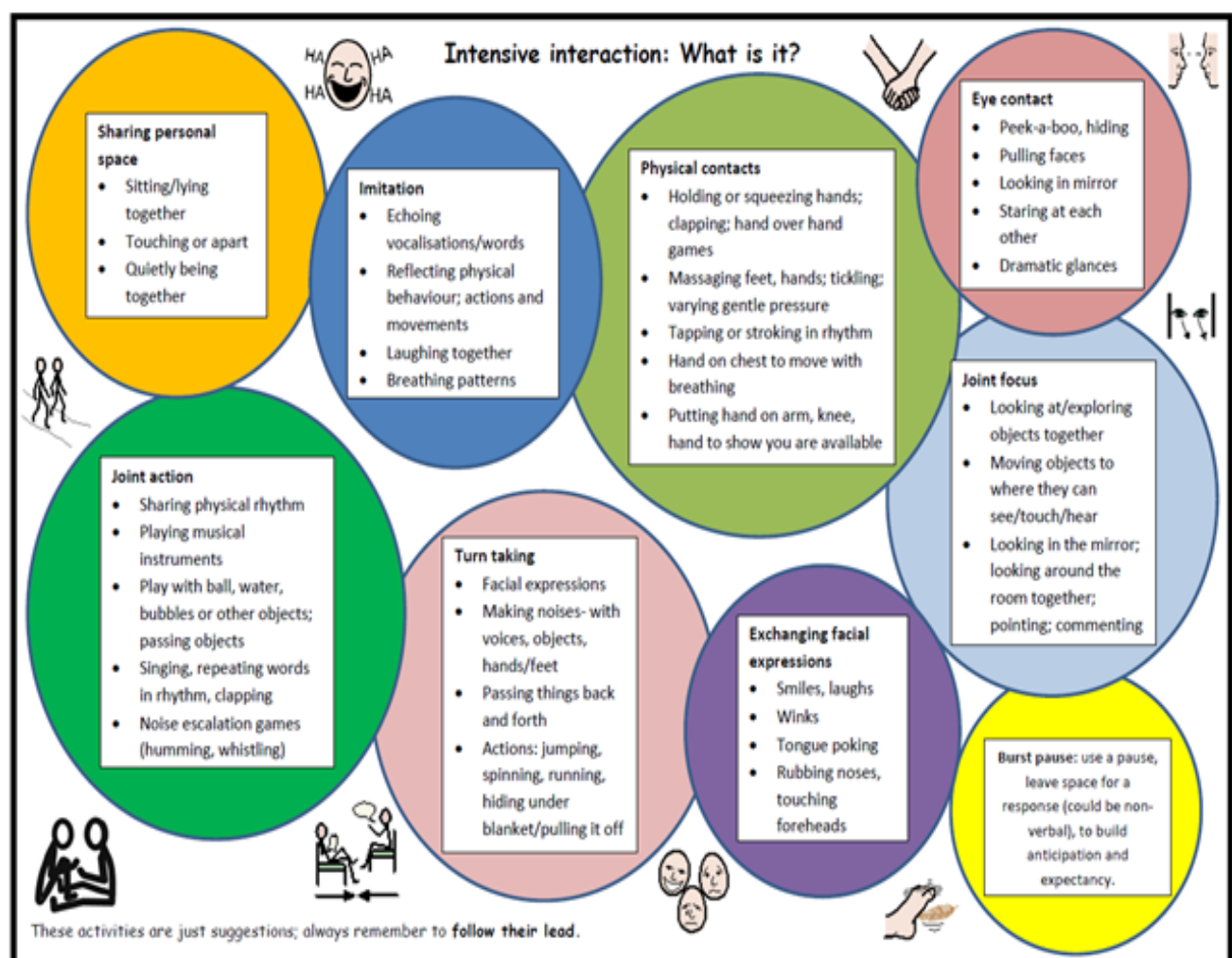
Intensive interaction is an approach used to help those who are using early methods of communication. It encourages individuals to enjoy interacting with others while providing a safe space to explore communication and build relationships. We use intensive interaction within school to support a wide variety of pupils.

Anybody who is involved with the young person's care can use intensive interaction, this includes family and teaching staff. It should be used regularly to practice the foundations of communication in a relaxed and naturalistic way.

Top tips:

- Follow the young person's lead and respond to their actions
- Start by mirroring their actions, then vary it by changing the speed or rhythm, for example
- Have fun! Don't overthink it or get stressed – it's supposed to be enjoyable for both you and the young person

You can find out more by going to www.intensiveinteraction.org





Occupational Therapy

What is OT?

Occupation: every day activities that people do as individuals, in families, and within communities, to occupy time and bring meaning and purpose to life

OT helps you live your best life at home, school and everywhere else. It is about doing the things you *want* and *have* to do. Everything is focused on increasing independence and wellbeing

Occupational Therapists see beyond diagnoses and limitations, to hopes and aspirations. We look at relationships between the activities you do every day (your occupations), alongside the challenges you face and your environment.

What we offer...

- Strategies and support to help students dress independently
- Specialist equipment for toileting
- Specialist cutlery, plates, bowls and cups
- Recommendations for independent feeding
- Support and advice on fine motor skills such as writing, using scissors, grip strength, isolation of fingers and dexterity
- Specialist equipment: cushions, chairs, slings, etc.
- Support and advice for safe manual handling
- Sensory based interventions and equipment
- A close working relationship with the NHS OT team who support with specialist seating and equipment



We work closely with your child's teacher to offer training, support, guidance and targets that work on independence and functional skills.

We can make recommendations and provide further guidance on skills for development as your student's independence increases.



We provide support on the breakdown of tasks, enabling simple manageable steps to aid students begin to develop these skills needed for furthering their independence.

Occupational Therapy

Grounding Technique

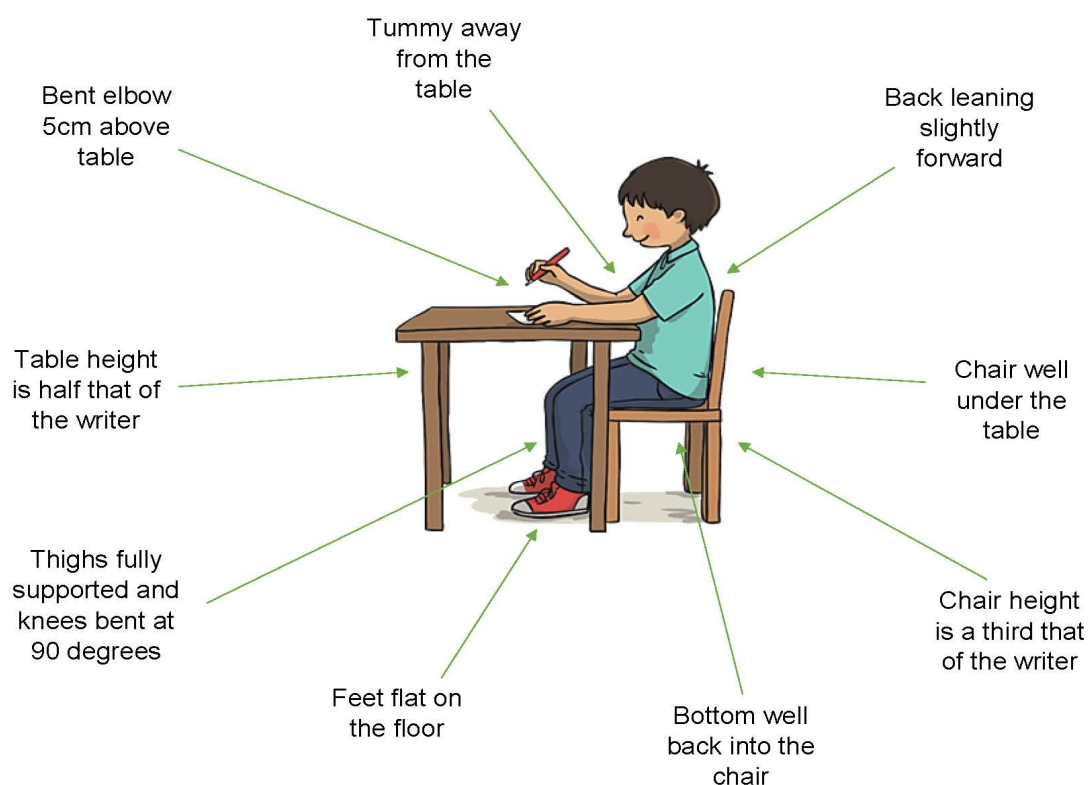
What is grounding?

A coping strategy that is designed to immediately connect you with the present moment. It helps you deal with stress, overwhelming feelings and intense anxiety. This method is beneficial for children (and adults!) who struggle to process the environment around them and regularly become overwhelmed.



Best seating position for handwriting

Best Sitting Position at a Desk for Handwriting



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 October.

All the students at Five Acre Wood School have their own unique and varied needs - some have 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. During my day I am now working with some of the students individually, in pairs and small groups. This group work is exciting as the students experience their music making in relation to others. Through turn taking, improvising, using their voices there is a sense of togetherness which is grounded in the music. I see the students regularly for weekly half hour sessions. The continuity and regularity of the sessions is important. This can help support them in building their confidence in making relationships through the music, in offering them a space to be heard and to express and explore their emotions.



Important Dates and Parent /Carer Information

Learning Opportunities for Parents/Carers:

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS 2021-2022

All meetings will be held virtually via TEAMS. Please see below a list of dates and subjects.

Dates	Time	Subject
Wednesday 23 rd February	10.30am – 11.30am	Signing at home
Wednesday 2 nd March 2022	10.30am – 11.30am	Social stories
Thursday 31 st March 2022	10.30am – 11.30am	Zones of regulation
Wednesday 27 th April 2022	10.30am – 11.30am	Using visual supports
Wednesday 25 th May 2022	10.30am – 11.30am	Developing early communication skills

Please confirm your attendance by emailing vgeylani@five-acre.kent.sch.uk or phoning us on 01622 743925.

