

Bright Start Therapeutic Services

Bright Start's accredited play therapist has significant training over six years to a Masters level, which specifically covers child development and play therapy. In addition to this training we also attend a range of CPD courses. We have been in practice for over seven years working in schools across North Nottinghamshire and the surrounding areas.

We are a member of and follow the ethical framework set out by our registered body PTUK (Play Therapy UK). PTUK is overseen by the PSA (Professional Standards Authority), who oversee the governing of all professional bodies including the HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council). Additionally, we have liability insurance, a DBS check and attend regular clinical supervision.

Bright Start is registered with the ICO (registration reference: ZA071017) and is compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

playtherapyregister.org.uk

professionalstandards.org.uk

Visit our website or like us on Facebook for more information:

www.brightstartuk.org

facebook.com/brightstartuk



Play Therapy

A Guide for Parents/Carers



Zoe Hebden
Accredited Play Therapist
Parent-Child Attachment Play Practitioner
Heart-to-Heart Practitioner

Play Therapy MA (Distinction)
Play Therapy PG Diploma
Therapeutic Play PG Certificate
Psychology with Child Studies BSc (Hons)



What is Play Therapy?

Sometimes children present worrying or challenging behaviour and it can be hard for them to talk about the reason for this. Perhaps they are not ready to talk, or they may not have the words to explain. It can be a worrying time for the child and their family.

Play Therapy is a form of counselling for children, which utilises play as a means to help children express underlying thoughts, feelings and experiences. It is a developmentally appropriate counselling service for children and does not rely on them having to verbalise feelings directly. When adults experience difficulties they may seek help from talking therapies, but for children this can feel intimidating. Consequently, Play Therapy is often offered to help children to communicate feelings and experiences at their own level and pace.

**80% of children
present less
difficulties post
therapy**

What happens during my child's session?

Your child will attend their session at the same time each week, at a time that fits in with the school day. Sessions are usually 45 minutes long. A minimum of 12 sessions are generally offered, but long-term support may be agreed.

During therapy boundaries are set so your child knows to look after themselves, the therapist and the space. Your child can then play in an unrestricted way. Often when they feel safe and secure, they begin to communicate feelings and experiences through their play. Sometimes they may re-enact or play out life experiences to make sense of their past and cope with their future. The therapist interacts with them in their play, following their lead and helps them to make sense of their world. The therapist does not ask lots of questions as each child will work in their own way.

Within the therapeutic environment, children often express underlying feelings, build resilience and develop coping strategies, therefore helping to alleviate the original difficulties.

By expressing thoughts and feelings in play therapy, children may begin to feel better. The outcome of play therapy may be general, for example raised self-esteem or more specific, such as a change in behaviour.

How can I support my child?

Even though you may not be directly involved in your child's sessions, you have a key role in helping the process along. Before your child's session's start, the therapist will meet you in school. It is helpful if you provide as much information as possible about your child's past and present circumstances, as this will enable the therapist to know how best to support your child.

Please encourage your child to attend sessions but avoid asking them to 'be good' as it is important your child feels free to express themselves. Your child may want to talk about what they did, but it is best to let them volunteer the information, rather than asking questions, as it may be hard for them to comment on something they may have difficulty understanding themselves.

Although sessions are likely to be enjoyable, it is also likely that during the time with the therapist your child will face important issues and emotions. This may be unsettling for them and sometimes things may get worse before they get better. If you have any questions or concerns please ask the therapist.

Parent/carer review meetings are usually held each half term, to discuss your child's progress and the themes within their play. You are welcome to contact the therapist in between these meetings to discuss any questions. The specific content of the sessions will remain confidential, but if your child says something concerning then this will be shared with school.

Who is working with my child?

We are working in partnership with Zoe Hebden. Zoe has a degree in Psychology with Child Studies and has completed three years post graduate training to become an Accredited Play Therapist. She has delivered over 3000 therapy sessions and the majority of children show a positive change.

