

Ian Rattray

Integrative Counselling and Therapy
Dip. Couns., Cert. Supervision, BA, MSc., Registered MBACP (Accred)

Counselling and Therapeutic Play Information

Welcome

The school have agreed to fund a number of sessions of Counselling and Therapeutic Play for your child. My name is Ian Rattray. I am a Counsellor and Accredited Member of the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) and as such am bound by their Code of Ethics.

What is Counselling and Therapeutic Play

Counselling and Therapeutic Play offers a space for your child to explore their world and concerns in a safe, confidential and supportive environment, without evaluation or judgement. This can be beneficial for children who may be experiencing difficulties which are having an impact on them or their learning. Exploring thoughts, feelings, actions and behaviours with a therapist can help someone make sense of their experience and bring about change. Although talking is part of it, children and young people often make sense of their world through creative work or play such as through drawing, painting, role play or story making.

Assessment

So that I can offer the correct support and determine if counselling and therapeutic play with me is the best way forward for your child, as part of the assessment process I will invite you to discuss how I might support your child, to get an overview of concerns and to answer any questions you have about the process. I will also speak to relevant school staff, such as the referrer and your child's teacher to support this process.

The initial session or sessions together with your child is also part of this assessment. Whilst this is not therapy your child may find it therapeutic and we will aim to decide if working together is the right step.

As part of the assessment or as the work progresses I may screen if any other factors, for example ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Issues, Visual Stress or Sensory Issues, which might be impacting them and related to the reasons for being referred and indicate a recommendation for assessment by an appropriately qualified professional.

Sessions and process

Once sessions have started they will take place on an agreed and regular basis unless there is an exceptional circumstance, such as illness or a special school event. If I'm not able to provide a session for any reason I will let your child know. Sessions are normally agreed to be weekly at the same time, during the school term and take place at the school unless agreed otherwise. Each session will last 30-50 minutes depending on the age and needs of your child. The number of sessions is dependent on the support your child needs or wants, and the needs of the school. During the assessment process I will discuss my thoughts on this with you and your child.

You or your child may choose to end our work together at any point, in which case I invite your child to let me know in a session, or it may draw to a natural ending. In either case it is important to have a closing session (or sessions) to say goodbye as this is an integral part of the therapeutic process.

If one of our situations changes or if there is a personal or ethical reason why we cannot continue to work together, we will agree the best way to end, for example with a closing session or sessions.

Use of Sessions

With the reason for referral and the focus of the therapy in mind, I will work with your child with what they choose to bring to each session.

Contacting Me

If you wish to speak to me at any point, do let me know. Also, if you think there is anything I need to be aware of that might be affecting your child's wellbeing, such as a change in circumstance or significant event please let me know.

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Sharing Information

As the child's parent or guardian it is your responsibility to inform the child's other parent(s) regarding the therapy, and other relevant people, such as a GP, paediatrician, psychologist, police, CMHT or social services. If you have joint custody, then the therapy cannot go ahead until you have informed them except in certain circumstances if they are estranged.

Confidentiality

I will provide your child with the the highest level of confidentiality possible according to the law, the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions and the School. This means I will not discuss or share with others what is said or done in the sessions unless there is an exceptional circumstance:

- In situations of serious concern regarding your child's emotional, physical or mental wellbeing, for example a risk of self-harm, I would encourage you to disclose this on their behalf, for example to their GP, in order to access appropriate support. With your consent, I could do this on your child's behalf. I will also let the school know so that they can provide appropriate support.
- In situations where either you or your child do not have the capacity to make a disclosure, for example due to a severe mental health condition or learning disability, I may have to disclose confidential information without consent. I will, however, always aim to inform you first.
- In certain situations of public interest, I would have a legal obligation to disclose information without consent and would not be able to inform them or you prior to taking such action. For example, child protection issues, some illegal activities, or acts of terrorism.
- Where your child is considered to be at risk of harm or neglect, this must be reported to the appropriate authorities as required by the The Children Act 1989.
- In accordance with the guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Dept. for Education, 2020), where there is a concern regarding your child's welfare this will reported appropriately; for example, by providing the school with a record of the concern.

I will communicate with school staff with responsibility for your child about general progress to in order to support the therapy and their needs. I share with the school a report of the therapeutic work, which will include details on general progress and general themes addressed. This is for the school's records and in support of your child's education and wellbeing.

Where other agencies are involved with the care of your child, such as a GP, paediatrician, psychologist, police, CMHT or social services, if required I may share the fact that the therapy is taking place and details on general progress. This is to ensure a joined up approach.

Professional Practice

To help progress over the sessions and monitor my work I will make brief case notes. As recommended by the BACP to ensure good practice I will also discuss our work in clinical supervision. All cases discussed in supervision are done so without using identifying details so that your privacy is maintained.

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the therapy sessions or have any concerns, I encourage you to talk these through with me in the first instance. Alternatively, if you are dissatisfied with the Service provided you can contact the headteacher at the school. Should you still be dissatisfied you can contact the BACP as I am subject to their professional misconduct procedure.