

LINDEN LODGE SCHOOL

Job Description



STATUS

Job Title: Highly Specialist Occupational Therapist (Professional Lead)

Accountable to: Head Teacher

Reporting to

Professionally: Clinical Team Leader (with external clinical supervision)

Managerially: Clinical Team Leader

Grade: Equivalent to AfC Band 7

Relationships: School Senior Leadership Team, Clinical Team Leader, Integrated therapy team colleagues, Pupils, Parents.

CONTEXT

About the school

Linden Lodge School provides a high-quality educational experience for visually impaired pupils, including those who are multi-disabled visually impaired and deafblindness. We are recognised as a specialist Regional Centre for children aged between two and nineteen. The school also supports pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Pupils attend the school on a day or residential basis.

Therapy provision at Linden Lodge

Therapists will work as part of a newly formed multi-disciplinary therapy team, which will be well-integrated with the school to provide specialist therapeutic input and support to the children at Linden Lodge. The school is set up by way of distinct learning units or departments, and each therapist's caseload will be formed as much as possible in line with these departments, with additional responsibilities depending on experience and professional development priorities (e.g. postural management, equipment provision, social communication, sensory based strategies etc). Occupational therapy sessions will primarily take place at the school, integrated into the child or young person's school day in order to support and enhance their learning and functional skill development. However, for many of the children and young people, provision of occupational therapy will also take part in their home or the wider community in order to provide real-life opportunities to develop independence and to promote participation. Therapists will benefit from clinical professional leadership, peer support and trans-interdisciplinary working, and the many opportunities for professional development and training the school has to offer.

As this is a new role and set-up for the school, its efficacy will be regularly reviewed and as such, the role may evolve and change over time. You will have the opportunity to work as part of the collaborative team to shape, develop and deliver this service.

Job Purpose

The role of Highly Specialist Occupational Therapist will provide clinical leadership, supervision and management of the Occupational Therapy team. As part of the integrated, multi-disciplinary therapy team at Linden Lodge School, the occupational therapy service promotes participation and functional activity of children and young people within the school and residential setting and the wider community.

The post-holder will also be responsible for delivering highly specialist, evidence-based and outcome focused occupational therapy provision in order to support the needs of the children and young people across the school. They will be required to support the development of the skills of the junior Occupational Therapists in the team, thereby ensuring the provision of a high standard of occupational therapy assessment, treatment and advice to children, young people and their families accessing the service.

Occupational therapy sessions will primarily take place at the school, or at home or in a clinic environment as appropriate.

Job Summary

- To take a specialist role and autonomously manage a caseload of children with complex neurodevelopmental disabilities, physical disabilities and sensory impairments who are placed within a specialist education setting for children with sensory impairment.
- To be responsible for the delivery of a holistic service to children with vision impairment, multi-sensory impairment and complex learning and communication disorders, integrating working practice with education staff and the wider multi-disciplinary team.
- To lead in the advanced occupational therapy assessment of children and young people with complex additional needs, with consideration of the impact of their difficulties on their functional abilities and wider participation. This may include assessment and provision of specialist equipment that supports occupational engagement.
- To provide high quality, evidence based occupational therapy provision for children and young people, in partnership with other members of the Multi-disciplinary team and education services.
- To liaise effectively with multi-disciplinary colleagues identifying the scope and role of occupational therapy for individual children and young people within the school. This will involve identification of opportunities for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary working as appropriate to maximise the effectiveness of interventions.
- To work jointly with families and carers of children and young people, providing expert knowledge on how best to support the functional skill development of children and young adults.
- To lead on the development of training packages to support education staff and parents / carers to implement strategies and approaches devised by the occupational therapist.
- To provide skilled team leadership and be responsible for some operational management and team development. This will include the implementation of policy and policy changes in relation to occupational therapy provision and to set and monitor standards of practice.
- To take a lead role in supervision and teaching of junior occupational therapy colleagues and students where appropriate, providing clinical expertise to enhance their development.
- To supervise, initiate and participate in evidence-based projects, including recommendations for change in practice and to lead in departmental research and audit in their clinical area.
- To liaise and work closely with a multi-agency therapy team and the clinical team leader, clarifying

the role of occupational therapy and be involved developing and implementing frameworks for joint working practice and joint record keeping.

- To support the development of core protocols covering the range of pertinent clinical issues associated with sensory, learning and physical disabilities.
- To represent the occupational therapy professional group relating to issues associated with the area of responsibility.
- To set development and workload priorities in discussion with line manager.
- To provide support and professional advice to the clinical team lead relating to occupational therapy and areas of responsibility.

The post-holder will ensure the development of a high quality, evidence-based therapy service through the promotion of professional and clinical guidance frameworks, in line with national initiatives such as Children's National Service Frameworks, NICE, the Children's Act, RCOT and other child related areas and will be responsible for ensuring the implementation within the context of the integrated therapy team.

Main duties and responsibilities:

CLINICAL

- To be accountable for the delivery of a service to children and young people within Linden Lodge School and residential service that operates in accordance with the professional standards for occupational therapy practice set by the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT). This may at times require home visits to children living in Wandsworth and surrounding areas.
- To provide highly specialist, evidence-based occupational therapy provision for children and young people, in partnership with other members of the multi-disciplinary therapy team and education services.
- To demonstrate expert knowledge of complex and co-occurring neurodevelopmental disorders and how neurodisability can impact on functional skill development.
- To undertake the highly specialist occupational therapy assessment of children and young people with a wide range of neurodevelopmental disabilities and subsequent additional needs. This may include the assessment of children with complex physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, social communication difficulties and sensory impairments.
- To utilise comprehensive assessments, including standardised and non-standardised tests, clinical observation and information from a range sources, combined with investigative and analytical clinical reasoning skills, in order to form a baseline/differential diagnosis from which to plan a programme of intervention.
- To collaborate with other members of the multidisciplinary therapy team in order to share findings that might contribute to accurate and or differential diagnoses for children and young people with complex needs.
- To communicate effectively with the children / young people being assessed for or provided with occupational therapy. Facilitation of effective communication with families is also required.
- To demonstrate highly effective communication skills when liaising with other members of the multidisciplinary therapy team, education staff and other agencies. At times this will require the

communication of complex and sensitive information.

- To have expert knowledge on occupational therapy intervention that incorporates evidence-based sensory strategies in order to support the occupational performance of children and young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities.
- To coordinate and provide evidence-based upper-limb management for children and young people with a wide range of physical disabilities. This will include the fabrication and provision of upper-limb splints that promote function and ensure comfort.
- To assess for and advise on specialist equipment and liaise with other agencies in relation to provision as and when necessary.
- To ensure that individual children / young people's postural needs are regularly reviewed and reassessed as required. This will require the ability to work jointly and flexibly with physiotherapy colleagues as appropriate.
- To coordinate input into the residential unit at Linden Lodge in order to ensure that functional self-care, independence skills and wider participation goals are being addressed.
- To provide highly specialist advice and support to others regarding the development of a child or young person's functional skills.
- To monitor each child or young person's progress and adjust intervention or programmes as necessary.
- To demonstrate clinical effectiveness through the implementation of evidence-based practice wherever possible.
- To utilise child / young person reported and standardised outcome measures as appropriate in order to promote meaningful occupational engagement and demonstrate changes in occupational performance.
- To write or contribute to child related reports that reflect highly-specialist knowledge, identify occupational therapy needs and evaluate progress.
- To maintain clear and concise documents and clinical records that are in accordance with both school's policies and RCOT guidance on note keeping.
- To demonstrate a sound understanding of clinical governance and clinical risk within the setting.
- To co-ordinate a range of both discipline specific and multi-disciplinary teaching programmes.
- To maintain an oversight of requests from Education Authorities to contribute a professional perspective to a child's Education, Health and Care plan, following departmental guidelines and the SEN code of practice, ensuring contributions are provided in a timely manner by the department.
- To act as a second opinion in cases of contention and support negotiations between the organisation, parents and Education Authorities and when required, participate in SEN Tribunals.
- To attend and contribute to child / young person-focused multidisciplinary team meetings as required.
- To take part in discussions and planning to meet individual children's needs to ensure occupational

therapy targets are embedded throughout the school, residential service and carry over into the home environment (including EHC plan reviews).

- To manage and prioritise own complex caseload independently, demonstrating skills in dealing with complex issues to generate appropriate strategies for caseload management.
- To manage and prioritise own workload of both direct and indirect contacts and time allocated working towards personal, integrated therapy service and organisation objectives.
- To contribute to development of care protocols/packages relating to specialist area in liaison with Clinical Team Lead to improve patient care within a specialist area. To assume delegated tasks as requested by line manager, including taking part in working groups and policy development groups.
- To contribute to interagency/ multi-disciplinary team building and policy development assuming a lead using specialist knowledge as appropriate. To adhere to and ensure that team plans, and policies are implemented. To define and manage a work programme for a clinical area.
- To advise Clinical Team Lead on issues of highly specialist service delivery including resourcing, (e.g. service deficiency) and providing progress reports regularly.
- To demonstrate skills in and advise on the therapeutic handling of clients with disabilities, including the ability to move patients and clients e.g. in wheelchairs within moving and handling guidelines.
- To have due regard for own personal safety and that of children/ carers, in particular to have regard to moving and handling regulations, restraining policies and ensure the safe positioning of self and others.
- To engage in any other relevant clinical duties identified by the Clinical Team Lead and or school management.

SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT

- To assist the Clinical Team Lead in achieving team objectives and service delivery by actively participating in team meetings, focus groups, development workshops and to be involved in the day-to-day operational aspects of running the service and to promote occupational therapy within the integrated therapy service, the organisation and among relevant Stakeholders.
- To effectively and efficiently prioritise and organise own workload. The ability to develop and implement highly specialist occupational therapy intervention and programmes of care at a universal, targeted and individual level within a tiered framework is paramount.
- To provide effective guidance, delegation of duties, supervision and performance management to junior and support staff including carrying out Professional Development Plan's and supporting Continuous Professional Development.
- To provide support for junior occupational therapists working in the team to ensure their practice is evidence-based and that they are utilising the most appropriate outcome measure according to their area of specialism.
- To participate in Multi-disciplinary working parties within the organisation. To explore, develop and implement ways of integrated working within the integrated therapy service, relating to external multi-agency teams and across the educational setting.

- To develop interviewing and selection skills in order to assist Clinical Team Lead with the recruitment of junior and support staff.
- To actively participate in ensuring that systems and processes are in place to deliver an efficient and effective integrated service.
- To maintain a working knowledge of relevant procedures including: Safeguarding Children, SEN procedures, and other legal frameworks.
- To apply the principles of Clinical Governance and their application to professional practice.
- To maintain up to date and accurate case notes in line with local policies and RCOT professional standards and organisational policies.
- To share information with others, observing data protection guidelines and data sharing protocols. To comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- To attend department, and Service Planning meetings as required.
- To carry out such duties as may be required by the Clinical Team Lead and Head Teacher, which are consistent with the responsibilities of the Grade.
- To report all clinical or non-clinical accidents, or near misses, promptly, and where required to cooperate with any investigation undertaken.
- To adhere to and implement clerical duties commensurate with the role, this includes following protocols for recordkeeping, measuring outcomes, recording and data management about clinics, equipment and review processes and liaising appropriately with the wider team to ensure service delivery and completion.

TEACHING AND TRAINING

- To identify personal and or professional development evidenced by Personal Development Plan/ Professional Portfolio developed within an appraisal framework, including objectives relating to clinical specialism.
- To participate in Individual Performance Review ensuring that the objectives set reflect the integrated therapy team and organisational improvement plans, including specific objectives relating to the clinical specialism.
- To support junior occupational therapy colleagues to identify and prioritise their own development and or learning needs in line with their areas of specialism and the RCOT career development framework.
- To attend relevant training and development in order to maintain and develop skills and knowledge required of a highly specialist occupational therapist working in the field of special schools.
- To keep up to date with new techniques and developments for the promotion and maintenance of evidence-based practice within the occupational therapy team.
- To meet current HCPC and RCOT standards with respect to professionalism and to maintain up to

date HCPC registration.

- To attend any mandatory training and induction courses, as requested by management.
- To be responsible for ensuring that junior occupational therapy colleagues are up to date with the mandatory training required to ensure safe practice.
- To demonstrate knowledge of and adhere to RCOT Professional and Clinical and National and Local Clinical Guidelines.
- To develop and deliver specialist training (formal and informal) to others in area of clinical expertise.
- To attend relevant courses, meetings and special interest groups, in line with personal development objectives, Professional Development Plan, as well as ensuring appropriate representation of the organisation.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- To initiate and undertake Research/ Clinical Governance/ audit projects within area of expertise. To represent the team within multi-disciplinary systems of clinical governance within the Integrated Therapy service where necessary and to participate in organisational research and clinical governance/audit projects and collect and provide research data as required. To develop innovations in areas of risk management, quality standards setting and clinical effectiveness.
- To be accountable for own professional action and recognise own professional boundaries, seeking advice as appropriate, through interpretation of clinical/professional policies within departmental and national protocols/policies and professional code of conduct.
- To work with colleagues across the organisation ensuring that robust Clinical Governance arrangements are in place to support, develop and promote audit, research and service quality within occupational therapy as well as supporting a research framework within the service.
- To critically evaluate practice through clinical audits and use the information gained to identify opportunities for service improvement and development.
- To continue the audit cycle by evaluating any changes implemented as a result. This should include the adoption of evidence-based practice, the trial of emerging interventions and cessation of interventions where evidence is insufficient and other approaches are indicated.
- To support the Clinical Governance arrangements within the Integrated Therapy Team ensuring appropriate feedback mechanism centrally within the organisation.
- To critically reflect on own performance and that of other staff; and use this evaluation to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of future practice.
- To pro-actively promote a culture of learning, development and clinical excellence within the Integrated Therapy Team, linking this to the organisation objectives and seeking collaboration with academic institutions as appropriate.

<i>Safeguarding</i>	<p>Be fully aware of and understand the duties and responsibilities arising from the Children's Act and Working Together in relation to child protection and safeguarding children and young people as this applies to the worker's role within the organisation.</p> <p>Be fully aware of the principles of safeguarding as they apply to vulnerable adults to the workers role.</p> <p>Ensure that the worker's line manager is made aware and kept fully informed of any concerns which the worker may have in relation to safeguarding and/or child protection.</p>
<i>Leadership</i>	<p>To work under overall supervision of the Headteacher and Clinical Team Lead.</p> <p>To ensure the implementation of all local and School / organisational policies and procedures relating to personnel management as might be contained in e.g. recruitment and retention, managing attendance, conduct and performance standards.</p> <p>To be responsible for equitable standards in the recruitment of staff to the service ensuring that the Trust's policies are followed.</p> <p>To assist the clinical lead in exploring issues relating to the improvement in recruitment and retention of staff.</p>
<i>Behaviour / Risk Management</i>	<p>Work with other colleagues to ensure safety of both workers and users at all times.</p>
<i>Supporting other colleagues</i>	<p>Work with and support other colleagues to ensure the smooth and effective running of the School.</p> <p>To contribute to discipline specific and multi-disciplinary clinical teams by discussing own and others input around clients' needs ensuring a well-co-ordinated care plan.</p> <p>To communicate complex condition related information from assessment to clients, carers, families and members of the multi-disciplinary team/other professions.</p> <p>To work closely with clients, carers and families, agreeing decision making relevant to the patient/client management.</p> <p>To demonstrate empathy with clients, carers and families and colleagues, ensuring that effective communication is achieved, particularly where barriers to understanding exist.</p> <p>To demonstrate skills in motivating clients and /or carers to engage in the therapeutic process.</p> <p>To demonstrate negotiation skills in the management of conflict across a range of situations. To deal with initial complaints sensitively, avoiding escalation where possible, although escalating when necessary.</p> <p>To form productive relationships with others who may be under stress and/or have challenging communication difficulties.</p> <p>To employ excellent communication skills; communicating effectively with clients and carers the reflection on auditory, visual and kinaesthetic aspects of the client's communication, identifying appropriate strategies to facilitate and enhance communicative effectiveness.</p>

To negotiate with carers, clients and others around individual case management.

To recognise potential breakdown and conflict when it occurs, generate potential solutions, and seek advice and support to resolve.

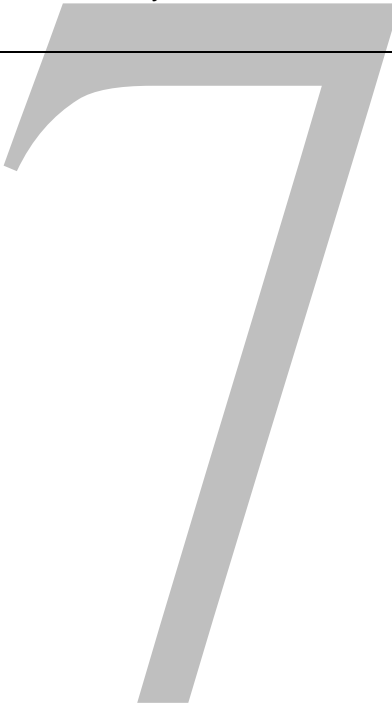
To seek advice and information from other professionals and carers as appropriate in order to make a differential diagnosis on the basis of this information and evidence from assessment.

GENERAL DETAILS

To comply with the policies and procedures within the Linden Lodge staff handbook

REVIEW

This job description does NOT define all the duties and responsibilities commensurate with the post. As such, it will be reviewed at the end of the academic year or earlier if necessary and may be amended at any time after consultation with you.



Linden Lodge School
Highly Specialist Occupational Therapist

Education and Training			
Essential Criteria		Desirable Criteria	
Recognised Occupational Therapy degree qualification or equivalent.		Recognised post-graduate qualification e.g. relevant MSc or equivalent	
Registered member of Health Care Professions Council – Licence to Practice.		Post graduate training in leadership and service management	
Evidence of successful completion of specialist short courses up to Master's degree level or equivalent.		Evidence of engagement with relevant specialist interest groups and / or clinical excellence networks.	
Post graduate training in neurodevelopmental assessment and treatment interventions.		Membership of relevant specialist sections	
Membership of Royal College of Occupational Therapists			
Achievements and Experience			
Essential Criteria		Desirable Criteria	
Substantial experience working as an occupational therapist with children and young people. Including experience of assessing, diagnosing and implementing appropriate management plans for children with a wide range of occupational performance difficulties, including at least 5 years' experience directly relevant to the clinical specialism.		Relevant experience to role working with people with sensory impairment.	
Evidence of continuing professional development and advanced training to achieve highly specialist clinical skills in relation to provision of occupational therapy for children and young people with complex neurodevelopmental disabilities and sensory impairment.		Experience of using SEND code of practice to resolve and support young people and parents in accessing therapy and educational provision, including contribution to mediation and SEND Tribunal proceedings.	
Well established knowledge of a range of standardised and functional assessment tools relevant to the client group, with demonstrable experience of making assessment tools accessible to children with cognitive, sensory, motor and physical difficulties.		Experience of providing second opinions on assessment and management of children with cognitive, sensory, motor and physical difficulties.	
Experience implementing the evidence-base into practice in order to ensure effective		Active member of relevant organisations e.g. CYPF clinical forums	

interventions.			
Experience of assessing for and prescribing specialist equipment to support occupational engagement and participation.			
Ability to demonstrate safe manual and therapeutic handling techniques to other staff members, family members and carers.			
Experience of evidence-based upper limb management when working with children with neurological conditions that affect the upper limb e.g. cerebral palsy.			
Demonstrates a working knowledge of legal requirements, national policies and procedures which may affect practice related to the client group.			
Ability to work with parents to negotiate agreement about therapy provision and maintain conflict at local levels.			
Experience of the clinical supervision of others and ability to facilitate therapist, assistant, student and multi-disciplinary development through effective supervision.			
Knowledge of the principles of clinical governance/ audit, experience of supporting/participation in research projects.			
Sound knowledge of the National Curriculum and specialist curricula appropriate to the client group across all Key Stages.			
Skills & Abilities			
Essential Criteria		Desirable Criteria	
Demonstrates the ability to be a good team leader, active team member and related line management experience.		Proven ability to teach and pass on skills to junior members of staff.	
Excellent interpersonal skills – including observation, listening and empathy skills, and ability to consider cultural diversity.			
Highly developed negotiation and problem-solving skills.			

<p>Excellent presentation skills, both written and verbal, proven ability to teach others on courses/conferences.</p>			
<p>Excellent organisational, prioritisation, analytical and reflection skills and the ability to support the development of these skills in others.</p>			
<p>Significant experience of working as an integral member of a multi- disciplinary team and ability to work collaboratively within a variety of teams and organisations relevant to the client group.</p>			
<p>Excellent ability to communicate complicated/ emotive information with an awareness of the need to take into account highly sensitive/ distressing situations both verbally and in writing where there may be barriers to understanding.</p>			