

# LINDEN LODGE SCHOOL

## Job Description



**Linden Lodge  
School**

A Specialist Sensory & Physical College

### STATUS

**Job Title:** Occupational Therapist (Early Years)

**Accountable to:** Headteacher

#### Reporting to

**Professionally:** Professional Lead Occupational Therapist

**Managerially:** Clinical Team Leader

**Grade:** Equivalent to AfC Band 6

**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 Specialist Occupational Therapist will work 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 be responsible for providing specialist, evidence-based and outcome focused occupational therapy provision in order to support the needs of the children and young people attending the school who are at different life stages. They will also be required to support teaching staff and families / carers to implement occupational therapy strategies and approaches.

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

## Job Summary

- To independently 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 oversight and delivery of a departmental area within 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, drawing on oversight from the professional lead and where appropriate, external agencies.
- To independently carry out 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 and work closely with multi-disciplinary colleagues identifying the scope and role of occupational therapy for individual children and young people within identified areas of the school or who are at specific life stages.
- To work jointly with families and carers of children and young people, providing specialist knowledge on how best to support the functional skill development of children and young adults.
- To support the clinical lead occupational therapist to develop training packages for education staff and parents / carers. Such training packages will demonstrate how these individuals might implement strategies and approaches devised by the occupational therapist.
- To provide a specialist level of advice and guidance to other occupational therapists within the team in relation own areas of clinical expertise.
- To be responsible for carrying out supervision and appraisal of junior colleagues as required.
- To support service improvements utilising audit and research as necessary under the guidance of more senior OTs.
- To support the implementation of core protocols covering the range of pertinent clinical issues associated with sensory, learning and physical disabilities.
- To set development and workload priorities in discussion with line manager.

- To take part in and support clinical training for OT students either via direct supervision or training.  
The postholder will support 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 support implementation with the integrated therapy team.

Main duties and responsibilities:

## **CLINICAL**

- To be responsible for the delivery of occupational therapy to children and young people within a specialist area at Linden Lodge School and residential service. The service 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 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 clinical knowledge of complex and co-occurring neurodevelopmental disorders; to be able to identify how neuro-disability can impact on functional skill development.
- To undertake 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, with support from the professional lead and others as appropriate.
- To work closely with other members of the multidisciplinary therapy team in order to share findings that might support specific ways of working with an individual child / young person.
- 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 effective communication skills when liaising with other members of the multidisciplinary therapy team, education staff and other agencies.
- To empower parents and carers and education staff in understanding the nature of a pupil's strengths and needs, the impact on function and participation, as well as activities and strategies they can use in daily routines to maximise functional abilities and engagement in learning.
- To provide 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 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 regularly review individual children / young people's postural needs. This will require the ability to work jointly and flexibly with physiotherapy colleagues as appropriate.
- To provide input into the residential unit at Linden Lodge to address functional self-care and independence skills, making recommendations for equipment and providing advice to support workers.
- 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 with support of the clinical lead occupational therapist.
- 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 contribute to child related reports that reflect 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 develop skills in training and contribute to a range of both discipline specific and multi-disciplinary teaching programmes to support families, education staff and colleagues.
- 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 comply with 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.
- 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 be responsible for an area of work (a departmental area/s) as agreed with the professional lead.
- 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 assist the Clinical Team Lead and Professional Lead in achieving team objectives and service delivery by actively participating in team meetings, focus groups, development workshops within the integrated therapy service, the organisation and among relevant Stakeholders.
- To undertake specified projects under the direction of the Professional Lead or Clinical Team Lead.
- To actively contribute to own supervision and Professional Development Plan processes.
- To support the implementation of systems and processes to deliver an efficient and effective integrated service.
- To develop a sound 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 share information with others, observing data protection guidelines and data sharing protocols. To comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 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 Band.
- 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 Personal Development Plan ensuring that the objectives set reflect the post-holder's role in the integrated therapy team and organisational improvement plans, including specific objectives relating to the clinical specialism.
- To attend relevant training and development in order to maintain and develop skills and knowledge required of a 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 continually improve knowledge of and adhere to RCOT Professional and clinical and National and Local Clinical Guidelines.

- 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 attend relevant courses, meetings and special interest groups, in line with personal development objectives, Professional Development Plan.
- To develop a working knowledge of relevant procedures including: Safeguarding Children, SEN procedures, and other legal frameworks.

## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- To contribute to Clinical Governance/ audit projects within area of expertise.
- 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 support the Clinical Governance arrangements within the Integrated Therapy Team ensuring appropriate feedback mechanism centrally within the organisation.
- To pro-actively promote a culture of learning, development and clinical excellence within the Integrated Therapy Team, linking this to the organisation objectives.

<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>	To work under overall supervision of the Headteacher and Clinical Team Lead.
<i>Behaviour / Risk Management</i>	Work with other colleagues to ensure safety of both workers and users at all times
<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 and continually develop empathy with clients, carers and families and colleagues, ensuring that effective communication is achieved, particularly where barriers to understanding exist.</p>

	<p>To develop skills in motivating clients and/ or carers to engage in the therapeutic process.</p> <p>To develop 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 develop 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> <p>To negotiate with carers, clients and others around individual case management.</p> <p>To recognise potential breakdown and conflict when it occurs, generate potential solutions, and seek advice and support resolution with support from the professional lead or others as appropriate.</p>
<p><b>GENERAL DETAILS</b></p> <p>To comply with the policies and procedures within the Linden Lodge staff handbook</p> <p>The postholder will support 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 support implementation with the integrated therapy team.</p>	
<p><b>REVIEW</b></p> <p>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.</p>	

**Linden Lodge School**  
**Specialist Occupational Therapist**

<b>Education and Training</b>			
<b>Essential Criteria</b>		<b>Desirable Criteria</b>	
Recognised Occupational Therapy degree qualification or equivalent.		Post graduate training in areas of specialism relating to occupational therapy practice e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment prescription</li> <li>• Postural management</li> <li>• Neurorehabilitation</li> <li>• Autism Spectrum Disorder</li> <li>• Upper-limb management</li> <li>• Sensory needs</li> </ul>	
Registered member of Health Care Professions Council – Licence to Practice.			
Evidence of successful completion of specialist short courses up to Master's degree or equivalent.			
<b>Achievements and Experience</b>			
<b>Essential Criteria</b>		<b>Desirable Criteria</b>	
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		Relevant experience working with people with Sensory impairment including deaf-blindness and vision impairment and profound and multiple learning difficulty .	
Evidence of continuing professional development and advanced training to achieve specialist clinical skills in relation to provision of occupational therapy for children and young people with complex neurodevelopmental disabilities and sensory impairment.		Experience of making assessment and intervention tools accessible to children with cognitive, sensory, motor and physical difficulties.	
Well established knowledge of a range of standardised and functional assessment tools relevant to the client.		Knowledge of specialist curricula appropriate to the client group.	
Sound knowledge of the National Curriculum across all Key Stages.		Active member of relevant organisations e.g. CYPF clinical forums	
Experience of working with children with special needs in an educational or multi-disciplinary setting.		Experience fabricating upper-limb splints for children with neurological conditions that affect the upper limb e.g. cerebral palsy.	

Experience of assessing for and prescribing specialist equipment to support occupational engagement and participation.			
Knowledge of the use of safe manual and therapeutic handling techniques required when working with children with physical disabilities.			
Knowledge of evidence-based upper limb management when working with children with neurological conditions that affect the upper limb e.g. cerebral palsy.			
An understanding of national policies and procedures relevant to the client group.			
Knowledge of the principles of clinical governance/ audit.			
Excellent auditory discrimination skills and ability to transcribe speech phonetically.			
Skills & Abilities			
Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria		
Demonstrate the ability to be a good team member.		Leadership qualities.	
Excellent interpersonal skills – including observation, listening and empathy skills, and ability to consider cultural diversity.			
Negotiation and problem-solving skills.			
Excellent presentation skills, both written and verbal.			
Excellent organisational, prioritisation, analytical and reflection skills.			
Understanding the roles of other professionals and ability to work collaboratively within a variety of teams and organisations relevant to the client group.			
Ability to communicate complex information to others where there may be barriers to understanding.			
Recognises the limits of own authority within the role.			