

Play & Creative Arts Therapy

Clear Sky deliver one to one Play & Creative Arts Therapy to children who have experienced trauma or display emotional or behavioural difficulties. Our qualified Therapists offer children an age appropriate way to 'play out' difficult feelings and build resilience so that they may become happy children who love life and enjoy school.

What is Play & Creative Arts Therapy?

Play & Creative Arts Therapy uses the child's natural language of play to help children overcome emotional or behavioural challenges. The Therapist's toolkit consists of carefully selected toys and creative mediums to allow children to express themselves in whichever way they choose. At Clear Sky we have a team of Play Therapists, Art Therapists, Dramatherapists, Dance & Movement Psychotherapists, Child and Adolescent Play Based Counsellors and Child Psychotherapists to deliver the Play & Creative Arts Therapy sessions. All of our Therapists are trained in a child-led, creative therapy approach using play and different creative modalities to support the therapeutic process of the individual children they are working with.

Who is Play & Creative Arts Therapy suitable for?

Play & Creative Arts Therapy is suitable for children between 4 and 12 year's old who have experienced trauma or display emotional or behavioural difficulties. These might include:

Emotions	Behaviours	Environment
Anxiety	Aggressive	Family breakdown
Low self-esteem	Withdrawn	Bullying
Difficulties with regulation	Antisocial behaviour	Bereavement
Peer difficulties	Inattentive	Abuse
Low resilience	Hyperactive	Trauma

Why Play & Creative Arts Therapy in schools?

Children who have experienced trauma or difficult life circumstances may struggle to achieve their potential in school and may find it challenging to access learning. Trauma can block children's ability to concentrate, take on board new information and engage in school life. Teachers and school staff are on the front line working with children and are likely to identify those who are experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties. Staff can help these children get early intervention support, at an age when it is proven to be most effective. The school environment provides the child with a familiar and safe place, ensuring consistency. Clear Sky can ensure that your school is providing accessible, in-house support for children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. For further information on trauma click [here](#).

Does Clear Sky offer Play & Creative Arts Therapy privately?

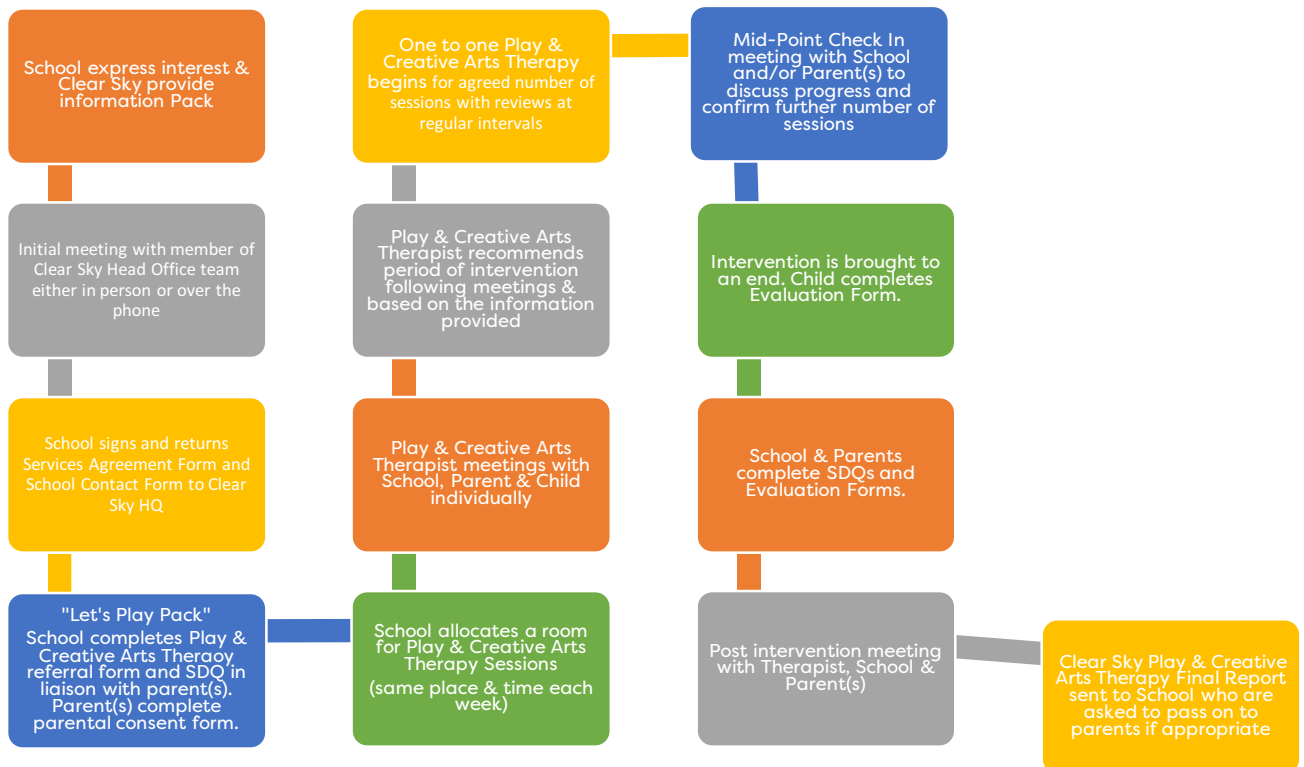
Clear Sky only work through schools and do not work directly with private clients. To find a private Play Therapist please refer to the [PTUK online register](#).

How can I access Play & Creative Arts Therapy?

If you are a parent, who feels your child would benefit from Play & Creative Arts Therapy, please speak with your child's teacher or the school SENCO and ask them to get in touch with us.

If you work at a school and are interested in our services please contact Jess Haynes, our Play Maker, to arrange a free consultation. Email jess@clear-sky.org.uk or call 01865 362789.

What is the Play & Creative Arts Therapy referral process?



How many sessions of Therapy would a child normally have?

Play & Creative Arts Therapy sessions are conducted one to one, once a week at the same time and place and last between 30 - 50 minutes depending on the child's age and developmental level. Each child referred for Play & Creative Arts Therapy will receive a minimum of 12 one to one Therapy sessions in line with the school term. The average number of sessions that children have with a Clear Sky Therapist is 19 (Aug 2017). **We recommend budgeting for at least 24 sessions per child as each child's needs are different.** At the time of referral an SDQ assessment tool will be used to understand the difficulties the child is experiencing and to provide a suitable length of intervention. For example:

Length	Example
12 sessions	A child who has a stable home life with a secure attachment with caregiver(s), who may have experienced a trauma, such as bereavement of a non-parental figure
24 sessions	A child whose parents are separated and there are difficulties managing the new family dynamics or transitions between homes
36+ sessions	A child who has attachment difficulties, has experienced or witnessed abuse or has been exposed to inconsistent or unpredictable parenting

When does Therapy take place?

The Therapist will liaise with the school to confirm exact timings. We will fit in around a school's timetable as much as possible but we do ask that schools are as flexible as possible when offering suitable times for sessions. This flexibility makes it easier for us to match a Therapist with the school without delay.

Can a Therapist tell me what happens in a session?

The Therapist is able to feedback to parents and school staff about a child's 'progress' in Play & Creative Arts Therapy, but not their 'process'. This means that they are able to tell you in general terms the themes that might be occurring in Therapy, but they will not tell you specific things that have happened in the session. In order to process their world freely, children need to be able to trust the Therapist and believe that they will provide a safe and secure space. Confidentiality ensures this trust remains intact and so the Therapist will uphold the child's right to privacy. The Therapist will only break confidentiality if they believe the child is at risk of being harmed, and they will also make the child aware of this. This can be frustrating for school staff and parents but it is an essential part of the therapeutic process.

What will the Therapist do in the case of a Child Protection issue or disclosure?

If the child makes a disclosure of a serious nature to the Therapist the session will be stopped immediately. Before Therapy begins we will ensure there is an agreement between the school and the Therapist about what the procedure will be in these circumstances. The Therapist will always follow the protocol of the school they are working from. More information can be found in our Child Protection Policy on Clear Sky's website. <http://www.clear-sky.org.uk/resources/>

Should the child be rewarded with Play & Creative Arts Therapy when they are behaving badly?

Play & Creative Arts Therapy is unconditional and should not be regarded as a 'reward' or 'punishment' for behaviour. It is a space in which the child can process their feelings and better understand their behaviour. Children need to feel secure in the knowledge that their Therapy session will be there for them each week. One of the key aspects of Play & Creative Arts Therapy is that the Therapist is non-judgmental – they express no view regarding the child's behaviour; this gives the children the permission to be however they need to be to know they are accepted within the boundaries agreed at the outset. Therapy can be helpful when a child is being disruptive or difficult as they can process their thoughts or feelings surrounding this.

Can I interrupt a Therapy session?

As Play & Creative Arts Therapy takes place in school, the space is often used by a number of people. It is important that staff members get what they need from the space before the session commences as interruptions can inhibit Therapy. Children need a consistent and secure place to feel safe enough to express themselves. Even one interruption can break down the Therapy process. The same room should be used each week and the Therapist will collect and return the child at the same time and place. It is important to ensure that the room is inviting and welcoming for the child having Therapy, even small things like making sure the room is warm can make a big difference in the way the child approaches the sessions.

Can I ask the child questions about the Therapy session?

It is best not to ask a child about their Therapy sessions, or say things like "have fun" when they are going to Play & Creative Arts Therapy. This is because children in Therapy are often exploring traumatic and difficult events and this is unlikely to be fun for them; but it is a necessary part of the healing process. That being said, there

is often a lot of laughter and fun that can be had in Play & Creative Arts Therapy, but we won't know how it is for that child until they enter the session. Play & Creative Arts Therapy provides a safe, secure and non-judgmental space for the child to process their feelings and their world. Children can feel obliged to answer questions from members of staff but not actually want to. Their process is private and it remains so without questions being asked.

What will Clear Sky do with the information gathered within Play & Creative Arts Therapy?

All information is kept strictly confidential unless a child protection concern or disclosure is raised. At the end of the Therapy, a report will be compiled and sent to the school along with any further recommendations for support.

How much does Play & Creative Arts Therapy cost?

We offer Play & Creative Arts Therapy services at a subsidised cost of £50 per session per child. This cost is inclusive of all meetings that take place around the Therapy intervention, including parent and teacher meetings and the end of Therapy report (see referral process above). Many schools that we work with are able to access Pupil Premium money to support Play & Creative Arts Therapy within their school.

We would expect to support 4-5 children with Play & Creative Arts Therapy at any one time in school - approximately 8 children per academic year. Schools are requested to sign up for Play & Creative Arts Therapy for an academic year to ensure that as one child finishes therapy another child can begin.

We understand that needs vary and we consider each school on a case by case basis. Please get in touch to discuss how we might best support the children in your school.

As a guide, the following costs are based on 36 weeks / sessions across an academic year:

Offer of Services	No of children	Cost per annum
Full day of Therapy	5 children	£9,000
Half day of Therapy (morning) *	3 children	£5,400
Half day of Therapy (afternoon) *	2 children	£3,600

Please note that if there is only one child supported through Play & Creative Arts Therapy at your school the cost per session is £80.

*Two schools within a school partnership are welcome to share the cost of a day of Play & Creative Arts Therapy - the Therapist can travel between the schools and see 4 or 5 children on the same day.

What evidence is there that Play & Creative Arts Therapy works?

Clear Sky is proud to have one of the highest rates of early intervention success with over 80% of children experiencing positive change as a result of Play & Creative Arts Therapy alone. Combined with parental involvement and professional training, research shows that the impact on children's futures will be greater still. We record and update our statistics continuously. For the latest figures please refer to the website, where you will also find testimonial evidence and supporting case studies.

Do you offer any support for parents?

We offer a range of complementary services for parents. Please visit the **Play for Parents** section of the website for further information.

Do you offer any training for professionals?

We offer a range of courses aimed at professional practitioners and school staff. Please visit the **Play for Professionals** section of the website for further information.

Guidelines for Schools Five “C’s” of Play & Creative Arts Therapy

Confidentiality

The Play & Creative Arts Therapy has to be private to allow the child to feel safe enough to express and explore difficult and painful experiences.

Consistency

Play & Creative Arts Therapy takes place at **the same time and same place each week**. It is important no changes take place even if the child is being disruptive or difficult.

Commitment

The Therapist, teaching staff and parent / carers are committed to helping the child. This requires patience, trust and belief in the Therapy process.

Consent

Before Therapy can start, the parent / carer must give written consent. The child must also give verbal consent.

Child Protection

Play & Creative Arts Therapists adhere to the school's Child Protection procedures, the Children Act (1989) and Local Authority Child Protection procedures. They must also know who the Child Protection Officer is at the school so that they can work together to discuss any concerns.

Guidance from the British Association of Play Therapists.