

Dear Parents, Guardians, Families, and Children!

The Wiltshire Children's Community Service Integrated Therapies Team would like to extend a warm welcome back to a new school year. We would also like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves and provide a little information for the year ahead.

Below we have outlined some key pieces of information including who we are and what we do, what level of physiotherapy therapy and occupational therapy input you can expect, how you can access our services, and what to do if you have any questions or concerns for us.

### **Who we are:**

The Integrated Therapies Team in Wiltshire comprises of physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and therapy assistants. Each special school will have a senior physiotherapist and occupational therapist assigned to it. They will be supported by junior staff as well as therapy assistants.

### **What We Do:**

The role of Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists in schools is to ensure your child is able to access the curriculum, the school environment, and to promote engagement in functional activities and classroom tasks. It is something that needs to be integrated into their normal daily activities by everyone involved with your child.

We provide advice and equipment and if needed a programme of activities to help your child progress and improve their physical well-being. The programmes are designed to be carried out by staff at school and by families and carers at home. Both Therapists and Therapy assistants will provide training and on-going support into class to enable them to achieve this and meet their obligations as per the Child's Statement or Education and Health Care Plans.

### **What we do not provide:**

**Orthotics:** Specialized footwear, insoles, day and night splints (feet and bespoke hand splints), helmets, gaiters, Calipers, and braces are provided by the Orthotics Department at Chippenham Community Hospital. They will complete an assessment and provide what in their opinion is the best option. Should there be any issues with what they have provided, or if your child has grown then please contact them directly on the number below.

New referrals to orthotics can be made through your GP, Paediatrician or by ourselves following a review.

Community Orthotics - Wiltshire Health and Care  
Chippenham Community Hospital  
Rowden Hill  
Chippenham  
SN15 2AJ  
Tel: 01249 456615  
Fax: 01249 444511  
(8.30 - 4.30 Mon to Fri)

**Sensory Integration:** Occupational Therapists advise on sensory strategies but do not provide sensory integration treatment. This is a service which some schools have bought in separately and is not provided by the Wiltshire Integrated Therapies Team. Please ask your school directly for further information or resources regarding this additional service.

**Wheelchairs:** All Children's wheelchairs are provided by the wheelchair service based at Melksham Hospital. The Occupational Therapist that visits your child's school will liaise with your child's wheelchair therapist as part of their 24 hour postural programme. However, if you have concerns regarding your child's wheelchair please contact wheelchair services directly.

Wheelchair Services  
Melksham Community Hospital  
Spa Rd  
Melksham  
SN12 7NZ  
Tel: 01225 899130

### **Where children are seen:**

We will continue to provide our services in the school setting whenever possible. When appropriate, therapists may also see your child at home or on occasion, we may ask you to attend a clinic appointment for specific assessments or treatments. As a community service, we are committed to seeing families in their usual environments and close to home whenever feasible.

### **How often children are seen:**

Children who have therapy in their Statement or EHCP will have a full review yearly to which parents are welcome to attend. In addition, some children will have further reviews throughout the year as indicated in their Statement or EHCP. Further input will be provided if your child has surgery, or botox, or a medication change in order to maximise benefit and monitor changes. If you feel you would like to discuss the level of intervention, this can be done either by calling us or discussing at the time of their therapy review.

Input can be provided by any member of the team, including the senior therapist, junior staff, and therapy assistants. The appropriate team member will be identified by the lead therapists according to the complexity of the child or need, and the availability and timeliness with which this can be carried out.

When your child has been seen a notice will be sent home indicating who has seen them and a basic description of what was done. Contact details will be provided should you like more details of the visit.

Therapists do not usually attend school annual review/PCP meetings, however if there is a particular concern and you would like us present please let us know so we can arrange for one of the team to be there.

Our therapy service aims to meet the needs of every child as set out in their EHCP plans or Statement, however, there are occasions where circumstances may affect this. We will work with the child, school, and family to minimise any limitations to the service we are able to provide.

### **What about when something comes up between scheduled reviews?**

If you have a concern between reviews please complete a self-referral form, a copy of which is included with this letter. It is important you include as much information as possible to enable us to determine the most appropriate course of action.

Examples of when to complete the form may be:

Your child is in discomfort.

Equipment is not supporting your child or their posture is worsening

Your child is moving differently/falling more.

Change of carer

Once we have received your form we will contact you to let you know the outcome.

### **Parent/Carer Involvement:**

We are always happy for parents to join us in school at any time to go through programmes or discuss any needs. Contact information for the integrated therapy team will be included with this letter.

We are strongly committed to taking a team approach, with the child at the centre of all we do. We see parents and families as integral and equal members of this team and as such, we will expect your input and participation in the care we provide.

We hope you have found the above information useful. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours Sincerely,

Wiltshire Children's Community Service Integrated Therapies Team