



Occupational Therapy – Professional Practice Policy
 Responsible person – Head of Therapy
 Next scheduled review – Autumn 2017

Date	Reviewed by	Amended (Y/N)
October 2003	Heather Anderson	Policy written
December 2004	Heather Anderson	Yes
September 2006	Mandy Grist	Yes
Summer 2009	Mandy Grist	Yes
Autumn 2011	Janet Dunn, Jean Wilson, Liane Hall and parent/carer focus group	Yes
Autumn 2013	Jean Wilson	Yes
Autumn 2015	Simon Elliott	Yes
Autumn 2017		



Meath School
Occupational Therapy Department
Professional Practice Policy Document

Principles of Delivery of Service by the Occupational Therapy Department at Meath School (to include Sensory Integration Interventions)

Mission Statement

The Occupational Therapy Department provides a specialised, integrated, child centred Occupational Therapy service to support pupils who have occupational therapy provision as part of their statemented need to access class based teaching and learning.

We offer: Provision of group and individual therapy and individual class based programmes where required
Collaborative working with class teams with regard to pupils' Occupational Therapy needs
Sharing knowledge of motor, sensory motor and sensory processing skills with staff and parents/carers
Commitment to continuing professional development
Participation in the extended services from the I CAN Meath Centre, including provision of training to external professionals

Occupational Therapy Service

Our Aim: To achieve functional, integrated therapy inside the classroom and other school contexts.

Delivery

The Occupational Therapy service at Meath is an integrated model which is focused on supporting pupils to access the class based curriculum by working on core barriers to learning. The aim is to maximise a child's potential to access learning, and to optimise their ability to function in class. Therapy approaches and delivery are determined by the treating Occupational Therapist, taking into account the provision described in the child's Statement of Special Educational Needs.

Occupational Therapy is delivered to pupils who have occupational therapy provision as part of their statemented need. Children without OT on their Statement but with some identified Occupational Therapy needs will not receive direct Occupational Therapy input unless this has been agreed at Annual Review. However, they may benefit from whole class sessions e.g. for handwriting. All pupils benefit from the integrated approach to Occupational Therapy as skills and strategies are cascaded throughout the school environment, and staff are able to update their skills and knowledge through ongoing training from the Occupational Therapy team. Examples of intervention integrated into the school day include class directed programmes to support handwriting, attention, organisation, visual perceptual/visual motor skills, alertness and sensory processing difficulties.

Direct individual occupational therapy intervention can be delivered by a qualified Occupational Therapist or an Occupational Therapy Assistant under the guidance of a qualified Occupational Therapist, as deemed appropriate by the Occupational Therapist.

In order to ensure that Occupational Therapy support is as integrated and functional as possible the Occupational Therapy service provides the following levels of intervention:

Band 1 - 2 x 40 minutes direct sessions per week, one individual and one small group, to include 10 minutes ongoing treatment planning, plus liaison time according to need and/or statement. For appropriately identified pupils, provision will be in half-termly blocks.

Band 2 - 1 x 40 minute session per week, individual or small group, to include 10 minutes ongoing treatment planning, plus liaison time according to need and/or statement.

Band 3 – 12 sessions across the academic year, frequency and regularity as deemed appropriate by the OT - individual or group, with periods of consolidation.

Band 4 – Fully integrated therapy across classroom activities – which includes programmes, liaison with staff and monitoring as appropriate.

The level of OT provision identified on the statement / EHCP will determine the initial band of OT input. Subsequent bands will be decided using information from standardised assessment, professional judgement and discussion with class teams as to functional barriers to learning. The highly functional and integrated model at Meath means that pupils' OT needs are met through a range of different ways as per the bands outlined above, and that OT provision at Meath does not always need to be as per the statement/EHCP. Families will be kept fully informed.

Pupils' progress will be continually assessed, but especially prior to their first Annual Review, and a professional decision will be made as to the band of intervention necessary. This will be the school's recommendation to parents/carers and at the Annual Review meeting. There will be similar reviews of progress throughout the second and subsequent years and particularly preceding the Annual Reviews. The nature of therapy delivery will change as pupils move through the school resulting in movement across bands as appropriate. The change of band will not necessarily mean a change of statement as a child may move between bands whilst at Meath. However, if assessment scores and observations show clearly that a child no longer needs the stated level of OT, this will be reflected at the Annual Review and a change to statement/EHCP recommended.

The OT will continually evaluate effectiveness of all levels of OT interventions, relevant approaches and programmes of therapy through a variety of methods. This may be by standardised testing, measuring outcomes of set targets, or through evidence based practice. Evaluation of the impact of therapy is essential in identifying whether direct therapy is effective. If a pupil does not make progress following intensive input, this will be an indication that the level/ type of intervention needs to change.

Individual sessions and group sessions both have benefits, however, some children may respond better to one approach rather than another. For example some pupils may feel more relaxed within a group and this may be a more effective way of working with them. Other children may be more comfortable within a one to one setting. Information about how individual pupils work best will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that pupils can access therapy in the most appropriate way.

While every attempt is made to ensure pupils receive their designated sessions, due to tight timetabling issues it is not possible for therapists to provide catch up sessions if they, or the pupil, have missed a session through illness or being required to attend other activities e.g. training/ school performances etc.

Communication

Parent/Carer Communication Forms

These outline termly targets and provide a measure of pupil progress on a termly basis. They are sent out to families of pupils receiving direct Occupational Therapy at the beginning of each term and reviewed at the end of term. The pupil's IEP target is identified on this form and communicated to the class team.

Reports

Full assessment reports will be prepared for new pupils to the school who are statemented for direct individual Occupational Therapy. Full assessment reports will also be written for pupils statemented for direct individual Occupational Therapy at Year 5. For all other pupils statemented for direct individual Occupational Therapy the Occupational Therapist will report on progress against targets, list future targets, confirm current statemented need, and detail provision banding for the next year. These reports will be sent out prior to the pupil's Annual Review.

Due to time constraints any additional reports will have to be written within that pupil's contact time.

Annual Review Attendance

Wherever possible the Occupational Therapist will attend the first Annual Review of pupils statemented for direct individual Occupational Therapy and also for those in Year 5 who are statemented for direct individual Occupational Therapy. In the event that attendance is not possible, the Occupational Therapist will liaise closely with the chair of the Annual Review to ensure that key messages can be conveyed.

In order to make maximum use of child contact time, parents/carers will be asked to make appointments for visits or phone calls to the Occupational Therapists out of child contact hours.

Referral

There is an open referral policy for staff to use within school. Any pupil not known to the service or discharged previously can be referred whenever there is significant concern raised by teaching staff. The child will then be screened by the OT to assess the level of need and the input or advice required for the future.

Occupational Therapy Staff

The Occupational Therapy service at Meath School is part of the wider therapy team. The current provision has 1 full time and 1 part time (1 day per week) Occupational Therapist. Both Occupational Therapists are trained, or experienced, in using Sensory Integration approaches.

There are also 1.2 (6 days) Occupational Therapy Assistants who supports the Occupational Therapists and works under their guidance to deliver OT programmes and liaises with school staff. Occupational Therapists are line managed by the Head of Therapy. Clinical supervision is provided by a practising OT with a specialism in Sensory Integration.

Support to Staff in School

The OTs in school provide training and information to class teams to enable them to create an OT intensive environment for children with sensory motor, perceptual motor and sensory processing difficulties across all learning activities throughout the day. In this way children can consolidate and generalise the direct input offered by the Occupational Therapists. There is also frequent opportunity to share relevant knowledge with staff via INSET training and other staff development opportunities.

Collaborative working

It is recognised that all pupils need to have full access to the curriculum and that inevitably they will miss some of what is being taught in class when they are withdrawn for OT sessions. However, when the children are statemented for significant Occupational Therapy needs, (only some of which can be carried out in the classroom as part of the curriculum), accessing Occupational Therapy must also be given high priority. Therefore timetables are organised to reflect these needs. In some classes in school, the Occupational Therapy intervention may be timetabled for the class as a whole and carried out as part of a team approach. Sessions will always be negotiated with class teams. Each class has a member of staff who is an Occupational Therapy representative and is responsible for the flow of OT related information regarding sensory diets, specialist seating, strategies etc between the Occupational Therapist and the class. The OT reps meet with the Occupational Therapist once every half a term to discuss these issues and individual pupils.

Home programmes will apply where skills learned in school can also be usefully practised in the home context. School staff can not make visits to homes for extended programmes, nor make programmes for skills which are not seen as barriers presenting in the school environment.

Professional Development

The Occupational Therapists hold an Occupational Therapy qualification or Degree recognised by the College of Occupational Therapists. The Occupational Therapists are members of the British Association of Occupational Therapists.

The Occupational Therapists are state registered with the Health and Care Professions Council.

Professional development continues through attendance at relevant external courses as well as attendance at school based INSET.

Links with other Occupational Therapy services are developing and it is planned that this will be a means of continuing professional development and support for the future.

Audit

Monitoring the work of the department is the responsibility of the Head of Therapy. This is done in collaboration with the Occupational Therapy team.

Audits are carried out according to the needs identified by the School Development Plan and by the department.

The department is developing external links in order to remain rigorous in standards of practice. Occasionally there may be external input in order to audit an aspect of clinical intervention.

Membership of professional organisations and Special Interest Groups is encouraged.

Child Protection

Occupational Therapists are expected to have read and to abide by the Meath Child Protection Policy and the I CAN policy on child protection.

Equality and Inclusion

At Meath School we will continuously seek to ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity. Every individual will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of their gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality, disability or special educational needs and ability, and other factors as detailed within the school's Equality Policy. These meet in full the requirements of the Equality Act, October 2010.