

Children's Occupational Therapy Liverpool City Council

Who we are:

The **Children's Occupational Therapy (OT)** team is a community based service for children and young people who live in Liverpool. The service aims to promote independence and inclusion at home, nursery, school, or short breaks settings.

The Occupational Therapists assess children aged 0 - 18 who are experiencing functional difficulties with everyday tasks due to a disability or special educational needs.

Difficulties may include:

- self-care – such as bathing, toileting
- independence skills – such as using cutlery, dressing
- school activities - using scissors, changing for PE classes
- play activities
- co-ordination difficulties
- sensory difficulties

What we do:

Following a referral and assessment the occupational therapist can help to find ways to enable children to participate in activities necessary for life at home, school and play.

Assessment of the home and school environment

If a child is experiencing difficulties with accessing home or school the **OT** can:

- assess your child and their home and/or school environments to identify any barriers to your child participating in family and school life. This includes children with physical disabilities and those with a decreased awareness of danger
- recommend ways in which the physical environment can be changed to enable your child to move around the home, get to their bedroom and bathroom, use the toilet or bath or access their school setting
- make recommendations about equipment that will help you and your child to carry out everyday activities
- support your child with transition to a new school setting by providing advice to the new school on how to reduce physical barriers to learning

Assessment of sensory-motor needs

If a child is experiencing difficulties with motor co-ordination and independence skills the OT can arrange an assessment at our clinic base. Depending on the child's needs identified at the assessment the family will either be offered advice or a block of therapy sessions. The OT will discuss what's important to the child and family and agree on goals to work towards.

The OT will give advice about:

- Fine motor coordination skills
- Visual perception
- Independence skills such as dressing and feeding
- Developmental activities
- Use of compensatory aids and equipment to promote independence
- Upskilling parents and professionals

Clinic base: appointments are offered at the Royal School for the Blind, Church Rd. North Wavertree, L15 6TQ

If your child is struggling with activities of daily living please see the attached resources that can be tried at home and school without an OT assessment. (Please note: do not complete any of the activities if you have been advised against this by a medical practitioner, for example if the child has been given advice about joint protection.)

How do I request an Occupational Therapy assessment?

For a home or school environmental assessment:

Requests for assessment of the home environment can be made by parents and carers. The service can be accessed by making a request for an assessment through Careline. Parents and carers should contact Careline on **0151 233 3700** to make a request by telephone.

Requests for assessment of the home and school environment can be made by education, health and social care professionals. They should complete the [Request for Occupational Therapy Form](#) and forward to Careline. This can be faxed on 0151 233 3700 or posted to Careline, Venture Place, Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool, Merseyside, L1 6BW. Parents should be asked for their signed consent before making a request.

Referral criteria for home and/or school environmental assessment:

- The child or young person must be under 18 years of age and live in the Liverpool city catchment area;
- The child must have a physical or neurological condition which is significantly and persistently impacting on their ability to access their home and/or school and using essential facilities such as getting in and out of the property or school, accessing a bedroom or bathroom, using a toilet and washing facilities.

For an assessment of sensory-motor needs:

Professionals should complete the [Request for Occupational Therapy Form](#) and forward to Careline. This can be faxed on 0151 233 3700 or posted to Careline, Venture Place, Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool, Merseyside, L1 6BW. Parents should be asked for their signed consent before making a request.

If you are a parent and feel that an assessment is required for motor co-ordination or self-care please speak to the child's [SENCO](#), School Nurse, [GP](#), Community [Paediatrician](#) or [Physiotherapist](#). There may be things that can be put in place or tried first before a requesting occupational therapy involvement. Parents and school should trial general strategies for at

least 3 months prior to making a referral. Please refer to the advice leaflets in the documents section of this page for further ideas and guidance.

Referral criteria for a sensory-motor assessment:

- The child or young person must be under 18 years of age and be registered with a Liverpool GP;
- The child or young person must be experiencing a difficulty that significantly and persistently impacts on their ability to participate in activities of daily living. This may include but is not limited to washing, dressing, feeding and toileting.

Please Note:

It is highly recommended that parents attend a Sensory Processing Awareness session before making a request for a sensory-motor assessment if any of the following are a concern for their child:

- Sensory processing
- Attention and concentration
- Behaviour
- General developmental delay

What happens after a referral has been made?

The referral is triaged to work out if we are the best service to offer help

- If the referral is accepted then we make a decision about the level of need using our triage tool
- The timescales to the first assessment are:
- Priority referral – we aim to see the child within 9 weeks
- Routine referral – we aim to see the child within 18 weeks

Please note: We are currently experiencing high levels of demand for sensory-motor assessments and the waiting times are approximately 25 weeks at the moment.

In Liverpool there are two occupational therapy teams so who do I refer to?

The two occupational therapy teams in Liverpool have different responsibilities.

The Liverpool City Council OT Team sees all children **apart from** pre-schoolers who aren't attending a nursery.

- The Alder Hey OT Team see in-patients and out-patients in the hospital setting, they also see children under 2 years of age who aren't in a nursery setting.

How do I get some advice or find out more about referring to the service?

There is a Duty OT available in office hours Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.45pm and Fridays 8.30am to 4.15pm (excluding Bank Holidays) on 0151 233 5989 or by email to chot@liverpool.gov.uk

If you would like to know more information about Occupational Therapy please visit the [RCOT](#) website.

What if my child has Sensory Processing Difficulties?

The Sensory Processing Difficulties (SPD) Offer

For children with sensory processing difficulties a referral is not required to access support. We offer a graduated response in partnership with ADDvanced Solutions.

- We advise parents to attend a Sensory Processing Difficulties (SPD) Awareness session with ADDvanced Solutions. They can be contacted on 0151 486 1788 and at <http://www.addvancedsolutions.co.uk>
- We also offer alternative SPD Awareness sessions for parents where their child is under 5 years of age. These are held at Children's Centres across the city. See attached poster for dates and venues. Parents need to contact the Children's Centre to book a place.
- Once you have attended an SPD Awareness Session they can book onto an SPD Strategy Workshop with one of our Sensory Integration Advanced Practitioner Occupational Therapists. This is a two and a half hour practical session for parents to learn how to implement the practical strategies which they have learnt about in the previous awareness session. During the workshop you will have the opportunity to try specific strategies, and explore resources which might be helpful for your child. Following this session parents can take the strategies away and try them at home.
- Parents are advised to try the strategies for three months. Then if they find they aren't working can call the team for advice on 0151 233 5989. Here you may be offered a telephone consultation, where additional strategies may be given.
- We also offer a two day Understanding SPD and Eating Difficulties course in partnership with ADDvanced Solutions for parents and professionals. This can be booked directly with them on 0151 486 1788
- Professional awareness sessions are carried out in partnership with ADDvanced Solutions. Professionals should contact them directly on 0151 486 1788 to book onto these.

How do I get a Sensory Processing [Assessment](#) for my child?

We are unable to routinely offer assessments for all children with SPD. However, following a telephone consultation with the OT, if your child's needs meet the criteria below the OT may consider making a referral into the SPD service for further support.

Referral criteria:

- The child or young person is under 18 years of age and is registered with a Liverpool GP;
- Parents have attended a Sensory Processing Difficulties Awareness Session and a Strategy Workshop.

- Parents have tried the strategies advised by the OT for at least three months and the child continues to present with sensory processing difficulties that significantly and persistently impacts activities of daily living and academic achievement AND there is a significant risk of: family breakdown, or exclusion from school, or harm to self or others.

What happens next?

If the referral is accepted the OT will give further advice and strategies and may offer short term targeted support.

Who to contact

Contact Name

Duty Occupational Therapist

Contact Position

Occupational Therapist

Telephone

0151 233 5989 [0151 233 5989](tel:01512335989)

E-mail

Chot@liverpool.gov.uk

Resource List

This list contains links to websites which provide a wide variety of aids and equipment for children with developmental needs and disabilities.

It is important that you consider your child's long term needs rather than just thinking about what would make their lives easier now. If you overcompensate for a difficulty in early childhood you will reduce their opportunity to develop their independence skills in the future.

For example, the use of caring cutlery promotes good hand positioning which allows the child to develop their cutting skills. Once the child becomes competent with caring cutlery they are likely to be able to transfer their skills to standard. However, when a child uses an electric toothbrush, the toothbrush does all the work so the child does not develop their brushing skills.

If you notice a piece of equipment that you feel would benefit your child but are unsure how it would affect your child long term, feel free to contact your Occupational Therapist for advice.

Therapy Strategies and Activities

Therapy Street for Kids: <http://therapystreetforkids.com/index.html>

- Therapy Street for Kids has lots of therapy ideas and strategies for developing self-care, scissor and handwriting skills. It also has a section on sensory strategies.

OT Plan: <http://www.otplan.com/default.aspx>

- This handy website generates activity ideas based on the skills you want to develop and materials you have.

Pinterest: <https://uk.pinterest.com/>

Social media site that allows you to search and save ideas. It's got really good activities and strategies with pictures that other users post.

Prompt Cards and Reward Charts

Visual Aids for Learning: <http://www.visualaidsforlearning.com/>

- Visual aids for learning has free downloadable charts and tick sheets.

One Place for Special Needs: <http://www.oneplaceforspecialneeds.com/main/resources.html>

- This site is full of advice and resources. It has some good social stories and reward charts too.

Charitable Funding

You may apply for funding for equipment from the following charities:

- Steven Morgan Foundation, email: enable@stevemorganfoundation.org.uk, website: www.stevemorganfoundation.org.uk, telephone: 01829 782808

* We do not endorse any of the information on the websites listed in this leaflet. Other products are available from other retailers which may be cheaper.

	<p>Exercise Ball / Peanut Ball</p> <p>Can be calming and stress reducing Can be used to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body awareness and balance • Core stability and posture • Shoulder and arm strength 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amazon • Some supermarkets • Sports shops • Argos <p>COST: From £7.99</p>
	<p>Trampette</p> <p>Can be calming and stress reducing Can be used to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body awareness and balance • Core stability and posture • Coordination skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.decathlon.co.uk • Amazon • Some supermarkets • Sports shops <p>COST: From £24.99</p>
	<p>Chewelry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be calming • May reduce child's urges to chew inappropriate or unsafe objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amazon • www.rompa.com • www.fledglings.org.uk • www.chewigem.co.uk <p>COST: From £9.99</p>
	<p>Move n' sit Cushion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes good posture • Can help some children with concentration • Can help to develop core stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amazon • https://www.nrshealthcare.co.uk/ • www.rompa.com • www.completecareshop.co.uk <p>COST: From £19.99</p>
	<p>Posture Pack/Sloped Writing Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes good posture • Promotes good hand position for handwriting • Can make it easier to copy from board by blocking visual distractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.nrshealthcare.co.uk/ • www.backinaction.co.uk • www.posturite.co.uk <p>COST: Approx. £64 for the full pack</p>
	<p>Pencil Grips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can correct pencil grasp in younger children • Can promote better hand position in older children • Can reduce hand pain and fatigue when writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.fledglings.co.uk • www.nrshealthcare.co.uk • www.thedyslexiaishop.co.uk • Amazon <p>COST: From £2.25 depending on quantity purchased in a pack</p>
	<p>Therapy Putty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent for developing hand strength • Can be calming and alerting • Help children to learn how to grade pressure required for writing and fastening buttons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.nrshealthcare.co.uk/ • Amazon • Liverpool Lifehouse, Summers Road (back of Yellow Sub) • Most mobility shops <p>COST: From £3.54</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothes without seems • Flavourless toothpaste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for children with hypersensitivities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marks and Spencer's • www.fledglings.org.uk approx. £4