

## Therapy with children and young people

A number of therapists based at the Therapy Rooms are experienced and qualified in working therapeutically with children and young people. The Therapy Rooms offers a calm, comfortable, well-equipped, bespoke space for children's therapy with a range of resources, creative and play media to help children engage well in therapy. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to wait in our comfortable waiting room whilst therapy is underway.

With **primary-aged children**, therapy is usually based around play. Play therapy can help with wide range of presenting problems, including:

- Anger and aggression
- Shyness and passivity
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Anxiety and fear
- Bullying
- Attachment difficulties
- Relationship difficulties
- Poor self esteem
- School refusal
- Boundary and limits issues
- Unhappiness
- Enuresis and encopresis
- Loss and grief
- Difficulties with change and transition
- Individuation and self identity

Play is the natural language of the child, this is how children best express their thoughts, feelings and desires, explore relationships and describe experiences. In therapy, children have the opportunity to 'play out' strong feelings and problems within a safe, accepting and containing space. The therapist is skilled in creating a relationship with the child based on trust, acceptance, and firm boundaries. Through play, children can find new and creative ways to express what is going on inside. Therapy can help children develop resilience, so that they are less likely to 'act out' at home or at school.

As with primary-aged children, therapy offered to **young people of high-school age** provides a safe, confidential, non-judgmental space for the client to explore issues that trouble them in an atmosphere of understanding and empathy. Therapists encourage client autonomy and empowerment, but will not offer advice, provide a mental health diagnosis or promise a quick fix.

Each therapist approaches their work with children differently. Varying approaches may be offered, according to the presentation of the individual child.

In non-directive therapy, the therapist works according to the presentation, needs, and developmental stage of the individual child or young person, they do not attempt to direct the child's actions or conversation in any way, or to hurry the therapy along. The therapist creates

