



Outcomes
First Group



Park School

Welcome booklet for parents



Working together to support your child's
wellbeing, learning and future.



For any questions or to get in touch, please email
parkschoolclinicalteam@parkschooloxfordshire.co.uk



Clinical Lead
Dr Kate Boardman



Headteacher
Lisé Sugden



Our team is here to support you and your child
every step of the way.





Outcomes
First Group



Welcome to Park School

A message from the Clinical Team

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are delighted that you and your child are joining our school community.

We understand that this may be the beginning of a new chapter following experiences that have not always been easy.

For many families, arriving at an SEMH school comes after a journey of seeking understanding, support and the right environment for their child.

We hope that from the very beginning you will feel welcomed, listened to and valued.



We Start with Understanding

At Park School, we believe that every behaviour has meaning.

Instead of asking:

"What is wrong
with this child?"



we ask:

"What has this
child experienced?"

"What does this child
need right now?"

We see behaviour as a form of communication and aim to respond with curiosity, compassion and consistency.



Regulation Supports Learning

Many of the young people we work with experience differences in how they process sensory information or regulate their emotions.



When children
become
overwhelmed...



During these times,
reasoning, problem-solving
and communication
become much more
difficult.



Our role is to recognise when a child is becoming overwhelmed and provide the support they need to regulate before expecting them to learn, reflect or solve problems.



Safety Comes First

Children learn best when they feel emotionally and physically safe.



Through:



Trusted
relationships



Predictable
routines



Calm
environments



Consistent
support

we help children develop trust, confidence
and a sense of belonging.



Safety. Understanding. Connection. Growth.





We Work Together

We work closely with:



Children



Families



Teachers



Pastoral Teams



External Professionals

to understand each child's individual strengths, needs and experiences.



You know your child in ways that no assessment or report can fully capture. Your knowledge, observations and experiences help us to understand what supports your child best.



Progress Is Individual

Progress is not always linear.
It looks different for every child.



Building trust



Asking for help



Managing emotions



Attending school



Developing relationships



Becoming more independent



Every step forward matters.



Our Clinical Philosophy

Our work is informed by current evidence in child development, attachment theory, trauma-informed practice and neurodevelopmental science.

We recognise that each child has a unique profile of strengths, needs and experiences. There is no single approach that works for every learner, which is why we tailor our support to the individual while maintaining consistency across the school community.



Our Commitment to Your Child

We will work alongside you to help your child feel:



Safe



Understood



Connected



Ready to Learn



Confident to Thrive



I hope this booklet provides a helpful introduction to who we are, the support we offer, and how you can contact the Clinical Team.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education and wellbeing. We look forward to getting to know your family and working together to help your child achieve success not only academically, but emotionally, socially and personally.

If you have any questions or would simply like to introduce yourself, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Clinical Team.

We are here to support you throughout your child's journey at Park School.

With warm regards,

Dr Kate Boardman



Dr Kate Boardman

Clinical Lead
Consultant Clinical & Child Psychologist
& EMDR Therapist



You can contact the Clinical Team at:

parkschoolclinicalteam@parkschooloxfordshire.co.uk



Meet Our Team



Our Clinical Team brings a range of specialist skills and experience to support the wellbeing, development and success of every child.

We work together with children, families and school staff to provide personalised, compassionate and effective support.



Dr Kate Boardman

Clinical Lead,
Consultant Clinical &
Child Psychologist &
EMDR Therapist

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Faye Stanton

Specialist Occupational
Therapist

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Rachel Sprakes

Play
Psychotherapist

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Lucy Matthews

Therapies
Assistant

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Zahra Moledina

Art Psychotherapist

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Anna Brown

Assistant
Psychologist

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We are here to listen, support and work together with you and your child.
Safety. Understanding. Connection. Growth.

You can contact the Clinical Team at: parkschoolclinicalteam@parkschooloxfordshire.co.uk



Therapies to Support Your Wellbeing



Different therapies can support you in different ways.
Here are some of the ways we can help.



Psychology Sessions can help with:

- ✓ Understanding and managing your feelings
- ✓ Going through a tough time at home, school, or with friends
- ✓ Working through bad things which have happened in your past
- ✓ Experiences of low self-esteem, loss, or with mental health
- ✓ Body image and gender identity
- ✓ Assessments to help your learning and wellbeing



Speech and Language Therapy can help with:

- Social skills
- Speaking too loud / quiet / slow / fast
- Using speech sounds correctly
- Memory and solving problems
- Confidence and expressing yourself



Art Therapy can help with:

- ✓ Draw, paint, or create things while talking to an Art Therapist
- ✓ They can help you understand your feelings through art
- ✓ No art talent needed, as there is no right or wrong way to make your art – it's just about expressing yourself



Occupational Therapy can help with:

- Handwriting
- Small movements like using scissors or tying shoelaces
- Big movements like running, balancing, or catching
- Sensory needs (sound, smell, sight, touch, taste)



Play Therapy can help with:

- ✓ Working through thoughts, feelings and emotions with a Play Therapist
- ✓ Use toys, games, and play to explore difficult situations and feelings that might be hard to explain with words



We are here to support you. Together, we can find the right support to help you feel understood, build confidence, and thrive.





How the Clinical Team May Work with Your Child



The Clinical Team provides a range of support to help children feel safe, understood and able to learn. The type of support will depend on your child's individual needs and may change over time.

Individual Sessions



One-to-one time to talk, explore feelings and build understanding.

Group Work



Small group sessions to build skills, confidence and connections.

Classroom Consultation



Working with teachers to understand needs and support learning in the classroom.

Staff Consultation



Supporting staff with strategies, understanding and next steps.

Observation



Observing in class or at other times to understand strengths and needs.

Support in Crisis



Providing immediate support during times of distress or dysregulation.

Annual Review Input



Contributing to annual reviews and planning for the year ahead.

Regulation and Sensory Support



Helping children understand and manage their emotions and sensory needs.

Emotional Wellbeing Interventions



Targeted support to build emotional resilience and wellbeing.

Communication Support



Supporting communication skills and helping children to be heard and understood.

Occupational Therapy Input



Supporting independence with daily tasks, motor skills and self-regulation.

Speech and Language Therapy Input



Supporting speech, language, understanding and communication skills.

Psychotherapy



Therapeutic support to explore thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Psychological Formulation and Consultation



Understanding what might be happening and what support will help.

Psychological Assessments



Assessments to help us understand needs, strengths and support planning.

Psychological Interventions



Evidence-based interventions tailored to your child's needs.

Supporting the Adults Around the Child



Helping parents, carers and staff feel confident and supported.

Adapting the Environment



Making changes to the environment to promote safety, access and success.



Not every child will receive the same intervention.

Support is based on individual needs and may change over time. We will always work collaboratively with you and your child to provide the right support at the right time.



Safe

We create safe spaces to explore and grow.



Collaborative

We work together with children, families and staff.



Individualised

We tailor support to each child's unique needs.



Strengths Focused

We build on strengths to help children thrive.



Ongoing

We review, reflect and adapt support over time.



What to Expect When Your Child Starts at Park School



Starting a new school can be a significant transition for any child. For children and young people joining an SEMH setting, this transition may bring a mixture of emotions and experiences.



Some children may feel hopeful and relieved to be joining a setting that better understands their needs.



Others may feel anxious, uncertain or overwhelmed by the change.



Every child responds differently, and there is no single or predictable way that a child will settle.



Settling Takes Time

Your child may take time to feel comfortable and secure in their new environment. Building trust with new adults, understanding routines, becoming familiar with the environment and developing relationships with peers can take time.

For some children, the first signs of progress may be small but significant. This might include:

- ✓ Entering the school building
- ✓ Staying in school for longer periods
- ✓ Becoming familiar with daily routines
- ✓ Accepting support from a trusted adult
- ✓ Beginning to communicate their needs
- ✓ Tolerating transitions between activities or spaces
- ✓ Developing a relationship with a member of staff
- ✓ Beginning to engage in learning or activities



These steps are all important parts of the settling-in process.



Home and School May Look Different

It is common for a child's presentation to differ between home and school.

At School

A child may appear settled at school but become very tired, emotional or withdrawn when they return home.

At Home

A child may find school particularly challenging while appearing more regulated in the familiar environment of home.



This does not mean that one environment is seeing the "real" child.

Children may use a great deal of energy to manage new experiences, expectations and emotions during the school day. They may then need time and space to recover once they return to a familiar and safe environment.



Sharing what you notice at home helps us to build a fuller understanding of your child.



Adjustment Can Affect Emotional Wellbeing

During periods of change, your child may experience:

- Increased tiredness
- Greater emotional sensitivity
- Withdrawal or reduced communication
- Increased irritability
- Changes in sleep or routine
- Increased need for reassurance
- Difficulty managing transitions
- Changes in behaviour at home or school



These changes may be part of the adjustment process. We will work with you to understand what your child may be communicating through their behaviour and whether additional support or adaptations are needed.

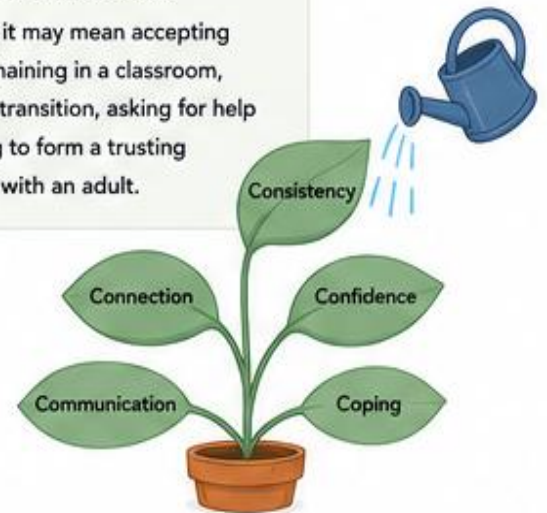


Progress Is Individual

Progress is not always linear, and it does not look the same for every child.

For one child, progress may mean attending school consistently.

For another, it may mean accepting support, remaining in a classroom, managing a transition, asking for help or beginning to form a trusting relationship with an adult.



Small steps are meaningful steps. We will work with you to understand your child's individual progress, recognise their strengths and celebrate the changes that matter to them.



Relationships Come First

For many children, feeling safe and developing trusting relationships is an important foundation for learning and progress.

Our initial focus may therefore be on helping your child to:

- ✓ Feel safe within the school environment
- ✓ Identify trusted adults
- ✓ Understand what to expect
- ✓ Develop a sense of belonging
- ✓ Communicate their needs
- ✓ Learn ways to manage emotions and experiences



We do not expect significant change to happen immediately.

We recognise that meaningful progress is often built through consistent, predictable and trusting relationships over time.



Working Together

You know your child best. Your observations and experiences are an important part of helping us understand how your child is adjusting to Park School.



We encourage you to share:

- ✓ What you notice at home
- ✓ Changes in mood, behaviour or routine
- ✓ What helps your child feel safe
- ✓ What your child finds difficult
- ✓ Strategies that work well
- ✓ Any significant changes or concerns



By sharing information and working together, we can develop a more complete understanding of your child and ensure that the support around them remains responsive to their changing needs.



We are here to support your child and your family every step of the way.



Together, we can help your child feel safe, supported and able to thrive.



Progress May Not Always Look Like Academic Progress

For some children, progress may initially look like:



Coming into school



Staying in a lesson for longer



Accepting help from an adult



Using a regulation strategy



Recovering more quickly after becoming distressed



Building a trusting relationship



Asking for help



Trying something new



Every step forward matters.
We celebrate progress in all its forms.



We are here to support, encourage and celebrate your child's progress – every step of the way.



Outcomes First Group

Understanding Regulation and Dysregulation

Every child experiences big emotions. Understanding regulation helps us respond with empathy, connection and the right support.



What Regulation Looks Like



Thinking clearly



Emotions in balance



Connected and engaged



When a child is regulated, their body and brain feel calm enough to cope with the everyday demands of life and learning. They may:

- ✓ Feel calm and in control
- ✓ Manage emotions
- ✓ Think clearly
- ✓ Focus and learn
- ✓ Solve problems
- ✓ Build positive relationships
- ✓ Cope with change and setbacks

What Dysregulation May Look Like

When a child is dysregulated, their body is in 'alarm' mode. This can make it hard to think, listen, communicate or behave in the way they usually would.

They may:

- Appear angry, tearful or irritable
- Withdraw, shut down or become very quiet
- Act impulsively
- Struggle to listen or follow instructions
- Find transitions or change very difficult
- Show physical signs such as restlessness, pacing or tension



Overwhelmed brain



Big feelings



Struggling to cope



Why a Child May Appear Calm But Still Be Overwhelmed

Some children hide how they feel on the inside. They might look calm, quiet or "fine", but their body could still be in stress mode.

They may be:

- Holding it together to cope with the situation
- Worried about what might happen next
- Exhausted from trying to manage their emotions or sensory overload
- Nervous about asking for help



Appearances can be deceiving. We look beneath the surface to understand what your child might need.

Why Reasoning and Problem-Solving May Be Difficult When a Child Is Highly Distressed



Alarm brain (survival)

Thinking brain (offline)

When a child is highly distressed, the part of the brain that keeps them safe (the alarm system) takes over. This means the thinking and reasoning parts of the brain go offline.

In this state, it can be very hard for a child to:

- Think clearly
- Listen or follow instructions
- Consider consequences
- Use logic or solve problems

Why Adults May Need to Focus on Safety and Connection First

When a child is dysregulated, they need safety and connection before they can engage in anything else. This is because they need our help to calm their body and brain.

Our first job is to:

- ✓ Ensure they feel safe
- ✓ Stay calm and connected
- ✓ Help them regulate
- ✓ Build trust

...then we can talk, reflect and problem-solve together.



Safety



Connection



Conversation



Problem-Solving

What Helps



Stay calm
Your calm helps their calm.



Validate feelings
All feelings are okay, even if the behaviour isn't.



Give time
Regulation takes time. Patience helps healing.



Co-regulate
Your presence and support help their nervous system settle.



Reduce demands
Too many requests can increase stress.



Celebrate small wins
Every small step towards regulation is progress.



Big emotions are not a choice – but how we respond makes a big difference.
With understanding, connection and the right support, children can feel safe, build skills and thrive.

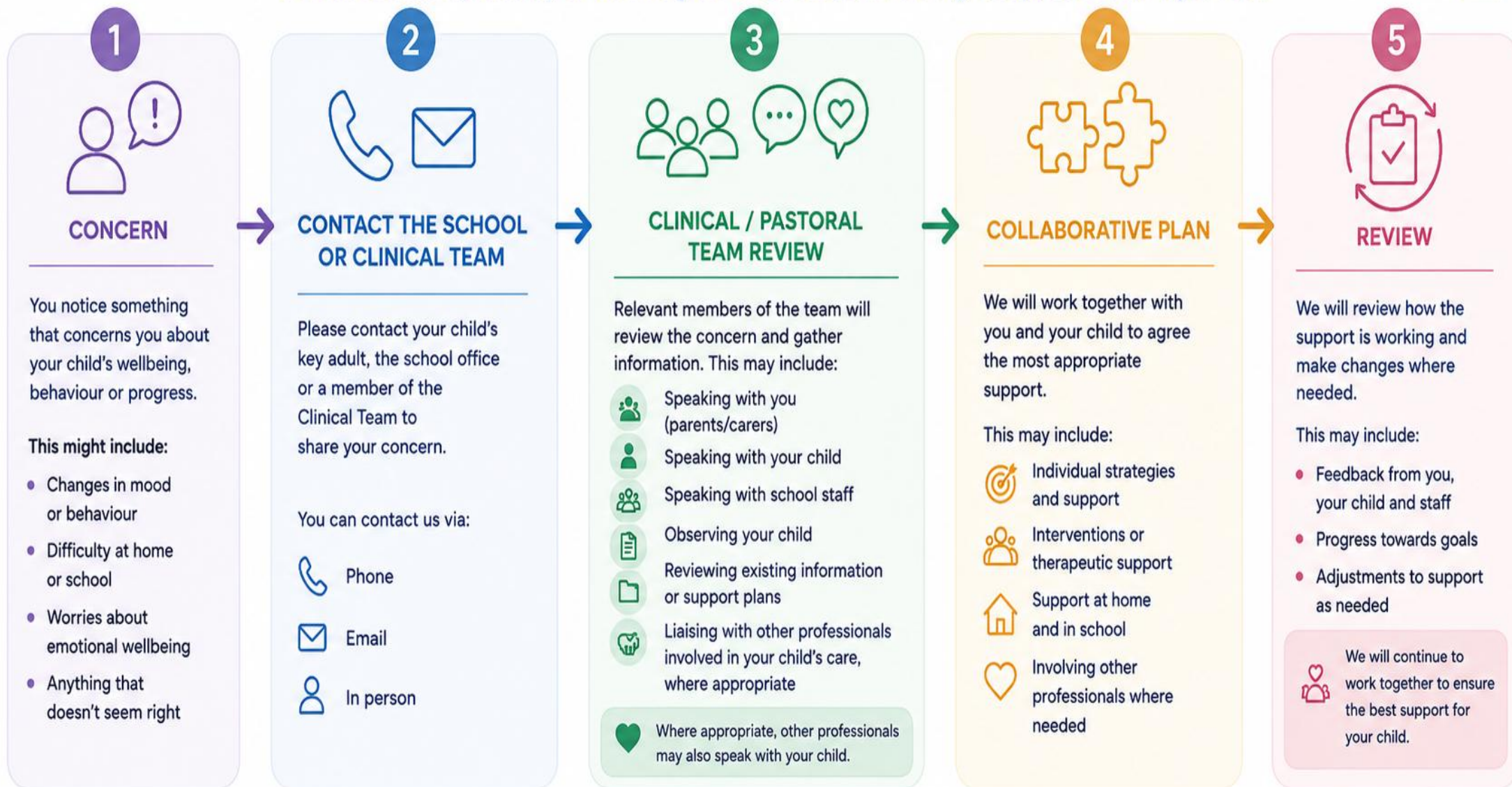




What to Do If My Child Is Struggling?



A collaborative pathway to ensure your child receives the right support at the right time.



WORKING TOGETHER

You know your child best. By working in partnership, sharing information and reviewing regularly, we can help your child feel safe, supported and ready to thrive.



Working Together to Support Your Child



Our Clinical Team works in partnership with children, families and school staff to provide personalised, compassionate and effective support. The information below explains how we work together.

1



Sharing Information with the Clinical Team

Parents and carers are encouraged to share information that may help us understand and support their child, including:

- Strengths, interests and achievements.
- Communication styles and preferences.
- Sensory needs and sensitivities.
- Emotional wellbeing and mental health concerns.
- Experiences at home and in the community.
- Factors that help their child feel safe, regulated and successful.
- Any concerns regarding behaviour, relationships or learning.

Information can be shared through meetings, telephone calls, email communication and discussions with school staff.

2



Initial Clinical Assessments

When a child is referred for clinical support, parents and carers are often invited to contribute information as part of the initial assessment process. This may include:

- Providing developmental and family history information.
- Sharing current concerns and priorities.
- Discussing their child's strengths and areas of need.
- Completing questionnaires or rating scales where appropriate.
- Helping the clinical team understand what support has been helpful in the past.

Parental contributions help ensure that assessments consider the child's experiences across different environments and provide a holistic understanding of their needs.

3



Ongoing Assessments

Throughout a child's placement, the clinical team may undertake assessments to better understand their emotional wellbeing, cognitive strengths, communication needs, sensory processing or functional skills.

Parents and carers may be involved through:

- Completing assessment questionnaires.
- Providing feedback and observations from home.
- Taking part in assessment interviews or meetings.
- Discussing assessment findings and recommendations with clinicians.

4



Team Around the Child (TAC) Meetings

Parents and carers are important members of Team Around the Child meetings. These meetings bring together the professionals involved in supporting a child to discuss progress, share information and plan next steps.

Where appropriate, parents and carers may be invited to:

- Share their views and priorities.
- Discuss progress towards agreed outcomes.
- Contribute to support plans and interventions.
- Raise questions or concerns.
- Help develop strategies that can be used both at home and at school.



Who to Contact with Concerns

If parents or carers have concerns about their child's emotional wellbeing, therapy support or clinical recommendations, they are encouraged to contact:

- Their child's class teacher or key worker.
- A member of the pastoral team.
- The relevant therapist involved in their child's support.
- The Clinical Team via the school's main contact details.

We encourage families to share concerns as early as possible so that we can work together to identify appropriate support.



Contributing to Reviews

Parents and carers are invited to contribute to review meetings and wider planning processes, including:

- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews.
- Team Around the Child meetings.
- Therapy reviews where appropriate.
- Placement reviews and transition planning.

Your views help us understand what is working well, identify any emerging concerns and ensure support remains relevant to your child's changing needs.



Sharing Clinical Recommendations

Following assessments, consultations or involvement from the clinical team, recommendations may be shared with families where appropriate. This may include:

- Verbal feedback during meetings.
- Written reports or summaries.
- Strategies to support emotional wellbeing, communication, sensory regulation or learning.
- Recommendations for home and school to promote consistency across environments.
- Signposting to external services and resources where relevant.

Our aim is to ensure that recommendations are practical, understandable and focused on helping children and young people thrive both at school and at home.



Supporting Together

Working together, we can ensure that every child receives the right support at the right time.

Your involvement and insights are invaluable in helping us understand your child and plan meaningful, effective support.



We recognise that families know their children best. By working in partnership with parents and carers, we can build a strong, supportive network around each child.



You can contact the Clinical Team at:
parkschoolclinicalteam@parkschooloxfordshire.co.uk



We are here to listen, support and work together with you and your child.





Confidentiality & Information Sharing

Your child's privacy is important to us.



A Safe Space to Talk

Your child can speak openly with a member of the Clinical Team.



Not Everything Is Shared

What your child says in a clinical session is private.



Not every detail will be shared with parents, school staff or others.



What May Be Shared?

Where appropriate, we may share:



General themes



Progress



Helpful strategies



Information needed to support your child



Information is shared when it is relevant and necessary to support your child's wellbeing, safety or education.



When Might Confidentiality Need to Be Broken?

There are circumstances where information cannot remain confidential, including concerns about:



Safeguarding concerns



Serious risk of harm



Legal or professional responsibilities

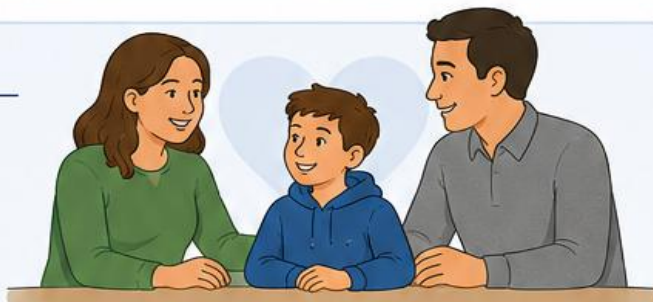


Our priority is your child's safety and wellbeing.



Our Aim

To respect your child's privacy while ensuring that the right people have the right information to help keep them **safe**, **supported** and **able to learn**.



If you have any questions, please contact the Clinical Team:
parkschoolclinicalteam@parkschooloxfordshire.co.uk



Outcomes
First Group

Clinical Glossary

Words you may hear from the Clinical Team

A simple guide to some of the words you may hear when talking with the Clinical Team.

A quick reference for families - clear, simple explanations without the jargon.

Term	What it means
Assessment	Gathering information to better understand a child's strengths, needs and the support that may be helpful.
Attachment	The emotional connection a child develops with important adults in their life. These relationships can influence how a child experiences safety, trust and relationships with others.
Clinical Support	The wider range of support provided by the Clinical Team. This may include assessment, consultation, observation, intervention and advice.
Consultation	Professionals working together to share knowledge, understand a child's needs and consider helpful ways to support them.
Co-regulation	When a calm and supportive adult helps a child to feel safe and regulated.
Crisis Support	Support provided when a child is experiencing significant distress or is finding it difficult to remain safe and regulated.
Dysregulation	When a child is overwhelmed by their emotions, experiences or environment and finds it difficult to manage their responses.
Emotional Wellbeing	How a child is feeling emotionally and how they are coping with everyday experiences.
Group Work	Support provided with a small group of children who may share similar needs or goals.
Individualised Support	Support that is tailored to the specific needs, strengths and circumstances of each child.
Neurodiversity	The understanding that people's brains can work in different ways, with different strengths, needs and ways of experiencing the world.
Observation	Carefully watching how a child responds, communicates, behaves and interacts in different situations to help understand their needs.
Occupational Therapy (OT)	Support with areas such as sensory needs, movement, coordination, daily activities, independence and participation.
Psychological Assessment	A structured process of gathering information to develop a better understanding of a child's psychological, emotional, behavioural, cognitive or learning needs.
Psychological Formulation	A way of understanding what may be happening for a child, including their strengths, experiences, needs and what may be contributing to their difficulties.
Psychological Intervention	A planned approach to support a child's emotional wellbeing, behaviour, relationships or psychological needs.
Psychotherapy	A therapeutic process that provides a safe space to explore thoughts, feelings, relationships and experiences.
Regulation	Being in a state where a child feels safe and is able to manage their emotions, behaviour and responses.
Safeguarding	The actions taken to promote a child's welfare and protect them from harm.

Term	What it means
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. These can affect how a child feels, behaves, builds relationships and engages with learning.
Sensory Differences	The different ways a child may experience and respond to sensory information. A child may be more or less sensitive to things such as sound, light, touch, movement, smell or taste.
Sensory Needs	The individual ways a child may need support to manage sensory experiences. This may include adapting the environment or providing sensory strategies and activities.
Sensory Processing	The way the brain receives, organises and responds to information from the senses and the body. Differences in sensory processing can affect how a child feels, behaves, moves and engages with their environment.
Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)	Support with communication, understanding language, expressing thoughts and feelings, social communication and speech.
Strengths-Based Approach	Focusing on a child's strengths, interests, abilities and potential alongside their needs.
Therapeutic Intervention	Support that helps a child explore and work through thoughts, feelings, experiences or difficulties.
Trauma-Informed Practice	An approach that recognises how difficult experiences can affect a child and focuses on safety, relationships, choice and understanding.

Not sure what something means? Please ask us - we are always happy to explain.