



Channels & Choices

THERAPEUTIC SERVICE

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Five stage approach drawing on three different therapeutic models
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Introduction

Channels and Choices is a therapeutic community that provides specialist care, education, and therapeutic support to children and young people who may have neurodiversity, experienced trauma, attachment difficulties, and complex needs. We provide fostering, residential care, and education at Sallygate School, all underpinned by a therapeutic framework. Our approach is trauma-informed relational, and focused on helping children feel safe, build resilience, and thrive in all areas of their development.

This brochure outlines the range of therapeutic services that we can provide to support our children, young people and the dedicated staff and carers around them.

1 Our Therapeutic Approach

Channels & Choices embodies the principles of a therapeutic community by creating an **integrated, collaborative and nurturing environment**. The organisation's therapeutic framework is fundamentally grounded in attachment theory, psychodynamic principles, trauma-informed practice, and systemic thinking.

Our overall aim is to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children we care for by creating a secure foundation from which children can grow and thrive. This is accomplished by promoting healthy co-regulation, building secure attachments, supporting childhood development, and enabling children to flourish in all areas of their lives.

Staff members are trained in developmental and relational trauma, neurodiversity, and the principles of PACE and therapeutic parenting. Across the organisation specialist training is provided by Dr. Karen Treisman and Professor David Shemmings, ensuring expert knowledge, skilled support, and trauma sensitive approach.



Dr Karen Treisman MBE & Professor David Shemmings delivering training to Channels & Choices

Our treatment approach focuses on a five-stage approach that draws upon three therapeutic models:

Secure Base

(John Bowlby)

Creating a safe and trusting environment for where healing can begin.

Neuro-Sequential

(Bruce Perry)

Addressing challenges in a step-by-step way that aligns with how the brain develops.

PACE

Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy (Dan Hughes)

Supporting growth through a caring, non-judgmental approach.

Our Five-Stage Stepping Stones Approach

1 Creating Safety & Containment

Our first priority is to help children feel secure. We do this by:

- Providing safe, stable and nurturing environments.
- Offering predictable routines and clear boundaries.
- Building trust through consistent, compassionate care.
- Demonstrating unconditional positive regard.
- Understanding the child's overall needs through observations and initial assessments.
- Providing support and aiding therapeutic thinking with the staff working with the child.
- Providing resources to support children with their communication and learning.

2 Building Relationships

Once a child is experiencing feelings of safety and stability, we focus on the development of engagement and relationships with others. We do this by:

- Encouraging strong, positive relationships with carers, staff, and peers.
- Using the principles of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) and Attachment Theory.
- Helping children experience trust, belonging, and acceptance.
- Offering consistency and predictability.
- Using visuals where needed to support transitions and processing.
- Utilise their interests and passions to personalise our approach.
- Understanding that engagement and relationships can take time and allowing children to take this at their own pace.
- Setting achievable and goals with personalised rewards.
- Engaging in the child's areas of interest.

3 Healing & Emotional Regulation

With safety and relationships in place, children can begin to heal. We support this by:

- Offering individual and group therapeutic support.
- Providing creative ways to explore feelings and experiences.
- Teaching strategies to manage and express emotions in healthy and safe ways.
- Adapting our approaches where necessary in best interest of the child, which can aid the development of trust, attunement and emotional safety.
- Reviewing interventions and approaches to meet the needs of the child.
- Ensuring clear and consistent communication across the multidisciplinary team and wider support systems to deliver comprehensive, wraparound therapeutic care.
- Exploring and tending to developmental gaps with care and curiosity.

4 Growth & Achievement

Children are supported to grow and reach their potential. We do this by:

- Promoting education and learning.
- Encouraging personal goals, hobbies, and talents.
- Celebrating progress and building self-confidence.
- Using structured and child focused key-working sessions to develop their knowledge and awareness around culture, religion, safety, and emotional literacy.
- Offering psychoeducation to the child and to the team around the child.
- Encouraging new experiences to develop their resilience and readiness for change.
- Promoting independence and self-development in areas they feel are important to them.
- Encouraging appropriate responsibility and risk taking to develop understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Promoting self-expression and supporting exploration of identity, beliefs, and values.
- Providing resources to support children with their communication and learning.

5 Stepping Stones

We prepare children for the next stage of their journey, whether that is moving to a foster family, transitioning into independence, joining a new placement, school, or returning to family. We do this by:

- Careful planning and support through every transition.
- Equipping children with practical and emotional skills to manage change.
- Ensuring continuity of care, guidance, and reassurance.
- Remaining child focused and advocating for the best interest of the child when making decisions about their care.
- Supporting the child to process change and transitions, this is personalised to the need of the child and can be creative or conversational.



2 Our Clinical Team

Our integrated therapy department is made up of experienced clinicians who take a holistic, trauma-informed approach to supporting children, staff, and carers across our community. Working collaboratively with caregivers and various departments within Channels & Choices, the team embeds therapeutic strategies into everyday life—ensuring emotional wellbeing is prioritised alongside academic and developmental progress. Through direct work with children and adults, the therapy team provides targeted interventions that help build secure relationships, support emotional regulation, and promote recovery from trauma. They also play a vital role in upskilling staff by delivering specialist training, consultation, and reflective practice sessions. This ensures that adults respond with empathy, consistency, and insight—creating a safe, nurturing environment where children feel understood, supported, and ready to thrive.

The team brings a wealth of knowledge in relational and developmental trauma, therapeutic care, and neurodiversity. All clinicians work in accordance with their professional registering bodies or the HCPC, and follow NICE guidelines, ensuring the highest standards of care and ethical practice.

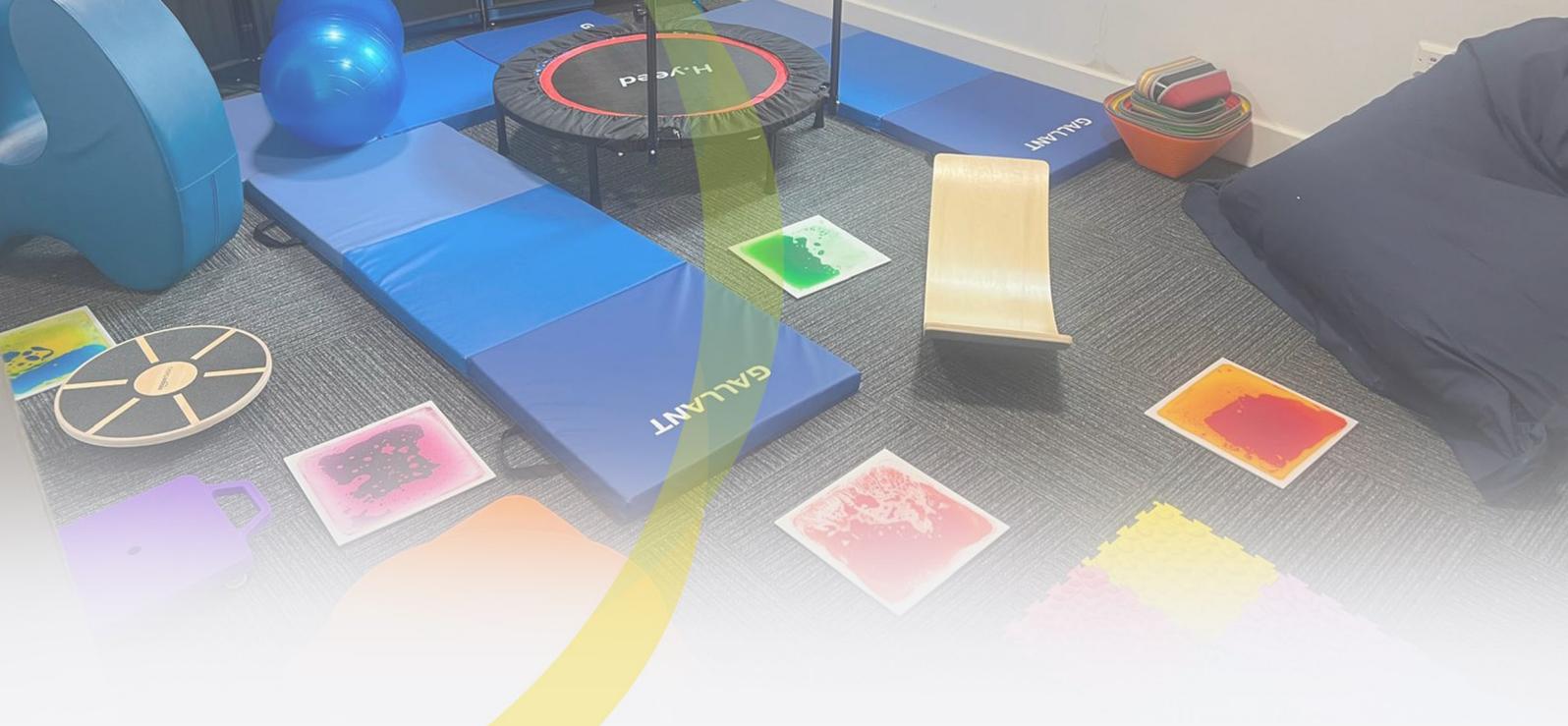
Our team of clinician's include: **Psychological Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Therapy assistants, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Consultant Educational Psychologist.**



Psychological Therapists

Our therapists practice a range of modalities which may include Creative Therapy- Play, Art, Dance Movement. As well as integrative counselling, relational and attachment-based interventions which may include- Theraplay, Systemic Family Therapy Practice, NVR (Non-violent resistance) and Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP). This means that we are able to respond to each child or young person's individual therapeutic needs.





Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapists (OT's) are trained in physical, mental health and child development. We help children to grow, thrive and reach their full potential by identifying:

- Areas of strength and areas that they find difficult.
- Personal, environmental or task specific factors that help or limit their ability to take part.
- Areas that require support to empower and enable them to learn new skills or adapt tasks, helping them to overcome barriers that may be preventing them doing everyday activities (occupations) that matter to them.

The Occupational Therapy service at Channels and Choices works with children affected by disrupted attachment and early trauma. Consideration is given to how early trauma impacts the child's development across the following domains:

- **Self-Identity, self-esteem, and motivation.**
- **Sensory processing.**
- **Movement, coordination, and visual processing.**
- **Emotional regulation.**
- **Executive function.**
- **Functional Skills.**

Occupational Therapy at Channels & Choices examines how challenges in these domains manifest in the body's regulatory responses, their fight/flight responses, development, and how this affects a child's daily life and function at home, school, and in play.

The overall goal of treatment is always to facilitate better engagement in home life, play, self-care, and education.



Educational Psychologist

As part of our multidisciplinary therapy team, we have access to a consultant Educational Psychologist, who specialises in supporting children with learning, special educational needs, and social, emotional and mental health needs.

Our Educational Psychologist is able to provide assessments and consultations to help us better understand the learning and education needs of our children.

3 Therapeutic support

At Channels and Choices, every child has access to personalised therapeutic support from our clinical team - whether they attend Sallygate School, live in one of our residential homes, or are part of our foster families. From the very beginning, our therapy departments work closely with professionals, caregivers, and staff to understand each child's individual needs, while also guiding and supporting those who care, support, or teach them.

We recognise that every child's needs differ, so having varied modalities amongst our team of clinicians permits us to individualise the therapeutic treatments plans offered to the children. This offers flexibility in the interventions we offer and how these are delivered.

This level of involvement and support continues throughout the child's journey within our care.

Our team's diverse expertise allows us to offer a wide range of interventions and assessments which **may** include:

- **Neurodevelopmental assessments and support in areas such as ADHD, Autism, cognitive and executive functioning, psychiatry, speech and language, and occupational therapy.**
- **ADOS (Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule)**
- **Formulation assessment of overall needs.**
- **Individual and group therapeutic interventions.**
- **Relationship and Sex Education consultations and interventions.**
- **Harmful sexual behaviour consultation or assessment.**
- **Safety planning and risk management.**
- **Attachment-based interventions with fostering or residential staff.**
- **Resources and visuals to support with emotional regulation, transitions, sensory input and communication.**
- **Targeted support and treatment plans.**



Support for Carers and Staff

We offer comprehensive therapeutic support to everyone involved in caring for our children, including foster carers, residential staff, and teaching staff. This support may include-

Consultation & Guidance: Tailored advice and support from our therapy team to help carers and staff respond effectively to children's emotional, developmental, neurodevelopmental and learning needs.

Group Reflective Spaces: Regular therapeutic sessions for residential teams, Sallygate staff, and foster carers to reflect, share experiences, and strengthen their practice.

Foster Carer Support Sessions: One-to-one sessions designed to help foster carers understand and respond to the emotional, behavioural and attachment needs of the children in their care. These sessions focus on therapeutic parenting using the principles of PACE, Non-violent resistance, reducing blocked care, and strengthening the caregiver-child relationship.

Therapeutic Training: Tailored training designed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of staff and carers, enabling them to confidently provide trauma-informed, compassionate care and practice therapeutic parenting.

Group Therapeutic input

All children in our community have access to different types of therapeutic group sessions delivered by our clinical team depending on their identified needs. These may focus on building and strengthening relationships, developing social and emotional skills, or taking part in activities such as sensory circuits that support regulation and wellbeing. Group work provides children with a safe space to connect, share experiences, and learn alongside others.



Individual Psychological Therapy

Children living within our residential homes or foster families are able to access individual therapy with one of our Psychological Therapists. The aim of the therapy sessions is to help alleviate internal distress for the child and help the child to be able to explore their feelings and experiences within a safe, supportive, and non-judgemental environment. The therapist aims to help the child identify strategies and work on ways to support them to manage and express their emotions in a positive way, through the use of different creative mediums. Therapy can help promote protective factors that contribute to resilience, reduce the child's distress, and increase placement stability. The frequency of sessions is guided by each child's needs, with progress reviewed every 12–16 weeks and a summary report provided.

We recognise that not all children are ready to engage in therapy right away, as it can bring up painful memories or trauma. In these cases, therapeutic support is provided through the child's wider care network and primary caregivers, with ongoing relationship-building and regular opportunities to re-engage the child when they are ready.

Channels & Choices Therapeutic Children's Services

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