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## **Introduction**

Play Therapy UK (PTUK)’s prime concern is to promote and monitor safe and effective practice with infants, children and young persons. Placements have an essential role in the training of practitioners at various levels.

The purpose of this document is to describe the responsibilities of the trainee, the training course provider and the placement organisation. The policies and standards have also been adopted by Play Therapy International (PTI).

Three important training principles for PTUK/PTI accredited courses are that trainees must:

1. Put into practice their practical training linking it to their theoretical knowledge
2. Demonstrate that they are reflective, self-analytical practitioners in real world settings
3. Be able to carry out clinical governance/audit to provide quality management of their work

These principles require trainees to work in a clinical placement in an appropriate organisation and not in private practice.

The benefits for the organisation providing the placement can be:

1. The provision of a cost effective added value service for children that meets the Government’s requirements for attending to the emotional wellbeing of infants, children and young persons in their care
2. More effective achievement of the organisation’s objectives because of the improved emotional state, behaviour and mental health of the infants children and young persons
3. Release of other professional staff members’ time who do not have specialist therapeutic experience
4. Increased engagement with the community through contact with parents and carers
5. Proving, through a pilot scheme, the effectiveness of therapeutic play and play therapy to justify continued funding

Trainees are required to complete 100 sessions of clinically supervised practice for both the Post Graduate Certificate in Therapeutic Play Skills and Post Graduate Diploma in Play Therapy courses accredited by PTUK/PTI. This includes working therapeutically with groups of clients at the Diploma stage. A session is defined as 40 minutes work with the clients, either individually or in a group (Diploma only) and 20 minutes for preparation, clearing up and writing notes. Please ask about the session requirements for other courses.

In practice the needs of clients are paramount. If a conflict of interest arises between the number or type of therapy hours required, or other organisation needs, the client’s needS must come first.

In considering placement organisations trainees should:

* Ideally have set up at least one placement, before the start of the taught training, allowing sufficient time for the process of doing this. PTUK/PTI and APAC will provide support but it is the trainee’s responsibility to be pro-active.
* Appreciate that in any single placement organisation there may not be an adequate number of appropriate referrals to meet the course requirements
* Build these factors into time management and consider possible financial implications

**CONSIDERATIONS IN CHOOSING A PLACEMENT ORGANISATION**

*How experienced is the organisation in handling placements?*

Some organisations have many years of experience in using trainees and some of these have come to rely on them for cost reasons. In these cases it is probable that the placement will get off to a smooth start which is valuable for completely inexperienced trainees. The PTUK website [www.playtherapy.org.uk](http://www.playtherapy.org.uk) offers free listings for approved placement organisations. On the other hand a placement is an excellent opportunity to progress into a paid position as your skills, experience and results develop, and this is unlikely to happen in this instance.

Using an inexperienced organisation may well present teething problems but have much better long term opportunities.

Always clarify the mutual requirements and expectations, including the relationship between trainee, placement organisation, training provider and professional organisation (PTUK/PTI).

*Referrals not opportunities*

It is important to establish from the start whether the organisation can provide a stream of suitable referrals for group (diploma only), as well as one to one working - not just opportunities if and as they arise. These referrals must meet your training requirements criteria.

*Current employer*

Many successful placements are with existing employers. PTUK/PTI encourages these, but it usually means that the trainee will have dual or multiple relationships with clients, staff and parent/carers, meaning that very clear boundaries have to be set and managed.

*Special conditions*

Can the placement organisation offer referrals with a variety of conditions / issues / problems? This is highly desirable at the Certificate stage. You may wish to use another organisation which has cases that have specialised conditions such as trauma, depression, anger etc, later in your training.

*Other constraints*

It is also important to check whether the agency has any requirements or practices, such as a specific theoretical approach, that will conflict with yours, or a limit on the number of sessions that may be offered. Is the playroom or play space suitable? If in doubt consult your Course Director or PTUK/PTI.

## **The Role and Responsibilities of the Placement Organisation**

The main role of the placement organisation is to provide suitable referrals for the trainee to work with and a suitable working environment. There are no training responsibilities since these are undertaken by a PTUK/PTI accredited training provider. It is also not the placement organisation’s responsibility to assess the trainee’s academic or practice performance, although observations on significant matters may always be passed to the training provider and a short report is required at the end of each placement.

Suitable referrals must be identified through an approved assessment process, which will normally include the use of the Goodman SDQ and ‘Hopes and Expectations’ questionnaire. Other assessment measures may be used subject to the written approval of the training provider.

Referrals for the ‘PG Certificate in Therapeutic Play Skills’ course trainees **must not** exceed an SDQ Total Difficulties score of 21. Trainees at the Diploma stage may work with any SDQ scores and will also need to work with groups of children.

The requirements of a suitable working environment are:

***Essential***

1. A play room, or play space that is safe in terms of confidentiality, physical security and consistency. This must be consistently available and kept clear of extraneous equipment or materials for the times of play therapy sessions.
2. Adequate equipment and materials that meet Health and Safety requirements and safe storage for them.
3. Absolute privacy during every play therapy session, with no interruptions, respected by every member of staff.
4. Confidentiality. No member of staff should ask the children how they got on in therapy, or draw attention in any way to the fact that they go to play therapy, apart from reminding the child in a low-key way, if necessary, of their next session.
5. A Child Protection Policy and procedures, clearly communicated to the trainee, and all others concerned. Any conflicts with APAC course requirements and PTUK/PTI’s Ethical Framework need to be resolved in writing before the placement starts.
6. The trainee is provided with the knowledge and facilities to protect the confidentiality of client records and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act(s).
7. The trainee must also be made aware of any permissions that are required in relation to the presentation of the organisation’s information to a training provider or external clinical supervisor, including material incorporated into case histories, research and of course in respect of any subsequent publication.
8. Adequate time is provided for the practitioner to carry out the sessions and attend clinical supervision.
9. The scheduling of client sessions is agreed in advance and adhered to. Any unavoidable changes to be notified to the therapist as soon as possible. Messages from the therapist for the child, due to unavoidable absence, are passed on verbatim and in a confidential location.
10. Periodic client review meetings involving the trainee, organisation staff, parent/carers and the child or young person
11. Communication protocols between the trainee and all relevant members of staff are agreed regarding the handover of clients before and after sessions.
12. Ending of therapy:The decision when to finish a course of sessions for a child needs to be taken jointly with the therapist and the organisation. Time needs to be allowed for an ending.
13. Satisfactory DBS(CRB)/Police Safeguarding checks.
14. The professional indemnity and public liability insurance policies of the organisation include therapeutic work.
15. Parental consent for therapy is obtained by the organisation.
16. Agreement upon the ethical framework to be used (normally PTUK’s) and complaints procedures. Any conflicts between the organisation’s ethics and the PTUK Ethical framework need to be resolved and agreed in writing before the placement starts
17. Agreement upon the referral data, including clinical outcomes, that must be submitted to the training provider and the professional organisation (PTUK/PTI) for clinical governance.

***Desirable***

1. Presentations, by the trainee, to all of the organisation’s staff, on the rationale of therapeutic play, its benefits and how it is proposed to integrate the service into other relevant activities
2. Encouragement of parental involvement at all stages
3. The SDQ assessment of all children and young persons in the organisation’s care
4. Information about the child from school and home. The trainee would like as much information as possible before starting play therapy with the child. We would also appreciate the organisation letting the trainee, the Clinical Supervisor and the Course Director know of any developments, which could have an impact on the child’s emotional state.

## **Trainees’ Responsibilities**

The trainee is responsible for:

1. Working within the ethos and values of the organisation
2. Using their best efforts to apply the training towards alleviating the problems of the clients that are referred
3. In the case of multiple relationships, making sure that the correct boundaries are maintained
4. Observing Child Protection, Health and Safety and other policies and standards of the organisation
5. Working harmoniously with all members of staff
6. Working within the set budget, if applicable
7. Maintaining the play room or play space in impeccable condition
8. Ensuring that there is an adequate stock of equipment and materials
9. Protecting the confidentiality of client records and observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act(s) relating to the placement organisation
10. Observing any permissions that are required in relation to the presentation of the organisation’s information
11. Ensuring that the confidentiality of the clients’ processes are protected
12. Reporting on the client’s progress, when requested
13. Diligently keeping to all session times and other appointments
14. Reporting as soon as possible any absences from work, making alternative arrangements for the clients and providing appropriate messages for the staff to pass on to the child
15. Ensure that you do not work with clients outside your competency (Certificate SDQ Total Difficulties a maximum score of 21 and at the Diploma stage, with groups, as maximum SDQ Total Difficulties score of 16).
16. Preparing for and attending client review meetings involving the trainee, organisation staff, parent/carers and the child or young person
17. Observing the agreed communication protocols with all relevant members of staff regarding the handover of clients before and after sessions.
18. Ensuring that there is adequate professional indemnity and public liability insurance in place to cover the therapeutic work.
19. Checking that parental consent for therapy is obtained and the use of data for research purposes
20. Working within the agreed ethical framework (normally PTUK’s) and the agreed complaints procedures.
21. Producing reports, as required by the training provider, placement and professional organisations, including the referral data (anonymised), and clinical outcomes, that must be submitted to the training provider and the professional organisation for clinical governance

## **Financial Aspects**

Financial arrangements should be clearly set out and agreed before the commencement of the placement, if the organisation is not the employer of the trainee. The following guidelines are suggested:

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| **Course** | **Guideline** |
| All courses | In an optimal situation, the placement organisation bears the costs of providing the playroom/space, the equipment and materials. |
| PG Certificate in Therapeutic Skills  | Recognising that the trainee’s skills are unproven we recommend that the service is provided free of charge until 100 sessions have been satisfactorily completed. The trainee normally funds their clinical supervision unless employed by the placement organisation. Clinical Supervisors have to be approved by PTUK/PTI. |
| PG Diploma in Play Therapy | By this stage the trainee is qualified to practice as a Certified Practitioner in Therapeutic Play Skills and should have proved their capabilities through measured clinical outcomes. The recommended session rate is £30 in the open (UK) market. However as the organisation is providing further opportunities for the trainee this is negotiable. It is highly recommended that the organisation pays for the cost of clinical supervision. |
| Other courses | Depends upon the trainee’s existing level of experience and the amount of added value for each party. |

## **Setting Up The Placement**

In negotiating the placement the trainee must provide the organisation with a copy of this document plus a written description of the course (normally the APAC courses brochure) including the learning objectives, requirements for client work, assessment of clients and clinical supervision. The organisation should then agree in writing that these conditions of placement are acceptable. This must then be passed to the training organisation for approval.

It is the training provider’s responsibility for assessing the trainee’s capability to begin and continue client work, in consultation with the Clinical Supervisor. A placement organisation may overrule this decision in order to stop the trainee’s work but not one to start work. Any differences in this area need to be resolved with the training provider and PTUK/PTI.

There should be an explicit written agreement between trainees, the placement organisation and the training provider. In the interests of speed and simplicity this may be a statement agreeing to the principles of this document plus any variations and specifics such as the start and end dates, location, an indication of the number of referrals and any financial points. A specimen format is available.

Trainees must be members of PTUK/PTI to ensure that the Ethical Framework, specifically written for working with children and young people, is used as the basis of practice.

Where a placement organisation has a published complaints procedure the placement agreement should clarify the distinction between complaints made against the trainee’s practice with clients in relation to malpractice and misconduct, and complaints that are made about aspects of the organisation’s service delivery and how each type shall be handled.

## **Supervision Arrangements**

The placement organisation is responsible for any line management supervision that may be required such as scheduling referrals, holiday arrangements, property and security matters.

The training and professional organisations are responsible for ensuring that the trainee undertakes the required amount and quality of clinical supervision. The amount is 1 hour of clinical supervision for every 6 client sessions, ie. for 100 sessions 17 hours are required. In most cases 5 hours is provided as part of the course so a further 12 hours of face to face clinical supervision has to be sourced by the trainee.

Clinical Supervisors have to be approved by PTUK and must be experienced practitioners, with at least 100 hours of practice in play or creative arts therapies *after qualifying* as a Certified Play Therapist, and have completed recognised training in clinical supervision. In exceptional cases where geography makes the location of the nearest approved supervisor difficult, Skype may be used. PTUK has a standard form of contract for clinical supervision.

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## **Preface**

Play Therapy UK (PTUK)’s prime concern is to promote and monitor safe and effective practice with infants, children and young persons. Placements have an essential role in the training of practitioners at various levels. The PTUK document “Trainee Placement Policies and Standards” provides a description of: the rationale; considerations; the role and the responsibilities of the trainee, the training course provider and the placement organisation; financial aspects; setting up the placement; supervision requirements.

## **Disclaimer**

*This specimen agreement provides material that is offered in good faith to assist the drafting of a placement contract. This advice is thought to be accurate, but no warranties, express or implied, are made. PTUK is not responsible for the validity or accuracy of the material presented in a placement contract and will not be held liable for any direct or other damages resulting from it.*

## **Contract for a Training Placement**

This contract is between [Name of organisation] referred to as the ‘placement organisation’ and [Name of Trainee] referred to as ‘trainee’ whilst undertaking the [Name of Course] starting on [Start Date] delivered by [Name of Course Provider] referred to as ‘Training Provider’ and accredited by [Name of Professional Organisation]. The purpose of the contract is to set out the responsibilities of all parties in relation to clinical work undertaken by the trainee, whilst under training by the training provider, for clients referred by the placement organisation.

## **The Role and Responsibilities of the Placement Organisation**

The main role of the placement organisation is to provide suitable referrals for the trainee to work with and a suitable working environment. Suitable referrals must be identified through an approved assessment process, which will normally include the use of the Goodman SDQ and ‘Hopes and Expectations’ questionnaire. Other assessment measures may be used subject to the written approval of the training provider.

Referrals for the ‘PG Certificate in Therapeutic Play Skills’ course trainees **must not** exceed an SDQ Total Difficulties score of 21. (Trainees at the Diploma stage my work with any SDQ scores and will also need to work with groups of children.)

The requirements of a suitable working environment to be provided by the placement organisation are:

*Essential*

1. A play room, or play space that is safe in terms of confidentiality, physical security and consistency. This must be consistently available and kept clear of extraneous equipment or materials for the times of play therapy sessions.
2. Adequate equipment and materials that meet Health and Safety requirements and safe storage for them.
3. Absolute privacy during every play therapy session, with no interruptions, respected by every member of staff.
4. Confidentiality No member of staff should ask the children how they got on in therapy, or draw attention in any way to the fact that they go to play therapy, apart from reminding the child in a low-key way, if necessary, of their next session.
5. A Child Protection Policy and procedures, clearly communicated to the trainee, and all others concerned. Any conflicts with APAC course requirements and PTUK/PTI’s Ethical Framework need to be resolved in writing before the placement starts.
6. The trainee is provided with the knowledge and facilities to protect the confidentiality of client records and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act(s).
7. The trainee must also be made aware of any permissions that are required in relation to the presentation of the organisation’s information to a training provider or external clinical supervisor, including material incorporated into case histories, research and of course in respect of any subsequent publication.
8. Adequate time is provided for the practitioner to carry out the sessions and attend clinical supervision.
9. The scheduling of client sessions is agreed in advance and adhered to. Any unavoidable changes to be notified to the therapist as soon as possible. Messages from the therapist for the child, due to unavoidable absence, are passed on verbatim and in a confidential location.
10. Periodic client review meetings involving the trainee, organisation staff, parent/carers and the child or young person
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13. Satisfactory DBS(CRB)/Police safeguarding checks.
14. The professional indemnity and public liability insurance policies of the organisation include therapeutic work.
15. Parental consent for therapy is obtained by the organisation.
16. Agreement upon the ethical framework to be used (normally PTUK’s) and complaints procedures. Any conflicts between the organisation’s ethics and the PTUK/PTI Ethical framework need to be resolved and agreed in writing before the placement starts
17. Agreement upon the referral data, including clinical outcomes, that must be submitted to the training provider and the professional organisation (PTUK/PTI) for clinical governance.

***Desirable***

1. Presentations, by the trainee, to all of the organisation’s staff, upon the rationale of therapeutic play, its benefits and how it is proposed to integrate the service into other relevant activities
2. A Project Manager/Link person will be appointed
3. Encouragement of parental involvement at all stages
4. The SDQ assessment of all children and young persons in the organisation’s care
5. Information about the child from school and home. The trainee would like as much information as possible before starting play therapy with the child. We would also appreciate the organisation letting the trainee, the Clinical Supervisor and the Course Director know of any developments which could have an impact on the child’s emotional state.

## **Trainee’s Responsibilities**

The trainee is responsible for:

1. Working within the ethos and values of the organisation
2. Using their best efforts to apply the training towards alleviating the problems of the clients that are referred
3. In the case of multiple relationships, making sure that the correct boundaries are maintained
4. Observing Child Protection, Health and Safety and other policies and standards of the organisation
5. Working harmoniously with all members of staff
6. Working within the set budget, if applicable
7. Maintaining the play room, or play space in impeccable condition
8. Ensuring that there is an adequate stock of equipment and materials
9. Protecting the confidentiality of client records and observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act(s) relating to the placement organisation
10. Observing any permissions that are required in relation to the presentation of the organisation’s information
11. Ensuring that the confidentiality of the clients’ processes are protected
12. Reporting on the client’s progress, when requested
13. Diligently keeping to all session times and other appointments
14. Reporting as soon as possible any absences from work, making alternative arrangements for the clients and providing appropriate messages for the staff to pass on to the child
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## **Financial Aspects**

The placement organisation will:

[Insert the placement organisation’s financial responsibilities – if any – such as any session payments]

[Insert the trainee’s financial responsibilities – if any]

The cost of the trainee’s clinical supervision must be included in this section.

**Signed**

On behalf of: [the organisation]

………………….. …………………… ………………………… ……………….

Signature Name Job title Dated

On behalf of: [the trainee]

………………….. ………………………………… ……………….

Signature Name Dated

On behalf of: [the training provider]

…………………. ……………………….. …………………………….. ……………………………….

Signature Name Job title Dated



### **Standard terms for placements**

1. These terms and conditions are designed to enable a clear understanding and agreement to be reached between ……..………………………………………………… and ……………………………………………………… in connection with providing a placement for students registered on the APAC Play Therapy Course.
2. These terms and conditions shall be operative until terminated by the student and placement organisation or superseded by subsequent amendments or replacement with a successor set of terms and conditions.
3. The Placement Organisation agrees to continue to supervise student’s client work (Line Management) over the completion of the Agreement period.
4. All placements and clinical supervision provided under these terms and conditions will meet the agreed standards. (PTUK/PTI).
5. The Placement Organisation agrees to monitor the trainee and write a report at the end on the lines of the attached document
6. The Placement Organiser shall ensure that he/she is available for consultation by the student and by training staff at agreed times.
7. The Placement Organiser shall report any concerns about the student to the Clinical Director of APAC (or designated representative) after discussing the concerns with the student supervisor involved. There must be a signed 4-way placement agreement for each organisation sent in advance to the office or your placement hours will not be counted. (See next sheet – Safety of Play Therapy Practice).
8. APAC shall ensure that adequate access is available from APAC staff to support the Placement if required and at least one contact shall be made between APAC and the placement organiser, initiated by the Placement organisation.
9. The Organisation for whom the student works shall hold Public Liability insurance and shall indemnify the APAC and the student in respect of any negligent acts, errors and omissions arising out of his/her actions as Placement Organisers under this agreement.
10. APAC shall ensure that a student in training shall hold his/her own public liability insurance.
11. Clinical responsibility for the student’s client work shall be held jointly by the placement Organisation and the Supervisor whom they contract with to supervise their client work.
12. The Supervisor/placement Organisation agrees to abide by the regulations in force for the time being concerning Health and Safety of students on placement and shall be provided upon request with a copy of the organisation’s Health and Safety Policy.

APAC LIMITED