

Clinical placement role description

Blue Smile is a relatively new Cambridge charity, which tackles the growing mental health problem among our children and young people by providing counselling and support in Cambridgeshire schools. We use an arts-based approach because we believe that the arts provide a unique means of processing trauma and regulating difficult feelings. The emphasis is also on providing a caring, creative and consistent relationship for a child or young person, in which it is safe for them to explore problems and build a trusting attachment.

Clinical placements are offered to counselling and psychotherapy students and graduates who want to gain experience of direct therapeutic work with children and to accumulate hours towards professional accreditation. These placements are recognised as providing a valuable opportunity to extend clinical experience, while being closely supported. They also provide in-house training, professional development and supervision and give volunteers the chance to shape a growing service and to develop their careers within it.

It is expected that therapists on placement will offer a minimum commitment of a year with Blue Smile and undertake 2–4 sessions on one day a week in the designated school. The placement will involve maintaining this clinical caseload, keeping accurate records, attending supervision and training, and adhering to Blue Smile's policies and procedures in order to ensure the most effective support to children and young people.

1. Reporting structure

The clinical placement is managed by the Team Leader in the designated school, who will oversee the day-to-day work. In consultation with the Team Leader, therapists on placement will also maintain good working relations and communications with the school's headteacher and staff, and attend relevant meetings as required.

They are responsible for reporting any child protection concerns immediately to the Team Leader and/or the school's designed person for child protection, in keeping with Blue Smile's Child Protection Policy.

2. Clinical work

Therapists on placement provide therapeutic support to children and young people and are assisted by the Team Leader in making clinical assessments to inform their work. They meet twice a term with parents/carers and as necessary with teachers in order to get appropriate background information for this work.

The role requires the keeping and storage of accurate and up-to-date records, in keeping with Blue Smile's Policy on note taking and storage, as well as the maintenance of confidentiality.

Monitoring of the work through statistics and feedback is central to Blue Smile's performance appraisal and funding applications, so the therapist on placement will be helped to complete the relevant questionnaires and outcome measures.

They will also abide by all Blue Smile's policies and procedures, the BACP's Ethical Codes of Practice for counselling and the ethical framework of their training organisation.

3. Supervision, training and course requirements

Blue Smile provides fortnightly group supervision and therapists on placement are responsible for attending these. (It may be necessary for these to be on a different day from the placement

day.) Students in training should also ensure they are fulfilling training supervision requirements by having additional private supervision as necessary (Blue Smile does not attempt to match those requirements) and it is recommended that they access personal therapy to support their early practice.

The student on placement is also responsible for ensuring that their Team Leader has relevant information from their training organisation, so that placement feedback can be given to tutors, etc.

It is expected that all those on clinical placements will attend a one-day Blue Smile induction training and a child protection introduction or refresher training, as well as explore further opportunities for continuing professional development.

4. Insurance

Therapists on placement are required to be properly insured for professional liability insurance.

Volunteer specification

Required criteria for the role are:

- Ideally in the second year of a Diploma-level, MA/MEd course or Level 5 course in counselling, with a considerable component devoted to children and young people
- Preferably some experience of direct work with children and young people
- Training which involves a personal development component
- Experience of personal therapy
- Openness and willingness to self-reflect
- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to work as part of a team in a school setting
- An ability to work within recognised theoretical and ethical frameworks
- An understanding of equal opportunities and an open approach
- An ability to operate within Blue Smile's policies and procedures
- A willingness to take up continuing professional development opportunities
- An ability to keep good and confidential records
- A professional liability insurance policy