Pathways School

Therapy Policy

Policy Monitoring

Date policy last reviewed: April 2026

Signed by:

Neil Jones	Headteacher	Date:	April 2026
Saima Ali	Chair of governors	Date:	April 2026

Date of next review: April 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedure.

1. Introduction

Students at Pathways School have a diagnosis of Autism. Some students have learning difficulties associated with this diagnosis. This impacts on their language, learning, sensory needs and functional performance. Pathways School is underpinned by the principles of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA).

2. Links to other school policies and practices.

- Behaviour Principles Written Statement
- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEN Policy
- Assessment Policy

3. Therapy at Pathways School

Pathways School employs a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) and an Occupational Therapist (OT).

Other therapies, as determined by any provision detailed in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), that extend beyond the scope of expertise of Pathways School are not provided. Pathways School will consult with the Local Authority responsible for the EHCP to ensure the provision of any additional therapies required for a student. Other therapies may include physiotherapy, as well as specialist support from visual impairment, dysphagia, feeding and swallowing specialists, would fall outside the expected clinical expertise of Pathways School. This should not be considered an exhaustive list of other therapies or specialist input which may be determined under Section F,G or H of the EHCP.

The therapists at Pathways School fulfil the assessment and therapy needs for each student as specified in their EHCP. The goal of therapies at Pathways School is to provide person-centred and individualised intervention for skill acquisition, maintenance and generalisation. This is done in liaison with staff, parents and other professionals working with each student, to address challenges in communication, social interaction, engagement, play, occupational performance and sensory processing. Interventions used are evidence-based and are formulated from assessment results. Targets are prioritised based on need and this guides Individual Learning Plan (ILP) target setting. Therapists devise a therapeutic programme of activities or recommend strategies which are personalised to each student so that they can maximise their potential as well as have the best educational experience. Therapy programmes consist of activities that the student completes with the therapist directly or indirectly as appropriate. These programmes are integrated into the student's ILP and are integral to their day-to-day learning opportunities. Targets are updated on a termly basis in line with the Pathways School review cycle and the Therapists formally report on the student's progress annually through Annual Reviews.

3.1 Speech and Language Therapy

The role of the Speech and Language Therapist at Pathways School is to assess, support and develop the students' communication, speech and language skills alongside their

functional play and social interaction skills. A Total Communication approach is used in order to maximise students' opportunities to communicate in the way that best suits them. This may be verbally or through Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) systems as determined in conjunction with SaLT, such as Signing, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), or using IT based AAC such as Proloquo2Go. Students may also use a mixture of these communication methods.

3.2 Occupational Therapy

The Occupational Therapist works with students on a 1:1 basis and/or in groups to help them promote and develop functional skills, such as handwriting and cutting; play and positive engagement through understanding sensory preferences and needs. OTs use a holistic approach in planning programmes, this means they take into account students' preferences, social, emotional, sensory as well as physical and cognitive abilities. OTs regularly liaise with staff to find out about students' occupational performance with the aim to remove barriers to learning and participation.

4. Professional Standards

Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists are Allied Health Professionals regulated by their own professional bodies – the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapy (RCSLT) and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) respectively, and both by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). This means that they adhere to professional and ethical standards, one of which is to remain informed of recent evidence and research relating to their clinical practice. A requirement of these Professional Standards is to maintain confidential clinical notes. Case notes at Pathways School are stored securely in line with professional standards and are only accessible by the therapists.

5. Assessments

Assessments are completed through a range of formal and informal methods to identify the specific needs of each student. These findings are used to design a functional and individualised therapy programme. Assessments are reviewed regularly, and at a minimum on an annual basis in line with the Annual Review. Due to the needs of our students, formal assessment results may not be appropriate to report as they are not standardised for our cohort of students. Standardised assessments are used to provide a qualitative assessment of need and to inform target setting. Where appropriate, standardised quantitative results are reported.

6. Delivery of Therapy

Distinction is made between the provision of direct and indirect therapy, as recommended within students' EHCPs. Each student will receive a minimum of 15 minutes SaLT and OT input per fortnight as the core therapy offer where therapy provision is not specified in the EHCP. Students receive indirect therapy throughout their school day as part of their personalised curriculum.

7. Reporting

Therapy sessions occur in a range of settings including individual, group and class based as appropriate. Sessions take place in class and across other settings ranging from sensory

rooms to playground or therapy room. We also support students' access to community activities, through direct and indirect means. Sessions can also be run jointly by the SaLTs and OTs to ensure integrated working. Targets are generalised throughout the students' day with targets and recommendations incorporated into all parts of the curriculum and learning. Therapy staff work closely with school staff to ensure an integrated approach to the students' needs. This includes regular discussions with, and training of, all staff accountable for working with the student. The staff accountable for the students are expected to carry over, monitor and review these targets when working with the student. It is expected that staff will consult with the Therapist as and when support is required, or targets are achieved.

Therapists make environmental recommendations and use approaches that are designed to support the students' participation and engagement. All staff are accountable for embedding these approaches into every aspect of the student's day.

Therapy targets are reviewed annually and formally reported upon as part of the Annual Review. Reporting will ensure therapy goals are updated and will be made available to parents and local authorities prior to the Annual Review meetings. Upon request and determined by the therapist's capacity, the therapists attend the Annual Review meeting as appropriate. If attendance is not possible the therapist will liaise closely with those chairing the meeting to ensure that the key messages can be conveyed.

8. Communication with Families

The therapists aim to facilitate a close relationship with the home setting to ensure that goals are relevant to both home and school and to allow families to communicate with the relevant therapist. Therapists may attend parent evenings and other relevant meetings in order to discuss ILP targets and current progress as well as the families' priorities or students' challenges when they are at home. Families are offered regular opportunities to attend training and therapists welcome emails from parents regarding queries or questions about targets.